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Ukraine Food Security Assessment: Acute Food Insecurity in the Frontline

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CARI	Consolidated Approach for Reporting Indicators of Food Security
CATI	Computer-Assisted Telephone Interviewing
DiD	Difference-in-Differences
ECMEN	Economic Capacity to Meet Essential Needs
FCS	Food Consumption Score
FFSA	Frontline Food Security Assessment
FI	Food Insecure / Food Insecurity
GCA	Government-Controlled Areas
HH	Household
HNRP	Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IPC	Integrated Food Security Phase Classification
KIIS	Kyiv International Institute of Sociology
LCS	Livelihood Coping Strategies
MEB	Minimum Expenditure Basket
MDDI	Multidimensional Deprivation Index
MSNA	Multisectoral Needs Assessment
OT	Occupied Territories
PIN	People in Need
RDNA	Rapid Damage and Needs Assessment
rCSI	Reduced Coping Strategies Index
RF	Russian Federation
SMEB	Survival Minimum Expenditure Basket
SP	Strategic Priority
UAH	Ukrainian Hryvnia
WFP	World Food Programme

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2025 was the deadliest for civilians since the full-scale invasion of Ukraine began, particularly for people living at the frontlines. It marked a significant escalation in hostilities despite efforts to impose a ceasefire, with Ukraine recording the highest levels of deadly violence for every month compared to previous years. The escalation of the war continues to disrupt domestic production, trade routes, energy supply, and foreign investment, further restricting Ukraine's economic outlook. Attacks on ports significantly reduced Ukraine's agricultural export capacity, which translated into higher prices and inflation, directly increasing household vulnerability.

The human impact of the war continues to deepen, particularly among households living closest to active hostilities, with those residing within 50 km of the frontline bearing the greatest burden. More than 90% of all conflict events recorded in 2025 occurred within this zone, and 67% of civilian casualties also occurred near the frontline.

Approximately 2 million war-affected people in Ukraine are identified as high-priority cases for humanitarian food assistance. More than half of the high-priority cases, about 1.2 million people, live within 50km of the frontline. This number reflects a vulnerability-driven analysis centered on four key issue areas: vulnerable populations within 50km of the frontline, IDPs, evacuees, and people affected by strikes. However, a nationwide analysis show that the overall number of food insecure people in Ukraine continues to rise, with an additional 1.5 million people now requiring food assistance across the country, compared to 2024.

Households living within 50 km of the frontline are older, poorer, more dependent, and more reliant on assistance than those living further away. The proportion of elderly-only households rises to 36% in the 0–50 km zone, compared to 27% beyond 50 km, while older persons living alone are significantly more common close to the frontline. Displacement and return dynamics are more pronounced close to the frontline with up to 30% of surveyed household within 50km of the frontline displaced and 20% returnees.

Household-level analysis shows that at least one in four households at the frontlines are food insecure. This is more prevalence in the 20km zone in eastern and southern region where more than 30% of the households are food insecure. Rural households tend to experience higher levels of food insecurity than urban households, although the magnitude of this gap varies by proximity to the frontline. Within the 0–20 km zone, 27% of rural households are food insecure compared to 22% of urban households. In the 20–50 km zone, food insecurity levels are nearly identical between rural and urban households (both around 21%).

The higher share of food insecurity within frontline areas particularly among rural residents reflects both the direct effects of conflict and the concentration of vulnerable populations in these locations. Large families, households with elderly members living alone, and households with a member with a disability show food insecurity levels well above the overall average. Many food-insecure households continue to adopt unhealthy coping strategies including consuming less preferred food or

spending their savings, and more than half lack the economic capacity to meet their basic need without humanitarian assistance.

Frontline households face compounded vulnerabilities. Limited economic opportunities, reduced agriculture production, deterioration in security, shelter and health lead to multidimensional deprivation. In fact, about half of food insecure households within 20km of the frontline are also multidimensionally deprived. While market generally functions, households living closest to the frontline continue to experience significant disruption in market access. About 20% of households within 20km of the frontline report lacking uninterrupted access to markets, and around 13%, particularly those living within 10 km of the frontline, report having no market access at all.

Food assistance, provided both as in-kind and cash transfers, has been central to alleviating immediate food gaps for vulnerable households in the frontline. WFP assistance is targeted toward households with the lowest economic capacity, and analysis shows that it translates into a measurable and meaningful reduction in food insecurity, reducing the probability of low economic capacity among assisted households by close to 20 percentage points. But with humanitarian funding declining and needs continuing to rise, many vulnerable households may soon be unable to access the food assistance they depend on.

Three actions are critical to prevent a reversal of hard-won progress: First, sustaining monthly food assistance for the 2 million priority cases is essential, alongside protecting the 0–20 km frontline zone from coverage reductions, where the near-total collapse of local markets means that any cut would have immediate and severe consequences for household food security. Due to market disruption, the 0-20km zone is particularly suited for in-kind food distribution. Second, cash transfer values should be regularly adjusted to reflect documented food inflation, as maintaining outdated transfer levels results in a silent erosion of impact and undermines the purchasing power donors intend their contributions to deliver. Finally, robust impact evidence provides strong proof of effectiveness and should be actively leveraged in dialogue to justify sustained investment in Ukraine, particularly in contexts where assistance has successfully reduced visible needs without eliminating underlying vulnerability.

CONTEXT OVERVIEW

The scale of destruction, the economic disruption, and the geographic concentration of hostilities in frontline areas directly determine who is food insecure, how severely, and why recovery without external support is not feasible.

Now in its fifth year of full-scale war, the humanitarian crisis in Ukraine continues to deepen. Large numbers of people are still fleeing active hostilities along the frontline, while some previously displaced households are returning to areas close to the frontline whenever security conditions temporarily allow. As of December 2025, almost 9.2 million Ukrainians remain displaced, including more than 5.8 million refugees abroad, over 3.4 million internally displaced persons, and nearly 4.4 million returnees residing in Ukraine[1].

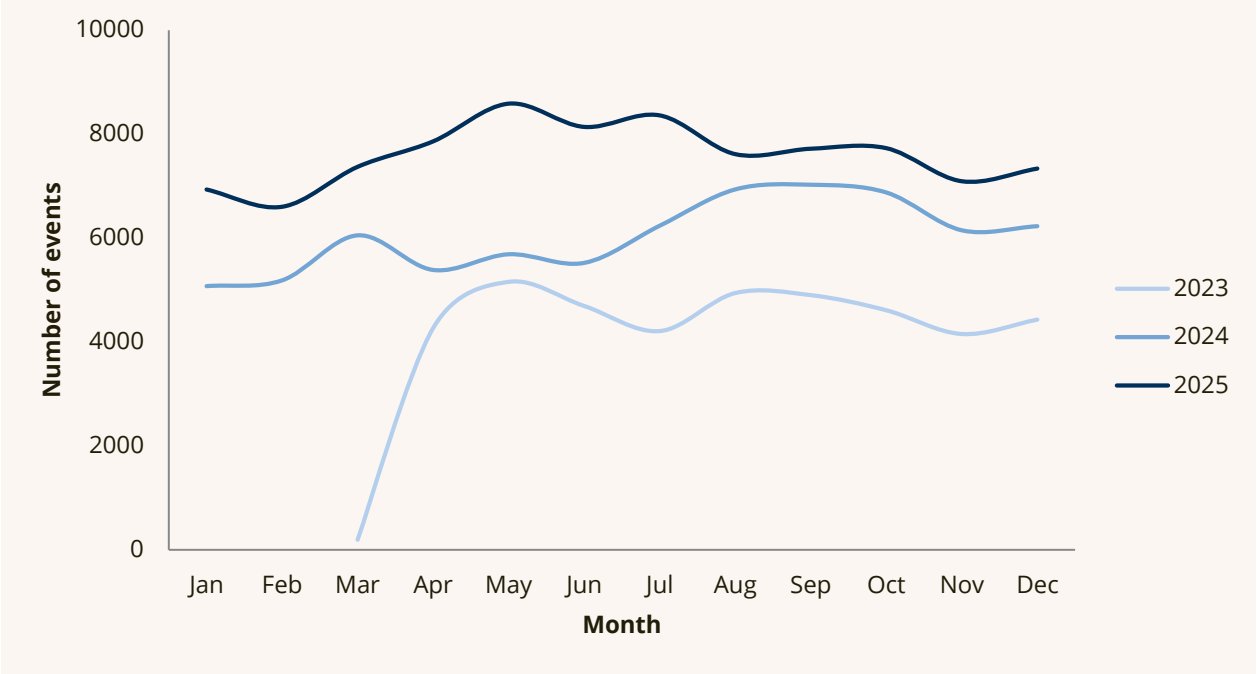
The year 2025 was the deadliest for civilians since the full-scale invasion began in Ukraine. It marked a significant escalation in hostilities despite efforts to impose a ceasefire, with Ukraine recording the highest levels of deadly violence for every month compared to 2023 and 2024 (Figure 1). The scale and nature of attacks also shifted, with regular strikes on civilian infrastructure including residential areas, public facilities, and critical logistics hubs. Security incidences increased by 26% in 2025 across Ukraine and airstrikes and drone attacks were the main drivers of this escalation, showing a remarkable 94% increase[2]. The targeting of energy infrastructure intensified sharply in the last quarter of 2025 as temperatures dropped. Bombardments of densely populated areas resulted in growing numbers of civilians killed or injured. Total civilian casualties in 2025 reached at least 2,514 killed and 12,142 injured, representing a 31% increase compared to 2024 and a 70% increase compared to 2023[3].

The escalation of the war continues to disrupt domestic production, trade routes, energy supply, and foreign investment, further restricting Ukraine's economic outlook. Despite initial signs of recovery, the intensified hostilities in 2025 led to a marked slowdown in economic growth. After contracting by nearly 30% in 2022 following the full-scale invasion, the economy rebounded in 2023 with a growth rate of 5.5%. However, growth decelerated to 2.9% in

2024 and fell further to 1.8% in 2025 amid widespread missile attacks on energy infrastructure, logistical disruptions, and reduced agricultural

output due to adverse weather conditions. These economic losses are closely linked to extensive damage in key export sectors, particularly agriculture.

Figure 1: Conflict and Attack Escalated in Ukraine in 2025



Note: Graph show the number of attacks by month reported by INSO data. Attacks include both airstrike, drones attack and ground operations.

According to the Fifth Rapid Damage and Needs Assessment (RDNA5), the scale of destruction and reconstruction needs in Ukraine continued to rise. The 2025 assessment reported an additional US$2 billion in direct infrastructure damage, bringing total war related damages to US$195 billion and total losses to US$667 billion. Recovery and reconstruction need also increased substantially, rising from US$523.6 billion in 2024 to US$587.7 billion in 2025. Total damages to the agriculture sector alone now amount to US$12.1 billion, with recovery needs estimated at US$55.3 billion. These figures underscore not only the destruction of assets but also the long-term losses in productivity, service delivery, and economic stability across affected regions.

Attacks on ports significantly reduced Ukraine's agricultural export capacity, lowering incomes for farmers and agro-allied industries. In 2025, there were over 150 strikes on ports in Greater Odesa, through which most Ukraine's grain exports typically pass[4]. Agriculture, one of the country's main economic pillars, remains a crucial source of employment and income, with Ukraine leading global production of sunflower oil, corn, wheat, and soybeans. While production and yields declined sharply after the record harvest of 2021, domestic output has since stabilized. However, even as production shows resilience, total agricultural export earnings have decreased. In 2024, agriculture generated 59% of Ukraine's foreign exchange earnings from goods exports, but by 2025, revenues had fallen by nearly 9%

due heightened logistical risks, severe port infrastructure damage and occupation and inaccessibility of some major agriculture production hubs.

