The Grassroots Institute | Ukraine

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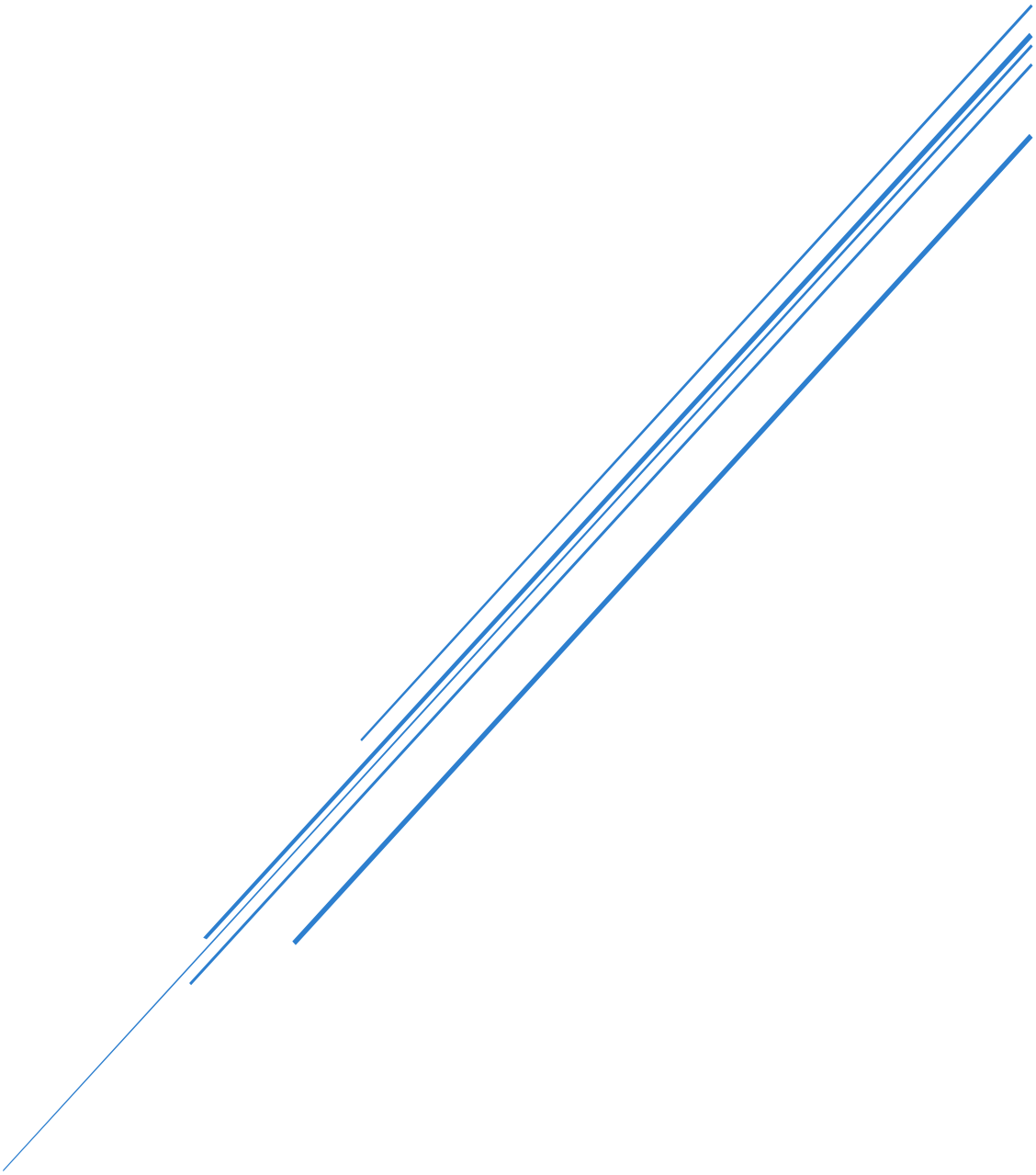

Organization Profile

Natural Resources, Agriculture and Rural Development

TGI Ukraine's **Natural Resources, Agriculture and Rural Development (NRM) Stream** brings together community-based natural-resource governance, sustainable agriculture, rural livelihoods, pastoralism, biodiversity conservation, climate adaptation and local economic development. The stream is grounded in the principle that **healthy ecosystems, productive landscapes and resilient rural communities are mutually dependent**.

