Rebuilding Rural Communities

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Heritage can help rebuild communities. But how?

Challenges within communities

- Reluctancy to volunteer – communist legacy
- Huge personal workload – agriculture and subsistance
- Poor communities, lacking basic infrastructure
- Lack of initiative & knowledge on heritage protection
- > 16.000 heritage sites

However …

- People are moving (back) to rural areas
- Heritage grassroots initiatives are growing
- The impact of COVID19

Ambulance for Monuments

Emergency conservation works for endangered heritage sites

- Link between students, heritage professionals, craftsmen and communities

- Strong local stakeholder engagement and involvement

- Adopted and implemented by several NGOs across Romania

- Faced COVID challenges successfully

Works on the Conservatory, Mocsonyi estate in Bulci

Castle Hotel Daniel

**Private investment
in heritage**

- Downscaling couple
- Revived an abandoned manor
- Involved & employed the local community
- Focused on local attractions (places, people)
- Catalist for innovation in cultural tourism in the area
- COVID innovation – butler app & safe zone

Adopt a House
in Roșia Montană

NGO initiative for a mining cultural landscape

- Grew when local heritage was threatened by a large scale mining project.
- Link between students, professionals, craftsmen, funders and local community (owners)
- Schooled an entire generation of heritage activists
- COVID effects – less students, longer stays, more online visibility (podcast)

In a nutshell …

Heritage is helping rebuild rural communities in Romania

- Grassroots projects are growing in numbers
- Media coverage and public interest is growing
- Young professionals have a wider variety of training possibilities
- Ideas on the benefits of heritage are slowly making their way into public policies

What about COVID19?

- Project teams shifted to helping communities stay safe
- Communities showed more resilience
- Sparked innovation and fueled cohesion to keep ongoing projects relevant and running
- Increased interest in remote work and downscaling

Thank you!

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