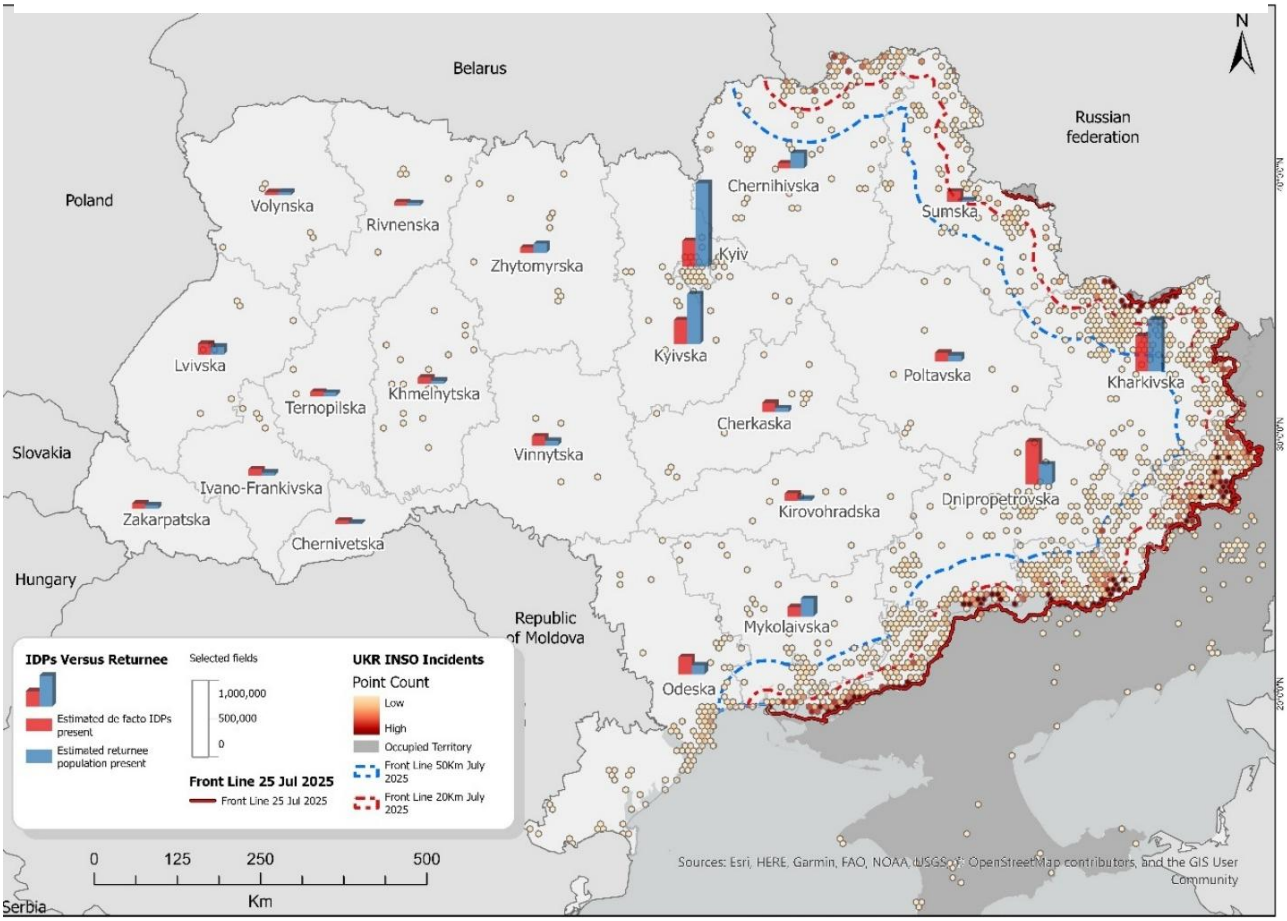
The impact of the conflict has also translated into higher prices and inflation, directly increasing household vulnerability. Infrastructure damage, supply chain disruptions, and the displacement of populations toward western oblasts have driven up the cost of food, housing, and utilities. The year-on-year inflation rate ranged between 8% and 16% in 2025, missing the government target of 5%. Food inflation was even more severe, peaking at 23% in June 2025 before easing to 10% by December. Between 2024 and 2025, the Ukrainian currency depreciated by nearly 4%, raising the cost of imported goods. According to the World Bank, a growing share of households reports financial strain from declining purchasing power. In 2025, the World Bank estimated that almost 35% of the population lived in poverty, a figure up sharply from 21% in 2021[5].

The human impact of the war continues to deepen, particularly among households living closest to active hostilities. Civilians across all regions remain exposed to escalating attacks that destroy homes, cause mass-casualty incidences, and disrupt essential services. However, those residing within 0–50 km of the frontline bears the greatest burden (Figure 2). More than 90% of all conflict events recorded in 2025 occurred within this zone, and according to UN Human Rights Monitoring Mission figures, 67% of civilian casualties also occurred near the frontline.

Civilian movement within 50 km of the frontline is extremely dangerous and often restricted due to explosive ordnance contamination, yet some people continue to return to the frontline. Health facilities operate with minimal staff and limited supplies, while education services are severely disrupted, forcing children to rely almost entirely on remote learning. Recurrent disruptions in frontline areas affect food availability and access to markets.

World Bank notes that the share of adults unable to work is substantially higher in frontline communities where conflict has been most intense. Older people and persons with disabilities, who constitute a large proportion of those remaining in frontline, are particularly isolated and heavily dependent on humanitarian assistance. Despite these challenges, a significant number of people continue to return to frontline areas. According to IOM, returns to areas within 50 km of the frontline consistently accounted for approximately 40% of all returns in 2025. Many returnees complain of high cost of living in displaced areas as well as stronger attachment to their home in the frontline.

Figure 2: Heat Map of Stikes in 2025



Recognizing the concentration of needs in frontline, WFP identifies the 0–50 km zone as a strategic priority. The Humanitarian Need and Response Plan (HNRP) in Ukraine also noted that the frontline is the centre of Ukraine's humanitarian crisis, with a disproportionately high share of people facing compounded vulnerabilities requiring urgent and sustained assistance[6].

The HNRP reports that more than 70% of people living within 50 km of the frontline are in need of humanitarian assistance. WFP has also designated the 0–50 km zone from the frontline as a strategic priority for humanitarian food assistance, given the concentration of conflict-related disruptions and the scale of unmet needs.

This report provides an overall picture of the food security situation across Ukraine, but places particular emphasis on households living within 50 km of the frontline. This focus aligns with WFP's operational priorities and the broader inter-agency strategy to target support where the crisis is most intense. The specific objective is to estimate the food insecurity prevalence in the frontline and how it manifests at the household level; to explore the key drivers of food insecurity in the frontline; and explain the role and impact of WFP food assistance in mitigating vulnerabilities in the frontline.

HOUSEHOLD PROFILE

The analysis presented in this report draws on two complementary data sources: the Multisectoral Needs Assessment (MSNA) led by REACH (2025) and supported by WFP, and the Frontline Food Security Assessment (FFSA) conducted by WFP (2025). The MSNA was implemented in July–August 2025 using a computer-assisted telephone interviewing (CATI) methodology. The survey covers the country and includes a total sample of 2,813 households. The FFSA was conducted by WFP in August–September 2025, also using a CATI and implemented by Kyiv International Institute of Sociology (KIIS), which is the same provider that implemented MSNA. The WFP assessment was able to identify households receiving WFP assistance at the time of the survey or prior to it covering many areas within 30km of the frontline.

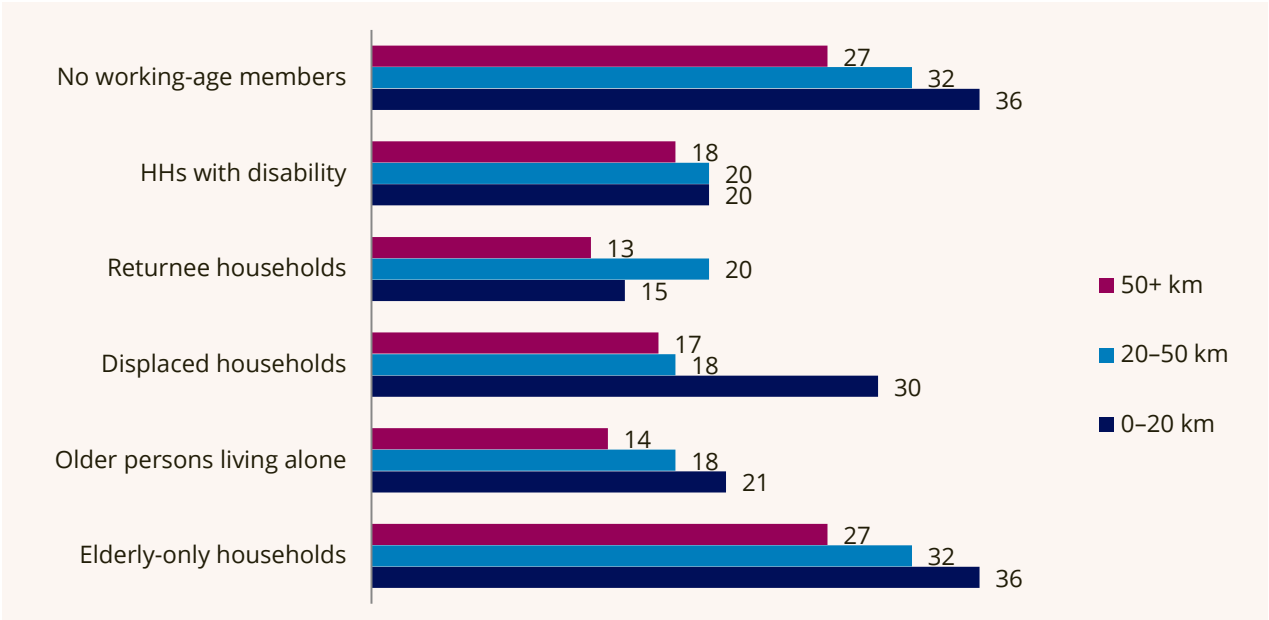
For the purposes of this analysis, data from the two assessments were harmonized and merged by aligning identical variables across both datasets. The combined dataset was then reweighted to ensure consistency and comparability between assisted and non-assisted populations, resulting in a final analytical sample of 4,886 households. The merged dataset includes key variables used to construct food security indicators, as well as detailed information on household characteristics, economic conditions, security perceptions, market access, household needs and receipt of humanitarian assistance. This harmonized dataset enables a rigorous assessment of food insecurity outcomes and the contribution of WFP assistance across frontline settings[7].

The household profile show that households living within 50 km of the frontline are older, poorer, more dependent, and more reliant on assistance than those living further away. The harmonized data show a markedly different demographic and socio-economic profile between frontline household and those residing further away (Figure 3). Frontline areas are characterized by higher concentrations of vulnerable household types, particularly among populations with reduced labour capacity, greater dependency ratios, and heavier reliance on external support.

Displacement and return dynamics are more pronounced close to the frontline with many returnees found in the frontline. While displaced households remain the majority across all zones, they account for only 18–30% of households in the 0–50 km zone, compared to 17% beyond 50 km. Frontline areas also host a substantially higher share of returnee households, especially in the 20–50 km zone, where returnees represent 20% of households, compared to 13% in areas further from the frontline.