1. UNDERLYING PRINCIPLES

a) **Legality:** All organizational activities are conducted in accordance with the Constitution of Ukraine, applicable legislation, Ukraine's international obligations, and the Statute of the organization.
b) **Transparency and Accountability:** The organization ensures openness to the public, partners, donors, government bodies, and community members. Project outcomes, reports, and financial information are regularly published and publicly available.
c) **Voluntarism:** Membership and participation in the organization are based on voluntary principles. Volunteerism is recognized as a key tool for achieving the organization's goals.
d) **Sustainable Development:** The organization's initiatives maintain an ecological, economic, and social balance, operating with a focus on long-term impacts for society and nature.
e) **Partnership and Cooperation:** The organization develops horizontal connections with educational institutions, other NGOs, local self-governments, businesses, international partners, and initiatives. Cooperation is based on equality, mutual respect, and shared benefit.
f) **Inclusiveness and Non-Discrimination:** No discrimination is permitted on any grounds. All initiatives aim to ensure equal participation opportunities regardless of gender, age, ethnicity, social status, etc.
g) **Scientific and Professional Approach:** TGI bases its activities on scientific data, expert evaluations, and applied research. It engages professionals and promotes academic environmental education.
h) **Environmental Ethics:** All activities are guided by the principle of minimizing environmental harm, preserving natural resources, and promoting environmental awareness among the population.
i) **Innovation:** The organization supports the implementation of new approaches, technologies, and methods in field action, capacity building, advocacy, and research.
j) **Community Stewardship:** Acting on the principle "from communities to decisions", the organization actively involves local residents in projects, initiatives, and decision-making processes.

2. VISION

The Grassroots Institute envisions effecting positive change through participation in a world in which local communities and vulnerable people who have been marginalized by environmental degradation, poverty, conflict and other forms of injustice gain control over their natural and biocultural resources, lives and livelihoods, and the policy decisions that affect their lives directly or indirectly.

3. AIM

The Grassroots Institute aims to undertake education, capacity building, innovative research, human development and appropriate grassroots field action to conserve the natural environment, to promote sustainable development, and to serve and empower deprived and marginalized communities, ethnic groups, and threatened and vulnerable peoples.

4. MODES OF FUNCTIONS

1) Field Action; 2) Advocacy; 3) Training; 4) Research; 5) Education; 6) Networking

5. FIVE PROGRAMME PILLARS

A) Natural Resources Management

Healthy Resources → Healthy Communities

- Sustainable natural-resource management
- Community-based resource governance
- Forest and ecosystem management
- Pasture and rangeland management
- Water-resource management
- Land-use planning
- Sustainable mountain landscapes
- Participatory resource assessment
- Community resource mapping
- Natural-resource policy and legal analysis
- Local institutions for resource management
- Conflict-sensitive resource governance
- Traditional and indigenous/local knowledge
- Sustainable use of common resources

B) Nature Conservation & Climate Adaptation

Conservation + Adaptation + Community Resilience

- Biodiversity conservation
- Ecosystem restoration
- Climate adaptation
- Nature-based solutions
- Landscape restoration
- Ecological connectivity
- Forest and habitat protection
- Pollinator and biodiversity conservation
- Climate-resilient landscapes
- Community conservation
- Environmental monitoring
- Disaster-risk reduction
- Climate-smart land management
- Environmental education
- Community climate intelligence

C) Sustainable Agriculture & Food Systems

Productive Landscapes → Sustainable Food → Rural Prosperity

- Sustainable agriculture
- Climate-smart agriculture
- Agroecology
- Regenerative agriculture
- Soil health
- Sustainable livestock production
- Fodder production
- Dairy production and processing
- Agro-processing
- Agricultural biodiversity
- Local and traditional breeds
- Local crop varieties and landraces
- Sustainable horticulture
- Organic and low-input production
- Food security

- Short food supply chains
- Local value addition
- Rural agricultural enterprises

