

LOOKING AT HIRSKA COMMUNITY

MODEL FOR REBUILDING DISPLACED COMMUNITY

ON THE EXAMPLE OF HIRSKA
MUNICIPALITY, LOCATED IN
LUHANSK REGION

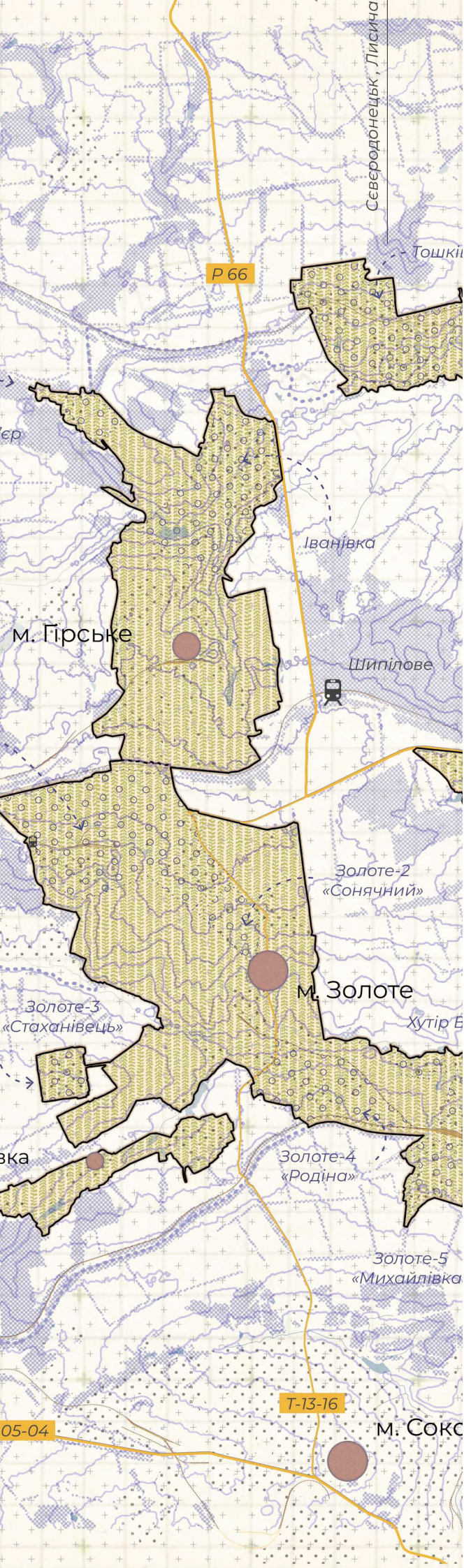
Unique approach for displaced communities and occupied territories

Several efforts are underway to rebuild Ukraine after the war. The government and its international partners face an enormous challenge, with a strong focus on restoring industries, cities, and transportation networks to support economic recovery. However, the deeper challenge is the **long-term social rebuilding** that restores the heart of the nation – the communities, homes, and connections that have been destroyed in hundreds of small towns and villages in the conflict zones.

This vision is central to the Ro3kvit Urban Coalition for Ukraine. One of its projects carried out at the request of the Hirska Administration in Luhansk Region, focuses on the Hirska municipality. This work serves as a **case study of a community-driven, culturally-informed approach to reconstruction** that could serve as a **model for other communities and regions**.



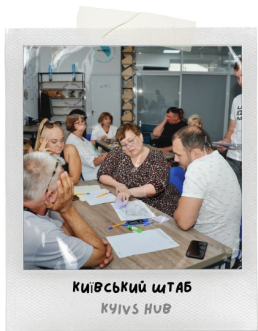
The lessons from this collaboration provide a tested framework for rebuilding towns and villages affected by conflicts or disasters leading to community dislocation. Ro3kvit is now working to share this knowledge with other communities, helping them prepare for recovery and plan for the future.





The Ro3kvit Initiative is rooted in the belief that **community connections, cultural preservation, and future preparedness** are essential for recovery. Connected to the territory through the Hirske administration in exile and the memories of displaced residents, the team has been inspired to work with a dedicated team of residents who dream of a rebuilt and free community. Informed by Ro3kvit's studies of other displaced communities in Ukraine, including the Urban Vision for Mariupol and the Dnipro River Integrated Vision, the efforts of this project draw from global experience in post-war reconstruction and post-disaster recovery.