Frontline areas have a higher share of elderly households including those living alone and a high presence of persons with disability. The proportion of elderly-only households rises to 32–36% in the 0–50 km zone, compared to 27% beyond 50 km, while older persons living alone are significantly more common close to the frontline (21% within 20 km versus 14% beyond 50 km). At the same time, frontline areas have fewer non-elderly households and higher shares of households without any working-age members. While there is no significant difference between the share of households with person with disability across the frontline zone, it is important to stress that at least 1 in 5 households in the frontline has a member with registered disability.

Figure 3: Socio Economic Profile of Frontline Households



FOOD INSECURITY PREVALENCE

Food insecurity is concentrated in frontline areas and rising: this chapter reports the number of people affected, where they are located, and who among them faces the most acute food need.

People in need of food assistance

According to the HNRP[8], approximately 2 million people in Ukraine are identified as being in need of food and livelihood assistance, representing 32% of the population included in the analysis. Among those identified as food insecure under the HNRP, approximately 1.83 million people are moderately food insecure, while about 180,000 people are severely food insecure (Table 1). This estimate was calculated by the Food Security and Livelihoods Cluster using the Consolidated Approach for Reporting Indicators of Food Security (CARI)[9].

More than 50% of the population in need of food assistance under the HNRP, around 1.2 million people, live within 0–50 km of the frontline. Of this group, approximately 790,000 people reside in government-controlled areas (GCA), while about 468,000 live in occupied territories (OT). Among those living in government-controlled areas, roughly 110,000 people are in severe need of food assistance. The HNRP further estimates that food insecurity will affect 126,000 newly displaced evacuees, 377,000 people affected by strikes, and more than 1.4 million displaced persons nationwide, including those living within the frontline.

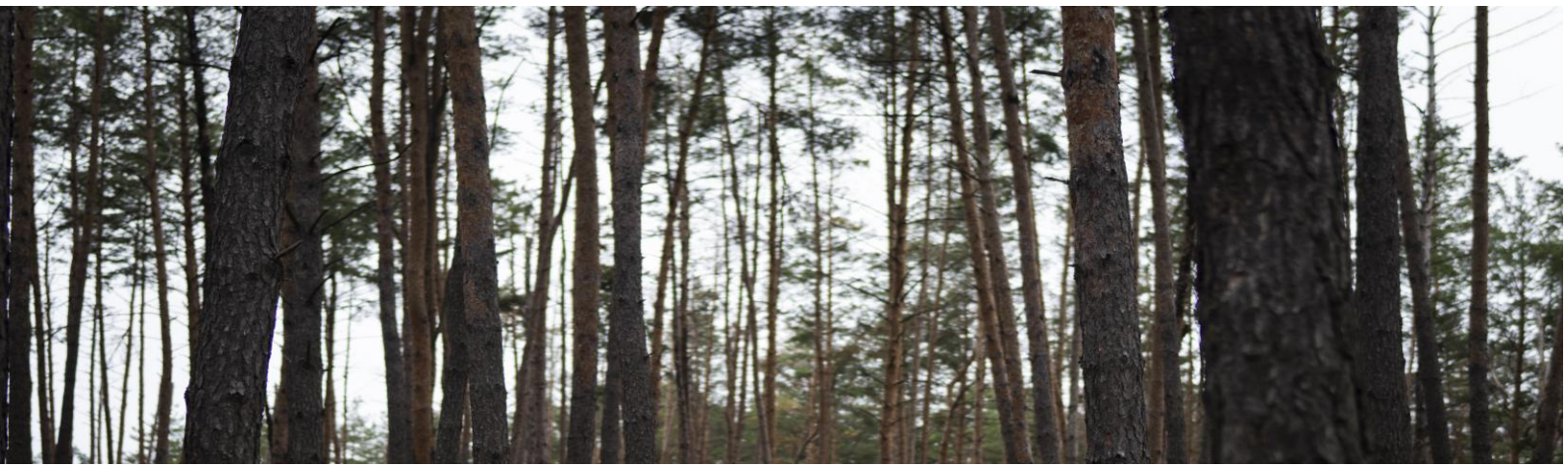


Table 1: Number of People in Needs of Food Assistance

Strategic Priority (SP) Group	HNRP PIN (Total)	Moderate FI	Severe FI
SP1 — Frontline 0–50 km (GCA)	790,121	680,121	110,000
SP1 — Frontline 0–50 km (OT)	468,285	433,164	35,121
SP2 — Evacuees	126,060	120,513	5,547
SP3 — Strikes affected	377,501	360,891	16,610
SP4 — Vulnerable IDPs	241,041	232,122	8,919
OVERALL PIN	2,003,008	1,826,811	176,197

The HNRP estimate of People in Need (PIN) does not represent the total food-insecure population across Ukraine. In 2025, Ukraine became the first country to fully operationalize the humanitarian reset, which prioritized urgent life-saving actions and simplified coordination structures. This shift entailed moving from cluster-level strategies to issue-based, multisectoral strategic priorities. Under this new approach, the Ukraine Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) reframed the HNRP around four issue-based strategic priorities: SP1: Supporting the most vulnerable populations living near the frontline; SP2: Supporting evacuees; SP3: Emergency response following strikes; and SP4: Humanitarian assistance to the most vulnerable internally displaced persons (IDPs), including those residing in collective centres. Furthermore, the PIN was not calculated based on the total population within these groups, but rather on a subset identified as "affected population." Consequently, the 2026 HNRP is based on issue-based boundary setting (Figure 1), which resulted in a significant reduction in the number of people identified as in need. Specifically, the analysis considered only 17% of Ukraine's total population, thereby substantially narrowing the overall scope of needs assessment.

Nevertheless, a nationwide analysis indicates that the number of people in need of food assistance increased significantly in 2025 compared to 2024, with an additional 1.5 million people, putting the number of food insecure people across Ukraine to be 6.5 million. When the restrictive boundaries applied under the HNRP are relaxed, the PIN estimate across Ukraine is substantially higher. In short, the 2 million HNRP figure and the 6.5 million nationwide figures are not contradictory: the former reflects who qualifies under the reset's issue-based boundaries, while the latter reflects the total population experiencing food insecurity by standard CARI thresholds. Both figures are methodologically valid and serve different purposes. In 2025, extending beyond frontline areas and other HNRP priority groups, the 6.5 million figure represents a 30% increase compared to the 5 million PIN estimated across Ukraine in 2024.

Figure 4: HNRP and National PIN Methodology

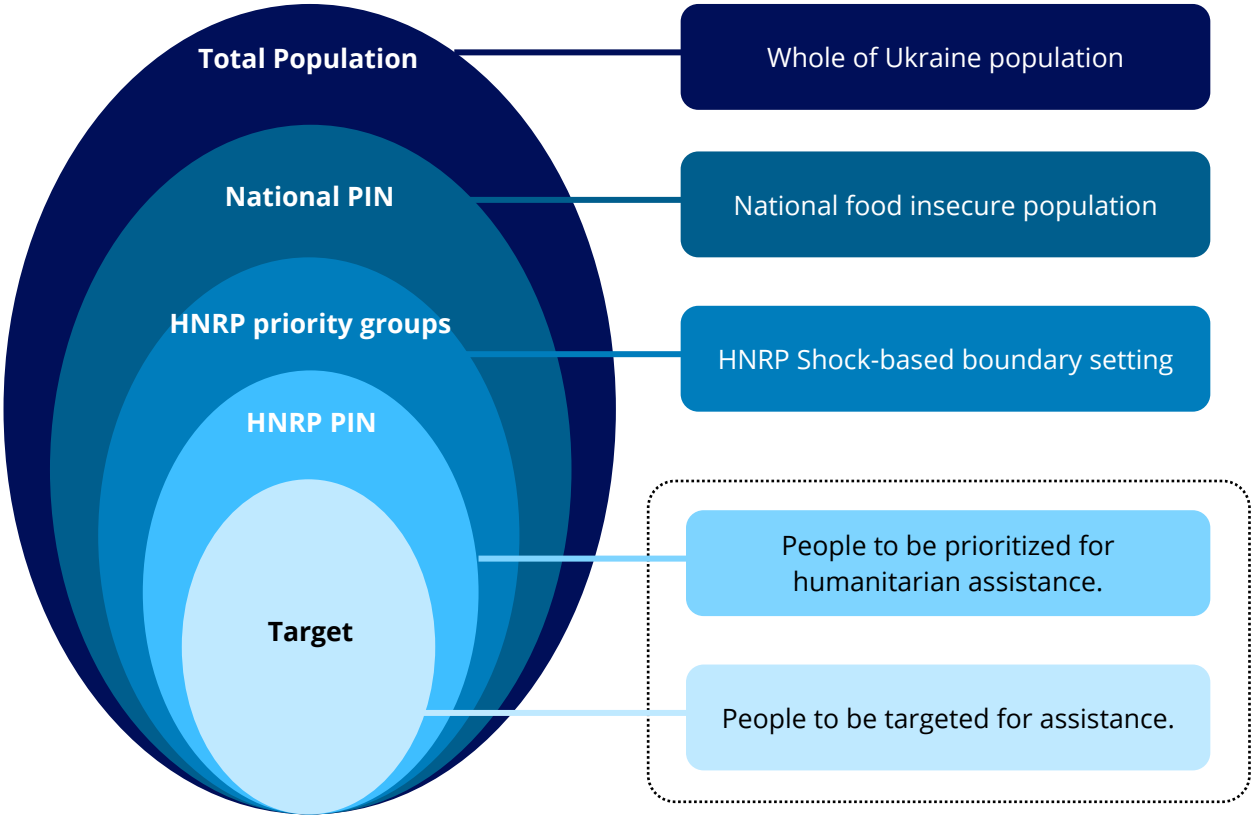
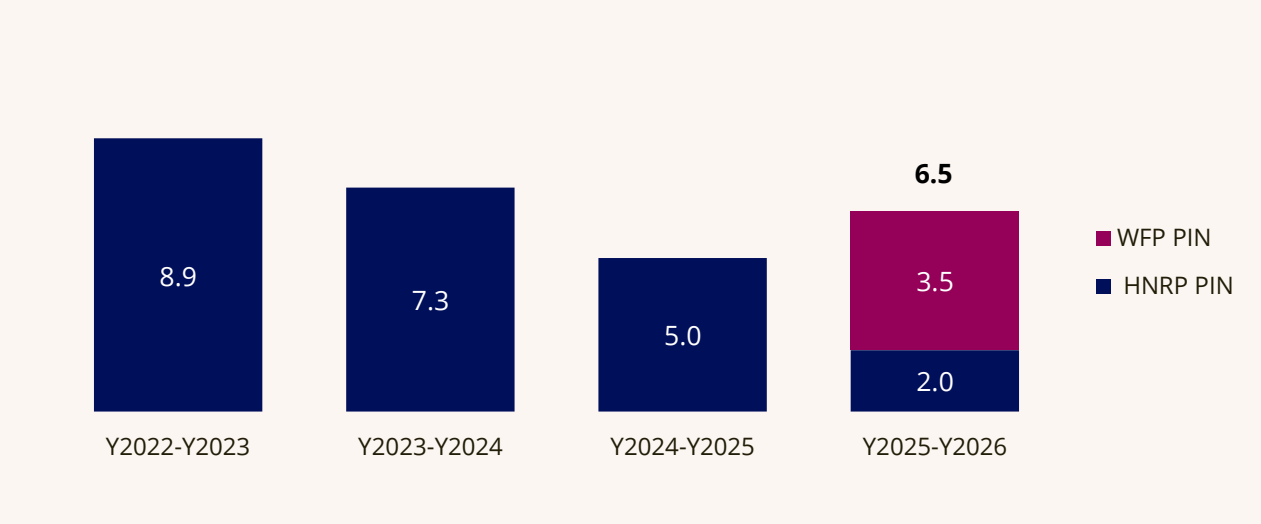