D) Skills, Livelihoods & Local Economic Development

Skills → Enterprise → Income → Community Resilience

- Rural skills development
- Vocational education and training
- Agricultural entrepreneurship
- Women-led enterprises
- Youth employment
- Social enterprises
- Cooperative approaches
- Local value chains
- Agro-processing
- Green jobs
- Renewable & alternative energy
- Digital skills
- Market-oriented vocational training
- Community-based enterprise development
- Livelihood diversification

E) Alternative Energy & Rural Energy Transition

Clean Energy → Productive Agriculture → Rural Enterprise → Community Resilience

- Solar energy for farms and rural households
- Small-scale agricultural solar power
- Solar irrigation
- Solar-powered livestock and dairy systems
- Solar drying and food processing
- Renewable-powered cold storage
- Biomass and sustainable bioenergy
- Energy-efficient agricultural technologies
- Renewable energy for VET institutions
- Community renewable-energy initiatives
- Rural energy entrepreneurship
- Green jobs and technical skills
- Energy efficiency
- Energy security and independence
- Decentralised energy systems
- Climate mitigation

6. NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT APPROACH

Resource → Community → Governance → Sustainable Use → Benefit

TGI promotes:

- Participatory resource assessment
- Community mapping
- Resource-use planning
- Local monitoring
- Stakeholder dialogue
- Sustainable-use agreements
- Community stewardship
- Legal and institutional analysis

- Conflict prevention
- Evidence-based policy advocacy

Core principle: Those who depend upon natural resources should have a meaningful role in deciding how those resources are governed and used.

7. AGRICULTURE & RURAL DEVELOPMENT MODEL

LAND | *ENERGY*
Sustainable land management | Renewable energy systems
↓
PRODUCTION
Climate-smart & sustainable agriculture | Energy hub & distribution
↓
VALUE
Processing + value addition + innovation + local markets
↓
ENTERPRISE
Farmers + cooperatives + social enterprises
↓
INCOME
Diversified and resilient rural livelihoods
↓
COMMUNITY
Stronger rural economies and social resilience

8. COMMUNITY-BASED NATURAL RESOURCE GOVERNANCE

TGI's approach places communities at the centre of resource management:

- Farmers as land stewards
- Pastoralists as landscape managers
- Forest-dependent communities as resource stakeholders
- Rural households as conservation partners
- Youth as next-generation environmental leaders
- Women as rural economic actors
- Local governments as governance partners
- Universities as knowledge partners
- CSOs as accountability and facilitation partners
- Energy efficient life and sustainability

From “resource users” → to “resource stewards.”

9. CARPATHIAN & MOUNTAIN FOCUS

Strong geographical competence in:

- Ukrainian Carpathians
- Zakarpattia
- Ivano-Frankivsk
- Lviv
- Mountain and foothill communities
- Rural and borderland areas

Priority landscapes

- Mountain pastures
- Forest landscapes

- Agricultural valleys
- River catchments
- Traditional farming landscapes
- Biodiversity-rich rural areas
- Mixed farming systems
- Rural–urban interfaces

10. KEY NRM THEMES

Theme	*TGI Ukraine Focus*
Forests	Sustainable management, biodiversity, community participation
Pastures	Sustainable grazing, pastoralism, rangeland governance
Water	Community water governance, watershed management
Land	Sustainable land management and participatory planning
Biodiversity	Conservation, restoration, agrobiodiversity
Agriculture	Sustainable, climate-smart and regenerative systems
Livestock	Sustainable livestock, herding, animal health and fodder
Renewable energy	Alternative energy, adoption, efficiency, sustainability
Climate	Adaptation, resilience and nature-based solutions
Food systems	Local production, processing and value chains
Rural economy	Skills, entrepreneurship, and social enterprise

11. PASTORALISM & RANGELAND DEVELOPMENT

A distinctive element of the NRM stream:

- Sustainable pastoralism
- Mountain grazing systems
- Rangeland restoration
- Pasture governance
- Traditional livestock systems
- Shepherd communities
- Transhumance
- Local breeds and traditional breeding
- Pastoral knowledge
- Community pasture institutions
- Livestock–biodiversity relationships
- Climate-resilient grazing
- Pastoral livelihoods
- Recognition of pastoralists as landscape stewards

Strategic perspective:
Pastoralism is simultaneously:
Livelihood + Culture + Biodiversity Management + Landscape Management + Food System

12. BIODIVERSITY & AGROBIODIVERSITY

TGI approaches biodiversity at forest, wetlands and agricultural landscape levels.