Guided by the principles of rebuilding social ties, safeguarding cultural heritage, and planning for a prosperous future, this initiative was developed in collaboration with the residents and the administration and is a stepping stone for further phases of planning for rebuilding. This initiative was developed without grant funding and driven entirely by the dedication of professionals, a committed administration group, and passionate community residents.



Top five directions:



Community values:



Reports state that refugees always have three priorities before returning to their beloved homes: 1 safety, 2 employment, and 3 housing. This was also true for the Hirska community, where these three needs ranked highest. However, when asked 'What do you miss the most?', most responses centered around nature, culture, and social life. Once again, this project highlighted the need for community engagement to enrich the work for planning the rebuilding of communities and their core.

ОПИТУВАННЯ SURVEYS

ПАМ'ЯТЬ MEMORY

РЕКОМЕНДАЦІЇ RECOMMENDATIONS

Case study: Hirska community

This project focuses on planning for **various potential futures of the displaced communities**, particularly for areas under occupation. By using scenario-based planning, we not only outlined steps for rebuilding when possible but also worked out a way to **preserve collective memory** when reconstruction remains uncertain. This ensures that the community's history is honored and considered in future plans, even when rebuilding is delayed.

Community engagement was instrumental in identifying the core values that guide the reconstruction efforts. Through discussion and interactive activities, residents shared what matters to them most: community, belonging, nature, and a safe, thriving environment. These priorities form the foundation of the **reconstruction scenarios**. We also explored how housing, economic opportunity, safety, and social cohesion can be integrated with these core values to **create a true sense of home**. Both the project process and its outcomes were greatly appreciated by the Hirska community strengthening their bonds and **providing comfort** in their current situation.

Insights and community engagement:

Even when displaced, the community often stays connected partly, online and offline. Involving the community in surveys, workshops and interviews ensures that rebuilding efforts align with their needs, values, and priorities.

Memory:

Capturing memories sets the foundation of values and meaning for the location and its residents. Memories create a value basis for the selection of prioritized projects for rebuilding.

Recommendations:

Based on a variety of potential future scenarios the community faces, this comprehensive approach helps capture Hirska's past, present, and possible futures. Our guidance and technical expertise supported the community in collecting and organizing their memories and aspirations into actionable plans. By doing so, we empower the community to rebuild in a way that reflects their identity and vision for the future.



A successful pilot, and now more!

We are pleased that our work could respond to the community's demand, giving hope and strength to the displaced people, and shifting their focus from despair to constructive thinking about their future. A platform for community integration has been established, encouraging activities that strengthen the community's ties and ease the pain of living away from their home(land).

Our approach to supporting the Hiraska displaced community is a unique example of a **demand-driven urban strategy tailored for people without access to their territory.**

We believe that **our methodology and tools can be scaled and applied to displaced communities worldwide**, whether affected by conflicts, climate change, or natural disasters.

Call for funders. Support to displaced communities worldwide

In response to growing interest from communities and professionals, **we are seeking sponsors to help scale this initiative.**

The communities often already lost jobs, homes and other properties, and the governmental support is low due to other costly priorities. The foreseen activities which require financing are

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Proof of concept:

Implementing up to 5 pilot projects in Ukrainian municipalities with displaced communities, with the potential to expand to other regions upon specific request and in collaboration with local partners.

Methodology development and publication:

Refinement of a unified methodology description based on pilot project experiences, supported by easy-to-understand graphics and tools for professionals and community leaders seeking to engage in this type of work.

Capacity building program:

Designing a training program and supporting material for hromadas, and professionals in urban planning, sociology, and other related disciplines.

Scaling and outreach:

Providing training for municipality administrations, urban practitioners, and NGOs, through events, short videos, and social media outreach.

By aligning our work with real community needs and professional expertise, we aim **to create a scalable, impactful model for supporting displaced communities in Ukraine and beyond.**



More about project

scan or click on the QR code to know more about the project:



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