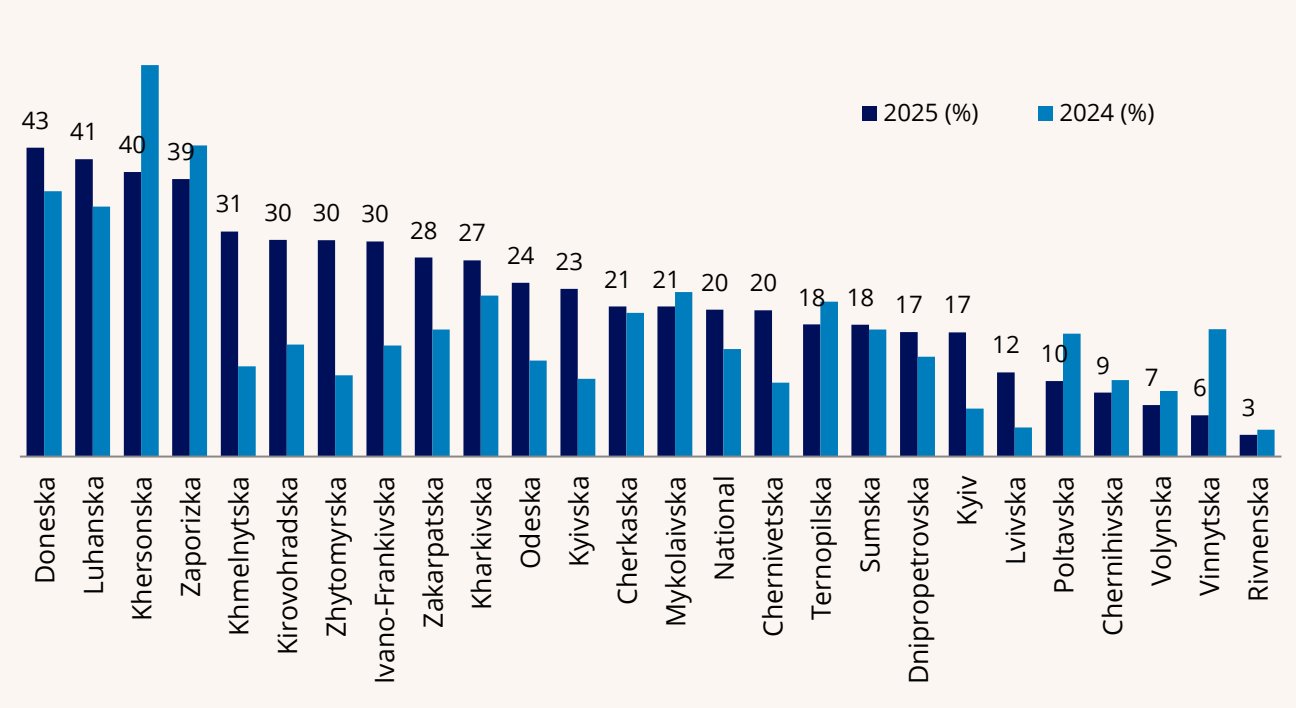
Figure 5: Number of People in Need of Food Assistance



At oblast level, the highest PIN (based on the whole of Ukraine PIN) is concentrated in conflict-affected eastern and southern oblasts, particularly Donetska (43%), Luhanska (41%, estimated), Khersonska (40%), and Zaporizka (39%). Compared to 2024, the largest increases are observed in several

central and western oblasts, notably Khmelnytska, Zhytomyrska, Ivano-Frankivska, Kyivska, and Odeska, which continue to host many more IDPs, indicating a widening geographic spread of food insecurity beyond frontline areas (Figure 6). In contrast, the lowest prevalence is recorded in Rivnenska (3%), Vinnytska (6%), and Volynska (7%).

Figure 6: Prevalence of People in Need of Food by Year



Characteristics of food insecure households

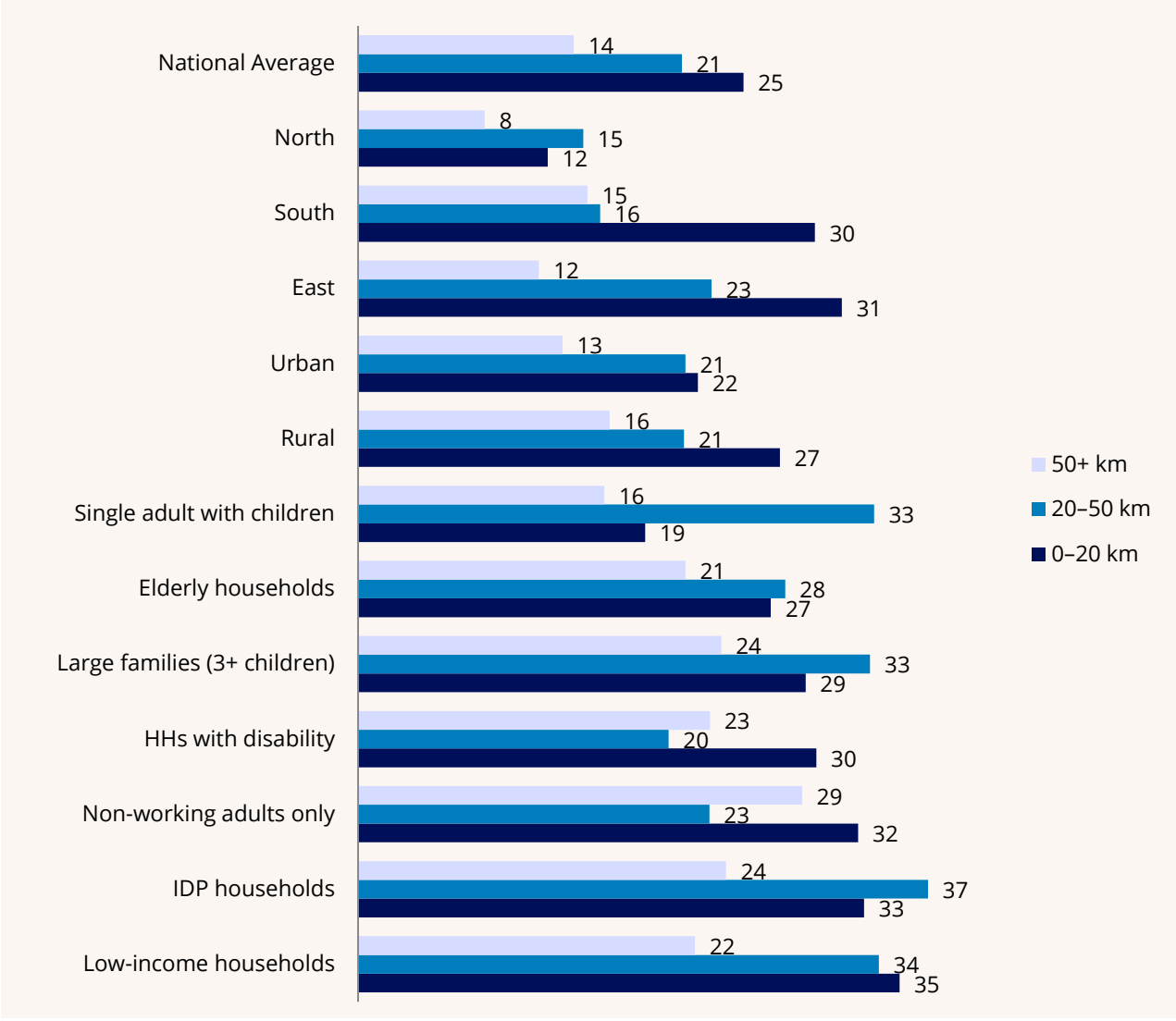
Households living at the frontlines are generally more likely to be food insecure than households living away from the frontlines. About 25% of households within 20km of the frontline are food insecure (Figure 7). This is more prevalence in the 20km zone in eastern and southern region where more than 30% of the households are food insecure. In areas 20-50km from the frontline, the share of households that are food insecure decreases slightly to 21%, while for households living in the 50+km zone, 14% are food insecure.

Rural households tend to experience higher levels of food insecurity than urban households, although the magnitude of this gap varies by proximity to the frontline. Within the 0–20 km zone, 27% of rural households are food insecure compared to 22% of urban households. In the 20–50 km zone, food insecurity levels are nearly identical between rural and urban households (both around 21%). Beyond 50 km from the frontline, the rural–urban gap re-emerges, with 16% of rural households classified as food insecure compared to 13% of urban households.

The higher share of food insecurity within frontline areas particularly among rural residents reflects both the

direct effects of conflict and the concentration of vulnerable populations in these locations. As demonstrated in Chapter 4, households living within 50 km of the frontline tend to be older, poorer, more dependent, and more reliant on assistance than those living further away, all of which are key drivers of food insecurity. Within the 0–20 km zone, low-income households, IDP households, households with only non-working working-age members, households with registered disabilities, and large families exhibit the highest levels of food insecurity. In the 20–50 km zone, in addition to these groups, elderly households and single-adult households with children emerge as particularly food insecure. Beyond 50 km from the frontline, food insecurity remains most pronounced among households with registered disabilities, non-working working age members, and other structurally vulnerable household types, although overall prevalence is lower than in frontline-adjacent areas.

Figure 7: Food Insecurity Prevalence by Groups



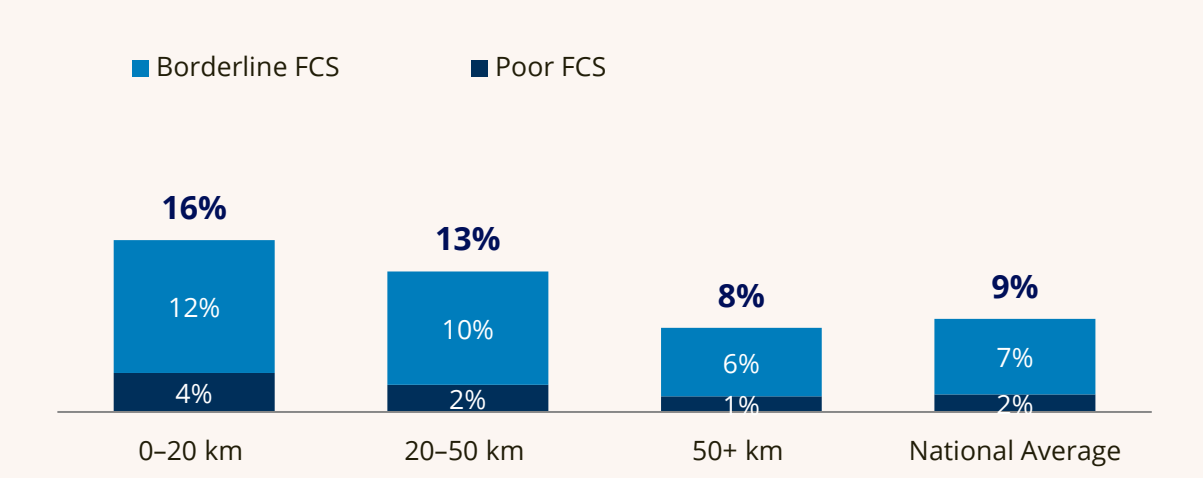
DIMENSIONS OF FOOD INSECURITY

This chapter examines food insecurity depth and nature across four dimensions, showing that frontline households suffer worse outcomes on every indicator and that severity intensifies sharply within 20 km of the frontline.