Conservation

- Forest biodiversity
- Mountain ecosystems
- Ecological corridors
- Pollinator habitats
- Native species
- Protected ecosystems

- Landscape connectivity

Agrobiodiversity
- Traditional breeds
- Local landraces
- Heritage orchards
- Traditional crops
- Community seed systems
- Genetic diversity
- Traditional agricultural knowledge

Core objective
Conserve biodiversity while maintaining productive and economically viable landscapes.

13. CLIMATE RESILIENCE

TGI integrates climate adaptation into natural-resource and rural development planning.

Climate-smart approaches
- Climate-resilient agriculture
- Soil conservation
- Water management
- Agroforestry
- Diversified farming
- Drought preparedness
- Flood resilience
- Landslide-risk reduction
- Heat adaptation
- Ecosystem restoration
- Nature-based solutions

Community dimension
Climate information → Local risk assessment → Community planning → Practical adaptation → Monitoring

14. RENEWABLE ENERGY SYSTEMS IN VILLAGES & TOWNS

Decentralised, community-oriented energy systems that reduce energy costs, improve energy security, support local livelihoods and strengthen resilience.

- Solar PV for Public Facilities
- Solar Energy for Agriculture
- Community Renewable Energy Systems
- Biomass
- Small Hydropower [subject to feasibility]
- Solar + Heat Pump Systems
- Renewable Energy for Rural Enterprises
- Renewable Energy for Mountain Tourism
- Community Renewable Energy Resilience Hubs
- Village Energy Audits & Energy Plans
- Promotion and Technical VET
- Partnership for Renewable Energy Communities
- Energy Efficiency in Urban and Rural Life
- Energy security and independence

15. RURAL LIVELIHOODS

TGI promotes diversified and locally rooted rural economies.

Livelihood pathways

- Sustainable farming
- Livestock
- Dairy
- Agro-processing
- Horticulture
- Forestry-based enterprises
- Non-timber forest products
- Rural tourism
- Eco-enterprises
- Renewable energy
- Green enterprises
- Social enterprises
- Vocational skills
- Digital rural services

Priority groups

- Smallholder farmers
- Women
- Youth
- Rural households
- Pastoralists
- IDPs in rural communities
- Vulnerable households
- Community-based enterprises

16. SKILLS & VOCATIONAL EDUCATION & TRAINING (VET)

From training to employment and enterprise. Priority skills may include:

- Dairy farm management
- Dairy processing
- Livestock health
- AI-assisted livestock management
- Fodder production
- Climate-smart livestock
- Agro-processing
- Renewable energy technician
- Sustainable agriculture
- Farm entrepreneurship
- Rural tourism
- Digital agriculture
- Environmental monitoring
- HVAC & heat-pump technician
- IT & Digital services technician
- Digital marketing & e-commerce cpecialist
- Food processing
- Hospitality & tourism services
- Construction & energy-efficient building technician
- Waste management & recycling technician
- Water & wastewater systems technician

TGI approach
Training → Practical application → Enterprise → Income → Local economic development

17. LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

TGI promotes development that keeps more economic value within rural communities.

- Local production
- Local processing
- Local employment
- Short supply chains
- Community enterprises
- Producer groups
- Cooperatives
- Social enterprises
- Women-led businesses
- Youth entrepreneurship
- Rural innovation
- Green enterprises

Principle:
Produce locally → add value locally → employ locally → retain value locally.