Household food consumption

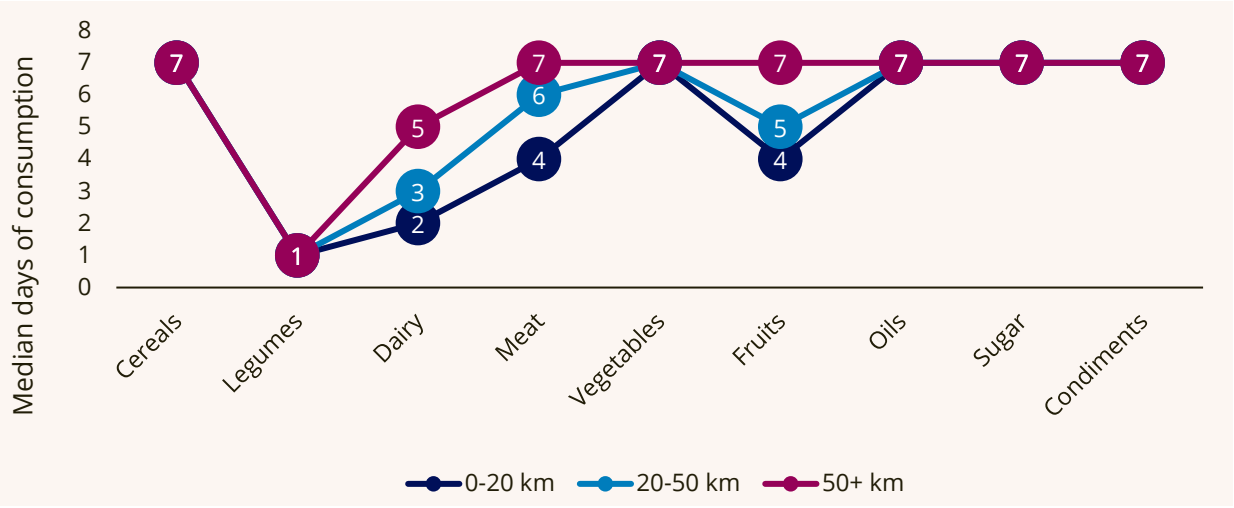
Inadequate food consumption[10] remains a concern in the frontline; notably, affecting 16% of households living within 20 km of the front line. Nationwide, about 9% of all surveyed households were found to have inadequate food consumption, defined as either poor (2%) or borderline (7%). The share of those with poor or borderline scores increased significantly closer to the front lines (Figure 8): 16% within the 0–20 km zone and 12% within the 20–50 km zone, compared to 8% beyond the 50 km mark. In frontline oblasts such as Donetska, Khersonska, and Zaporizka, the share of households with insufficient food consumption is more than double the whole of Ukraine average (22%, 21%, and 19% respectively, compared to 9%).

Figure 8: Prevalence of Inadequate Food Consumption



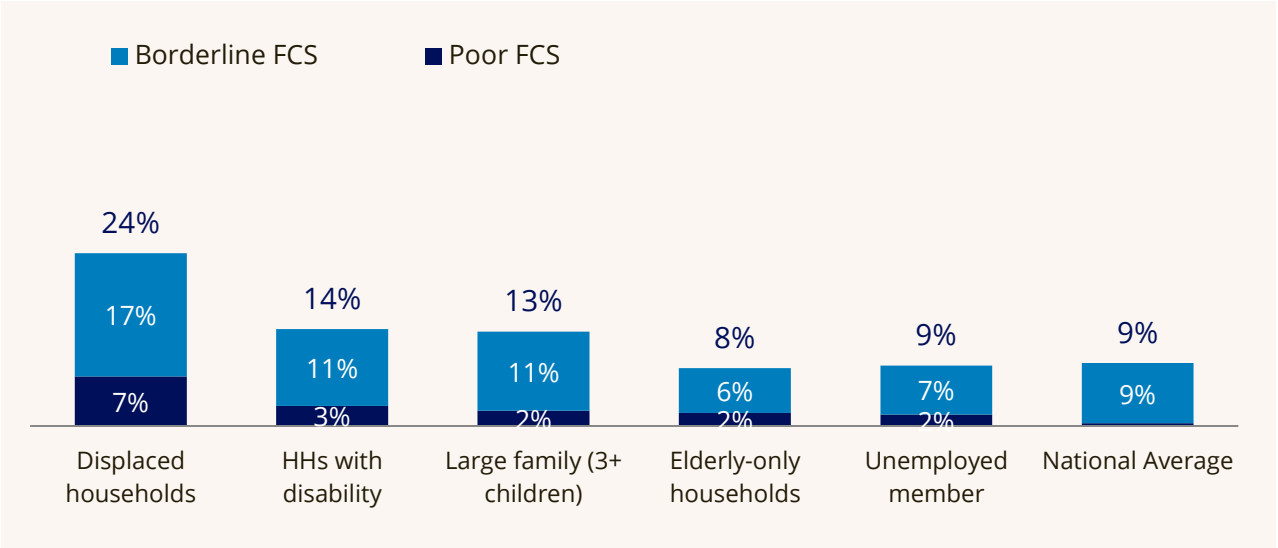
Proximity to frontline is associated with reduced dietary diversity and lower intake of nutrient-rich foods. While staple goods including cereals, vegetables, oils, and sugar remain consistently consumed seven days a week across all zones, the intake of perishable proteins and fruits drops sharply as one approach the front line. For households within the 0–20 km zone, meat and fruit consumption both fall to a median of only four days per week, while dairy intake reaches a critical low of just two days per week. This stands in stark contrast to areas beyond 50 km, where meat and fruits are consumed daily and dairy is consumed five days a week. Notably, pulses and legumes remain the least consumed food group nationwide at just one day per week, a trend likely attributable to long-standing cultural dietary preferences rather than conflict-related supply disruptions. These results indicate that frontline populations are increasingly forced to adopt "coping diets," prioritizing shelf-stable staples over fresh produce and animal proteins due to a combination of market fragmentation, high transport costs, and the collapse of cold-chain infrastructure.

Figure 9: Median Food Consumption by Food Types



Households with persons with disabilities, displaced households, and those with at least one unemployed adult often report significantly lower food consumption score than the national average (Figure 10). Due to reduced earning potential and limited access to stable markets, these households are more likely to rely on less nutritious, calorie-dense foods, resulting in borderline or poor food consumption levels that jeopardize their long-term health and nutritional well-being.

Figure 10: Food Consumption Score by Groups



Reduced coping strategies

Adoption of consumption based coping strategies is another dimension of food insecurity[11]. Nearly four in ten households had to rely on food-related coping strategies in the week before the survey. This share increases closer to the frontline, where 50% of households within 20 km resorted to at least one coping mechanism, compared with 38% among households located more than 50 km away (Figure 11). Regarding the intensity of coping, 16% of households adopted a high level of food-based coping strategies. This proportion is considerably higher in frontline areas (0–50 km), particularly in Donetska (32%), Khersonska (28%), and Zaporizka (26%) oblasts. Displaced households, households composed only of older persons, and households with a person with a disability more frequently reported high levels of coping compared with the national average (25%, 25%, and 36% respectively).

Figure 12: Food Coping Strategies by Location

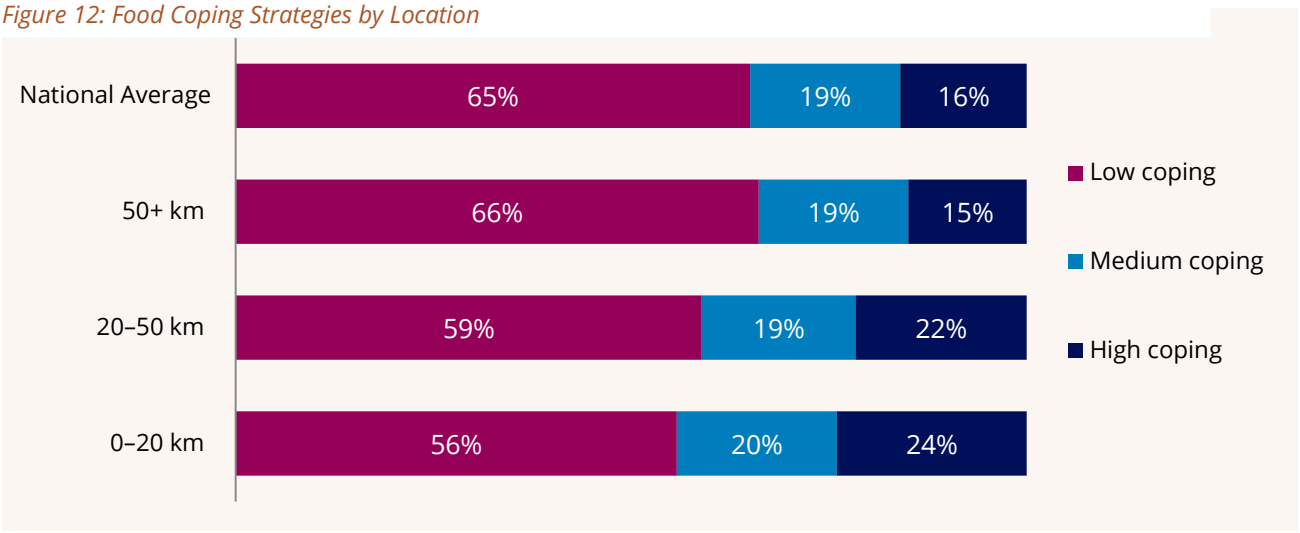
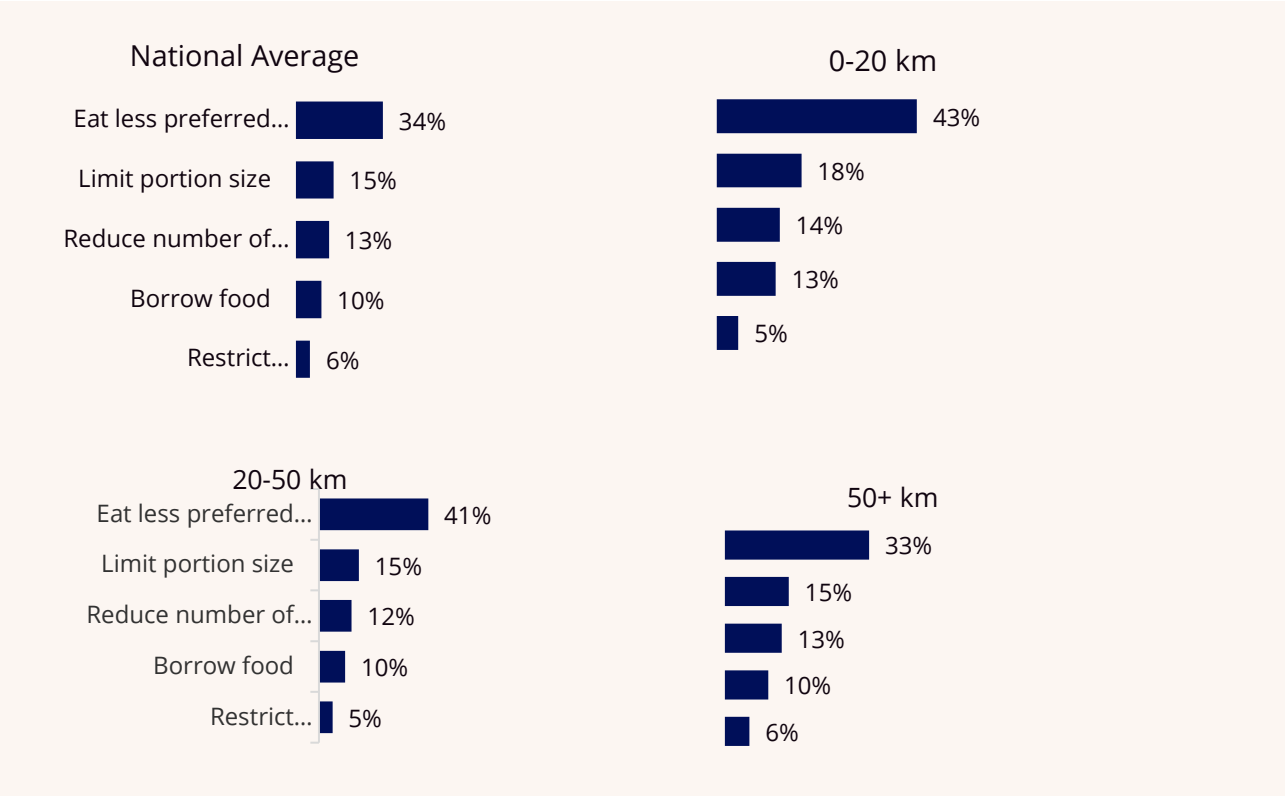


Figure 11: Prevalence of Adoption of Coping Strategy



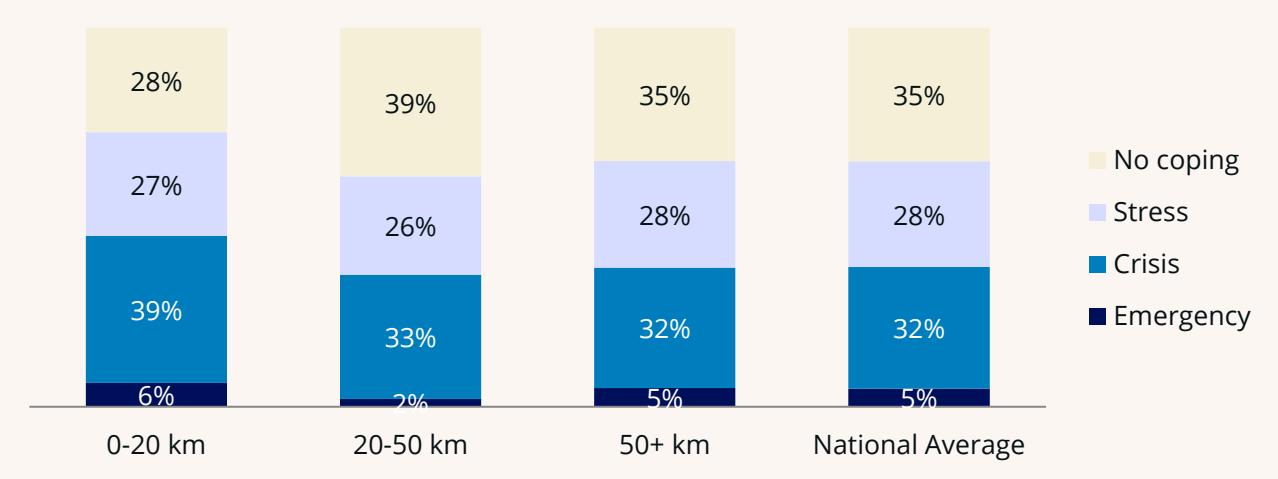
The top consumption coping adopted by households is shifting to less preferred and cheaper foods. This pattern reflects short-term adjustments households make when faced with constrained food access or affordability. According to the data, 34% of surveyed households nationally reported switching to cheaper foods at least once in the previous week, but this share increases markedly to 43% in the 0–20 km zone and 41% in the 20–50 km area, compared with 33% among households living more than 50 km away (Figure 12). Other coping strategies show similar gradients: limiting portion sizes is reported by 18% of households within 0–20 km versus 15% in the 50+ km zone;

reducing the number of meals by 14% versus 13%; and borrowing food by 13% versus 10%. Restricting adult consumption in favour of children remains less widespread overall, at 5–6% across distance categories but still indicates stress on household food consumption.

Livelihood coping strategies

Beyond consumption coping, almost three in four households living within 20km of the frontline continue to adopt unfavourable livelihood coping strategies to meet their essential needs[12]. Around 65% of surveyed households reported using at least one unfavourable livelihood coping strategy, but this rises to 72% among households living in the 0–20 km zone. Crisis level coping strategies continue to be the most reported (32%), occurring predominantly through reductions in health-related expenditures. Stress strategies are used by 28% of households, typically spending savings, borrowing money, or seeking additional income sources (Figure 13). Emergency strategies, which represent the most severe form of livelihood erosion, were reported by 5% of households nationally. In frontline areas within 20 km, reliance on crisis strategies is notably higher than the national average (39% versus 32%).

Figure 13: Prevalence of Adoption of Livelihood Coping



Among households closest to the frontline, the most frequently used livelihood coping strategies are spending savings and reducing health-care expenses. These households are adopting these strategies due to a lack of resources to meet essential needs including due to food shortages and financial difficulties. Although a slightly smaller share of households in the 0–20 km zone reported spending savings in the past 30 days compared with the overall average (37% versus 41%), a greater proportion indicated they had already exhausted their savings and therefore could not continue to rely on this strategy (8% versus 6%) (Table 2). Households near

the frontline are also somewhat more likely to seek additional income sources, including high-risk, exploitative, or degrading forms of work, than households in 50+. In addition, they more often reported sending one or more household members elsewhere due to a lack of food or money to buy it.

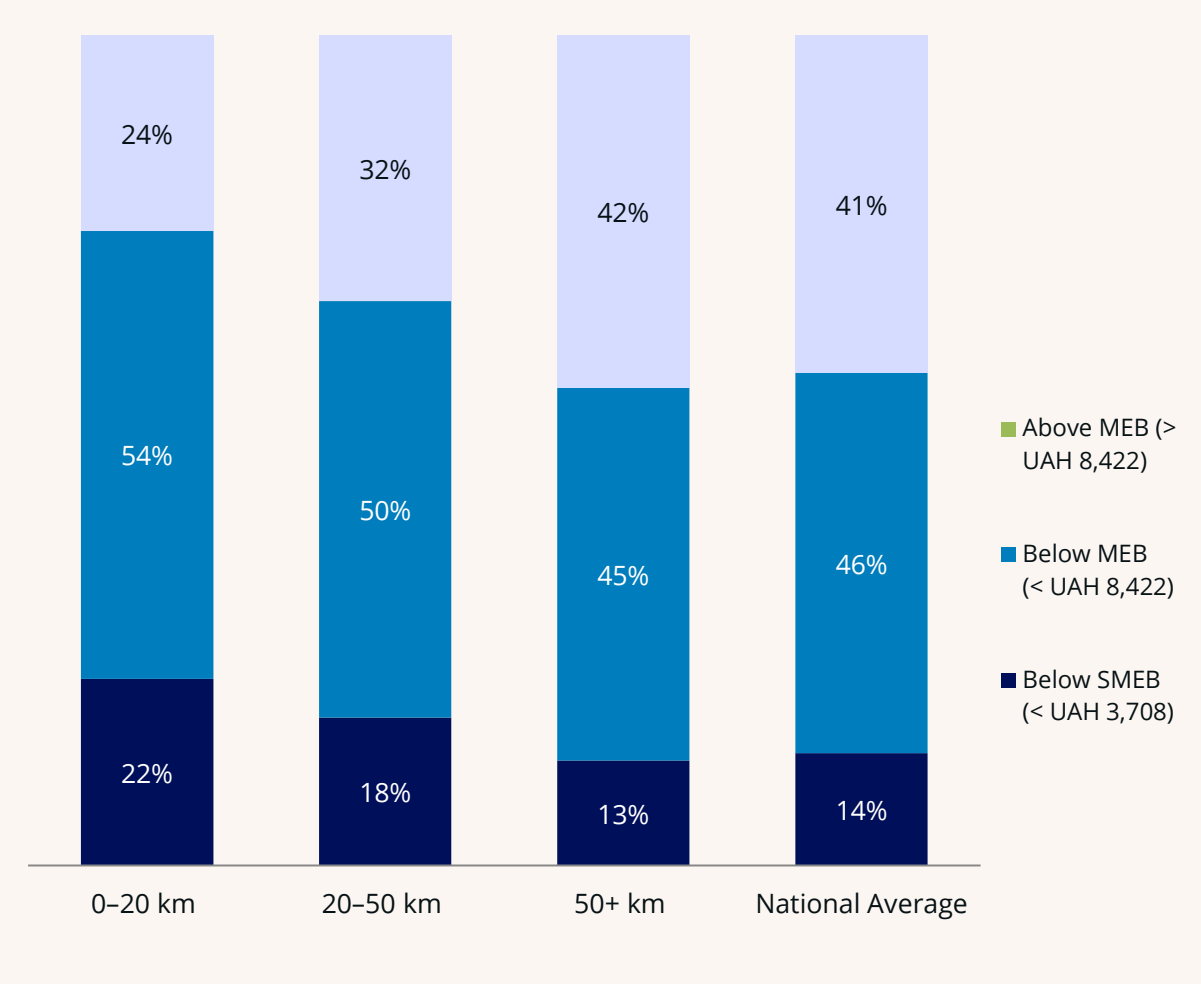
Table 2: Types of Livelihoods Coping by Location

Strategy	0–20 km	20–50 km	50+ km	National Average
STRESS COPING				
Spend savings	37%	32%	42%	41%
Borrow money for food	21%	28%	0%	25%
Seek additional income	21%	18%	18%	18%
Sell household assets/goods	5%	4%	4%	4%
CRISIS COPING				
Reduce health expenditure	37%	31%	32%	32%
Reduce education expenditure	3%	5%	0%	4%
Move to cheaper dwelling	3%	4%	0%	4%
Sell productive assets	2%	2%	2%	2%
Send member elsewhere	4%	1%	1%	1%
EMERGENCY COPING				
High-risk/exploitative work	4%	1%	2%	2%
Ask strangers for money/food	1%	1%	1%	1%
Sell house or land	1%	0%	0.2%	0.25

Economic capacity to meet needs

In terms of capacity, more than half of frontline households are unable to meet their essential needs without humanitarian assistance. This is measured through the Economic Capacity to Meet Essential Needs (ECMEN) indicator, which compares a household's actual level of essential consumption with expenditure thresholds[13]. Overall, 59% of households have monthly per-capita expenditures below the MEB, including 14% below the SMEB (Figure 14). The situation deteriorates sharply closer to active conflict areas: 74% of households within 20 km of the frontline fall below the MEB threshold, a statistically significantly higher share than among households living more than 50 km away (58%). This pattern is particularly pronounced in oblasts heavily affected by hostilities, including Khersonska, Donetska, Sumska, and Kharkivska, where over 73% of households lack the economic capacity to meet their essential needs.