18. TARGET GROUPS

Primary

- Smallholder farmers
- Rural households
- Pastoralists
- Shepherd communities
- Women
- Youth
- Rural entrepreneurs
- Agricultural workers
- IDPs and vulnerable rural households
- Community resource users
- Environmental activists
- Local conservation groups

Institutional

- Hromadas
- Local governments
- Agricultural institutions
- Forest institutions
- Protected-area authorities
- Universities
- VET institutions
- Research organisations
- CSOs
- Producer organisations
- Cooperatives
- Rural SMEs

19. ACTION MODES

- Field-based research
- Community assessments
- Participatory mapping
- Natural-resource inventories
- Demonstration sites
- Pilot farms
- Farmer field learning
- Training and VET
- Community workshops
- Technical assistance
- Legal and policy analysis
- Policy advocacy
- Stakeholder dialogue
- Community monitoring
- Knowledge exchange
- Digital tools
- Enterprise development
- Partnership building
- Replication and scaling

20. KNOWLEDGE-TO-ACTION MODEL

RESEARCH
Scientific + local + traditional knowledge
↓
ASSESS
Resources + risks + livelihoods + markets
↓
CO-DESIGN
Communities + experts + institutions
↓
PILOT
Practical demonstration
↓
LEARN
Evidence + community feedback
↓
SCALE
Replication through hromadas, partners and policy

21. ORGANISATIONAL STRENGTHS — CORE ATTRIBUTES

Core Attribute	*TGI Ukraine Strength*
Natural-resource expertise	Integrated management of land, forests, pastures, water and biodiversity
Water resource	Water resource management, watershed governance, sustainable water use, participatory water governance
Agriculture	Sustainable, climate-smart and community-oriented agricultural development
Pastoralism	Understanding of pastoral livelihoods, rangelands and mountain landscapes
Biodiversity	Conservation integrated with productive landscapes
Climate resilience	Adaptation integrated into agriculture, ecosystems and rural livelihoods
Rural development	Skills, livelihoods, enterprise and local economic development

Renewable energy	Renewable energy systems, energy efficiency, rural energy transition, green skills
Community presence	Strong relationships with rural and mountain communities
Localisation	Community-led resource and development solutions
Knowledge integration	Scientific, technical and traditional/local knowledge
Policy engagement	Research and field evidence translated into policy recommendations
Interdisciplinarity	Environment + agriculture + law + livelihoods + governance
Partnerships	Communities, hromadas, universities, CSOs and technical institutions
Replication	Pilot approaches designed for adaptation and scaling

22. STRATEGIC RESILIENCE MODEL

Ecological Resilience
Healthy ecosystems + biodiversity + renewable energy + functioning landscapes

- *Agricultural Resilience*
Diverse + regenerative/circular + low external inputs + climate-smart farming

- *Economic Resilience*
Skills + enterprises + diversified livelihoods

- *Social Resilience*
Community organisation + inclusion + local cooperation

- *Institutional Resilience*
Capable hromadas + participatory resource governance

= *Resilient Rural Communities*

23. INTEGRATED LANDSCAPE APPROACH

TGI does not treat forests, farms, pastures, water and settlements as isolated sectors.

Landscape
Forest
↕
Pasture
↕
Farm
↕
River / Water System
↕
Alternative Energy System
↕
Village / Hromada
↕
Rural Economy

The objective is to manage the "*whole landscape system*", balancing:
Conservation + Production + Livelihoods + Climate Resilience + Community Interests

24. NATURAL RESOURCES & RURAL DEVELOPMENT GOVERNANCE

TGI's preferred governance model

Community

- Local knowledge
- Resource users
- Farmers
- Pastoralists

↕

Hromada

- Planning
- Local regulation
- Infrastructure
- Services

↕

Technical Institutions

- Agriculture
- Forestry
- Environment
- Energy
- Water

↕

Research & Knowledge

- Universities
- Experts
- Traditional knowledge

↕

Policy

- Regional (Oblast)
- National
- European

TGI's role:
Facilitator + Knowledge Partner + Technical Resource + Community Connector + Policy Advocate

One-Line Institutional Profile

TGI Ukraine's Natural Resources, Agriculture and Rural Development Stream integrates community-based natural-resource management, biodiversity conservation, renewable energy transition, climate adaptation, sustainable agriculture, pastoralism, rural skills and livelihood development to build productive landscapes, resilient rural economies and communities capable of sustainably managing the natural resources on which their wellbeing depends.