Figure 14: Prevalence of Low Economic Capacity by Location

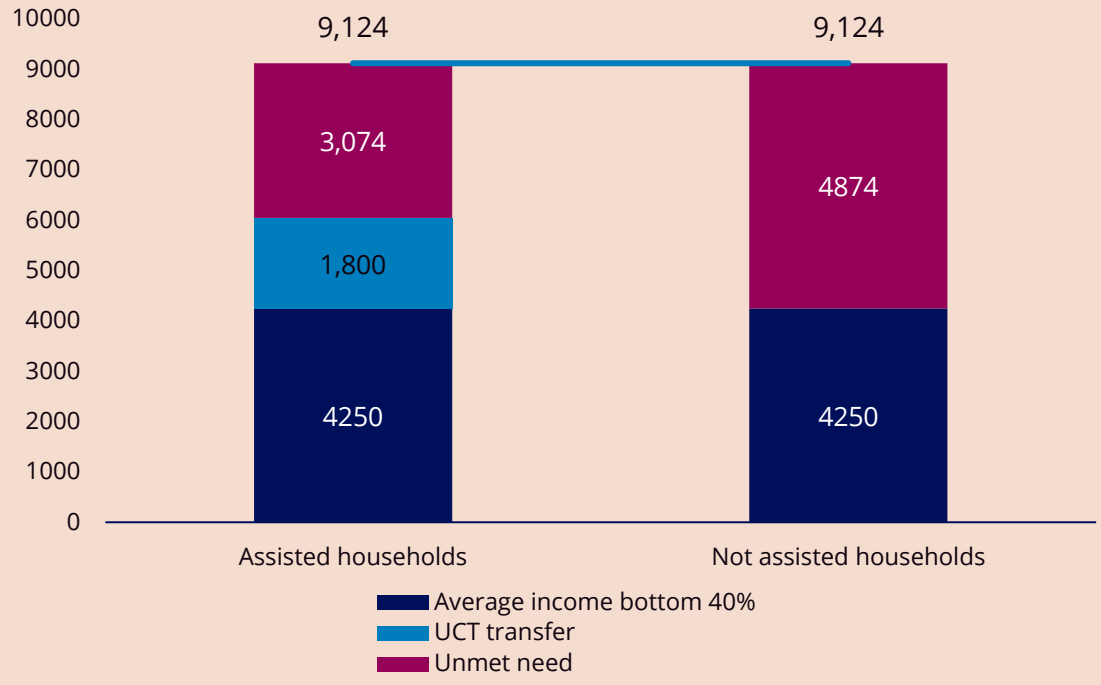


Unified Cash Transfer for Frontline Response

In 2025, humanitarian actors under the Cash Working Group launched the Unified Cash Transfer in Ukraine. The Unified Cash Transfer for people living in frontline areas aims to address the specific humanitarian pressures associated with frontline living. The objective is to provide a coherent, needs-based, and harmonized cash response that supports affected households in managing the financial impacts of frontline conditions and reduces reliance on negative coping strategies, while ensuring complementarity with national social protection systems. The methodology is based on the Government Actual Subsistence Minimum (ASM), which is used as the Minimum Expenditure Basket (MEB) and was set at UAH 8,422 per person per month as of June 2025. Recognizing the higher cost of living in frontline areas, estimated at +8.33%, an adjusted MEB of UAH 9,124 per person per month was applied.

When compared to the average monthly income of the bottom 40 percent most vulnerable households living in frontline areas, estimated at UAH 4,250 per person, a transfer value of UAH 1,800 per person per month was calculated as the unified transfer value. The assistance is designed to be provided over a period of six months. Participating organizations may deliver assistance either as a lump sum of UAH 10,800 or through monthly instalments of UAH 1,800 per person. Based on operational experience and strategic considerations, WFP will prioritize monthly distributions. The monthly transfer value of UAH 1,800 enables assisted households to meet approximately 66 percent of their MEB requirements. The distribution of assistance is expected to commence in the second half of 2026.

Figure 15:Unified Transfer Value and Gap



OVERLAPPING VULNERABILITIES

Food insecurity in frontline areas does not arise from a single cause. This chapter examines the structural drivers that produce it, showing how conflict exposure, livelihood collapse, reduced agricultural production, and poor market functionality reinforce each other, making self-recovery without external assistance extremely difficult.

Insecurity

Security conditions overlap considerably with food insecurity with households reported security issues more likely to be food insecure. Households living more than 50 km from frontline where food insecurity is more prevalent reported experiencing around four conflict-related incidences per month, roughly one per week, compared with more than 10 monthly incidences in the 20–50 km zone. In areas within 20 km of the frontline, monthly conflict incidences reached up to 50, meaning households faced armed violence nearly every day. Within 0–5 km of the frontline or the international border, incidence intensified reaching approximately 70 incidences per month, or 2-3 incidences per day[14]. Statistically modelling show a significant correlation between number of incidence and prevalence of food insecurity. High security incidences create an operational environment where humanitarian access becomes extremely limited or, at times, entirely impossible.

Household living in frontline equally experience widespread damage to housing and essential infrastructure. Data show that households living close to the frontline are almost ten times more likely to have their homes damaged by the war than non-frontline households. While only 6% of households located more than 50 km from the frontline reported damaged housing, this share rises to 38% in the 20–50 km zone and 47% within 0–20 km. Households with damaged housing are also slightly more likely to be food insecure, reflecting the compounding nature of shocks. Financial constraints remain the main barrier to repair: although around 70% of households with war-related damage report having repaired their homes, the likelihood of repair declines sharply with proximity to the

frontline, from 74% beyond 50 km, to 68% in the 20–50 km zone, and just 53% within 0–20 km. The most common reason for not repairing damage is inability to afford the cost (48%), followed by security concerns that prevent maintenance (36%).

Beyond physical destruction, frontline households face recurring disruptions to essential services. Nearly one-third (30%) of surveyed households overall reported electricity cuts or low voltage, but this share increases to 57% in areas within 20 km of the frontline, where 6% reported having no electricity at all. As of summer 2025, only 28% of households had access to any backup power source, leaving many unable to cope with prolonged outages. Water access challenges follow a similar pattern: while 92% of surveyed households nationally reported having sufficient drinking water, this falls to 85% among households in the 0–20 km zone.

Limited livelihoods

Livelihood vulnerability continues to rise as unemployment, low income and humanitarian dependency increases as households get closer to the frontline. Employment patterns reveal that households in the 0–20 km zone face the greatest labour constraints: 36% of households there have no working-age members, compared with 32% in the 20–50 km band and 27% in areas beyond 50 km. Households composed only of working-age earners are also less common close to the frontline (33%) than in the 20–50 km (40%) and 50+ km (43%) zones, reflecting reduced labour capacity and higher dependency ratios in frontline areas.

Households where every adult aged 18–60 without disability or chronic illness is not engaged in any form of employment is distributed relatively evenly across distance zones, with around 12% of households in the 0–20 km area falling into this category. Despite this even distribution, the barriers they face in accessing employment differ markedly depending on proximity to the frontline. The most commonly reported constraints during job search include unsatisfactory salaries or working conditions (37%), a lack of available opportunities (25%), and experiences of discrimination (17%). While low wages and discrimination appear more frequently in areas located beyond 20 km from the frontline, the lack of livelihood opportunities becomes particularly pressing close to frontline: 38% of households in the 0–20 km zone identify the absence of job opportunities as the main barrier, compared with 25% elsewhere.

Figure 16: Livelihood Opportunities and Aid Dependency

Income sources follow a similar pattern of vulnerability, with households closer to the frontline far more dependent on external support and far less able to rely on their own economic activity. Almost half of households living within 0–50 km of the frontline depends solely on social benefits, humanitarian assistance, or family support. This reliance intensifies in the

areas closest to active hostilities: in the 0–20 km zone, only 22% of households rely exclusively on income from economic activities, compared with 27% in the 20–50 km band and 31% beyond 50 km. In practical terms, this means that nearly 78% of households in the 0–20 km zone and 73% of those in the 20–50 km zone receives some form of external assistance, from the government, humanitarian organisations, or social transfers, to meet their basic needs. Exclusive dependence on social benefits or aid is highest in the 0–20 km area (48%), decreases in the 20–50 km zone (37%), and reaches its lowest level in 50+ areas (28%). At the same time, households with mixed income sources, which generally provide more stable and diversified livelihoods, are least common near the frontline (30% in 0–20 km, compared with 35% in 20–50 km and 41% in 50+ km).

Nearly half of households in the 0–20 km zone (49%) has - income from own source below UAH 4,250[15]. In contrast, the share of low-income households in other areas is 30%. At higher income thresholds, the disparity becomes more pronounced: only 17% of households within 20 km earns more than 9,500 UAH per capita, compared with 30% in the 20–50 km band and 38% in the 50+ km zone. These disparities are reflected in income composition: frontline households rely far more heavily on social benefits, humanitarian assistance, and family support, while households outside the frontline are more likely to depend primarily on income from economic activities.

Engaging in economic activity and earning income clearly reduce the likelihood of food insecurity across all frontline zones. Households that rely solely on income from economic activity have some of the lowest food insecurity rates (8% overall; 15% in 0–20 km), while those depending only on social benefits or aid face much higher levels (27% overall; 33% in frontline areas). Income level shows a similar pattern: households with very low income below 4,250 UAH have food insecurity rates of 35% in the 0–20 km zone, compared with just 7% among households earning more than 9,500 UAH. Food insecurity is lowest among households where all working-age members are employed (9% nationally; 16% in 0–20 km) and highest among households where working-age adults are not working (29–32%). Overall, having income from work either alone or combined with transfers offers clear protection against food insecurity, especially in frontline areas.

The collapse of employment and income in frontline areas does not occur in isolation: it directly undermines households' capacity to produce their own food and to access functioning markets, creating a self-reinforcing cycle of deprivation. The following two subsections examine how reduced agricultural production and disrupted market access compound the income constraints documented above.

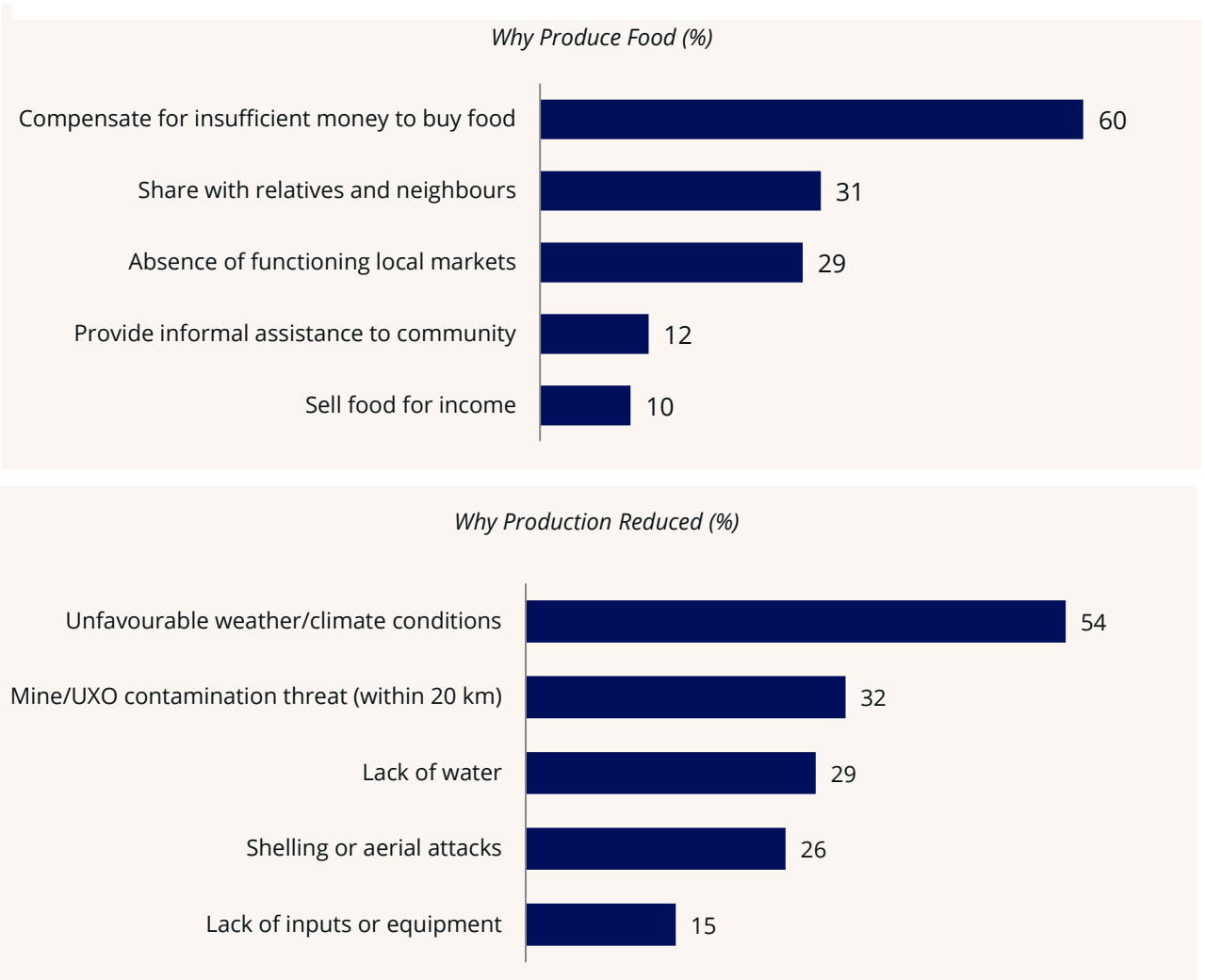
Reduced home food production

Among the economic activities households engage in, food production plays an important role in supporting household food consumption, especially in frontline areas, yet production level continues to decrease due to the war. Among households living within 30 km of the frontline, nearly half (46%) produce some food for their own use, and this proportion increases to almost 60% among households within 20 km of the frontline. In general, most agricultural households produce fruits and vegetables (39%), cereals, pulses and tubers (33%), or animal proteins (18%). By engaging in small-scale agricultural production, frontline households are able to ease the financial constraints that limit their ability to purchase food or cope with supply shortages. The majority of households producing food for self-consumption (60%) do so to compensate for insufficient money to buy food, while 29% cite the absence of functioning local markets. Relatively few households (10%) produce food for sale. Many households engaged in agriculture also support others in their communities: 31% share food with relatives and

neighbours, and 12% provide informal food assistance to community members in need.

The ongoing insecurity and unfavourable weather conditions have forced many to reduce or stop production altogether, disrupting not only their own food access but also the informal support networks they sustain. Among households practicing agricultural activities, 56% reduced their production in 2025 compared to 2024, and 6% stopped entirely. The main reasons for reducing or stopping production were unfavourable weather or climate conditions (54%), lack of water (29%), and shelling or aerial attacks (26%). Within 20 km from the frontline, a third of household (32%) has heard or saw mine/UXO contamination threat. Most of those households (80%) claim that the mine/uxo threat prevents people in their settlement from accessing land or other resources to earn living.

Figure 17: Agriculture Activities in Frontline



Limited market functionality

While markets continue to function in the country despite the conflict, many households living closest to the frontline continue to experience significant disruption in market access. About 20% of households within 20km of the frontline report lacking uninterrupted access to markets, and around 13%, particularly those living within 10 km of the frontline, report having no market access at all. Security concerns remain the main factor hindering people's ability to reach markets. Households without markets in their settlements cope primarily by travelling to other settlements (57%), relying on humanitarian assistance (47%), asking others to buy food on their behalf (27%), or depending on their own food production (21%).

Even coping strategies such as travelling to other settlements are constrained by lack of sustainable transportation in the frontline areas. Nearly one-third of households in frontline were unable to use public transport whenever needed. About 55% reported having interrupted transport connections with other settlements. The most reported barriers to public transport were the absence of functioning transport services (47%), war-related security concerns (33%), and irregularity of transport schedules.

These disruptions in market and transport access directly heighten food insecurity. When households cannot safely reach markets, they lose access to a diverse and affordable food supply, face higher prices in limited local outlets, and become more reliant on coping strategies such as reducing food consumption or depending on assistance. In areas where markets do not function reliably, households also have fewer opportunities to supplement diets, diversify income sources, or engage in normal economic activity. As a result, limited market access, driven primarily by insecurity, acts as a major constraint on household food availability and affordability, contributing to higher levels of food insecurity in frontline zones.

The four drivers examined above do not operate sequentially: they overlap and reinforce each other in ways that make frontline food insecurity qualitatively different from food insecurity elsewhere in Ukraine. A household that loses employment income, cannot produce food due to shelling or mine contamination, and cannot reach a functioning market faces a depth of vulnerability that no single intervention can address alone. The following subsection quantifies this compounding effect through a Multidimensional Deprivation Index.

Multidimensional deprivation

Households living in the frontline face multiple and overlapping vulnerabilities that compound their hardship. A Multidimensional Deprivation Index (MDDI), which measures deprivations across six dimensions, including food, education, health, shelter, WASH, and safety shows increase in multidimensional deprivation the closer households are to the frontline[16]. Households are considered

deprived when facing deprivations in at least two domains, and severely deprived when facing deprivations in half or more of them. Results indicate that 11% of households beyond 50 km are multidimensionally deprived, rising to 15% in the 20–50 km zone and reaching 23% among those living within 20 km of the frontline. With an average deprivation intensity of 39%, deprived households typically face constraints in two to three dimensions simultaneously (Table 3).

Table 3: Multidimensional Deprivation by Location

MDDI Indicator	National	Food-insecure HHs 0–20 km	Food-insecure HHs 20–50 km	Food-insecure HHs 50+ km
Share multidimensionally deprived (H)	12%	41%	32%	25%
Average deprivation intensity (A)	39%	42%	38%	34%
Combined score (H × A)	0.05	0.17	0.12	0.09

Food-insecure households experience even higher rates of multidimensional deprivation. Across the frontline, 41% of food-insecure households are also multidimensionally deprived in the 0–20 km zone, compared with 32% in the 20–50 km zone and 25% beyond 50 km. This indicates that food insecurity rarely occurs in isolation: it is strongly associated with limited access to safe water, disrupted education, unmet health needs, inadequate shelter, or heightened safety risks. Among the most common deprivations faced by food-insecure households in frontline areas, apart from food-related components, are deprivation in health (34%), safety (29%), and shelter concerns (28%).

These overlapping vulnerabilities reinforce each other: households living close to the frontline not only face greater food insecurity but also significant challenges in safety, shelter, and access to essential services. As a result, multidimensional deprivation becomes both a driver and a consequence of food insecurity, compounding household hardship, deepening vulnerability and limiting households' ability to recover or cope with ongoing shocks. To a large extend, this also means that a single-sector food interventions alone cannot fully address the compounding nature of vulnerability.

HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

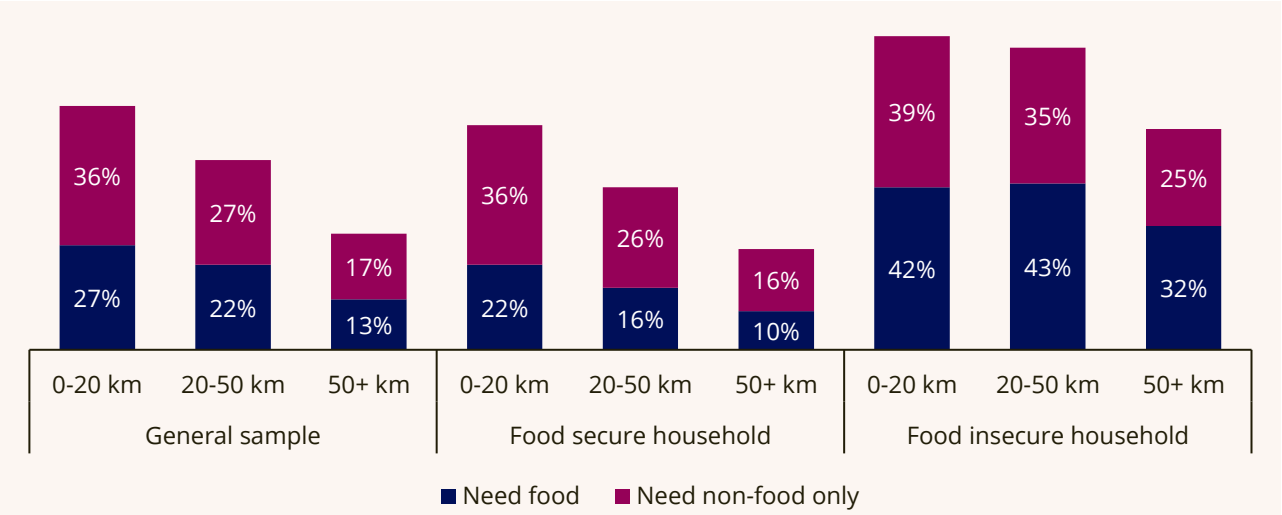
WFP assistance is reaching the most vulnerable households, and it contributes significantly to food security improvement.

As the war protracts, households across Ukraine, particularly vulnerable households residing in frontline continue to report increasing difficulty meeting their basic food needs. Data show that 27% of households living within 20 km of the frontline report needing food while additional 36% need non-food items (Figure 18). This is significantly higher compared with only 13% and 17% respectively in areas beyond 50 km. Among food-insecure households, this pattern is even more pronounced, with over 42% of households in the 0–20 km zone reporting food needs and 39% reporting non-food needs. Vulnerable households living in frontline areas have consistently ranked food as their priority need, often surpassing several non-food essential items.

Food assistance, provided both as in-kind and cash transfers, has been central to alleviating immediate food gaps for vulnerable households in the frontline. In 2025, the number of vulnerable people assisted in Ukraine with food assistance by a cluster of humanitarian partners averaged around 1 million per month, with in-kind distributions accounting for approximately 65% of all food assistance delivered. Despite these efforts, the scale of support remains small relative to the size of the population and the number of people that need food assistance. Overall, the food assistance provided reaches only about 5% of all Ukrainians and covers around 23% of the total population assessed as food insecure. Even when compared against the ultra-prioritized 2 million individuals identified in the HNRP, partners collectively reached only about 76% of that priority caseload.

Funding gaps continue to force humanitarian organizations to narrowly target households closest to the frontline, where food access barriers are most severe. Consequently, food assistance is highly concentrated geographically, with 70% of all distributions in December 2025 delivered within the 0–50 km zone. This prioritization reflects both the increased severity of needs in the frontline areas as shown in this report and the limited capacity to maintain adequate coverage in whole of Ukraine. It is therefore not surprising that for the 2026 HNRP exercise, humanitarian partners including WFP elected to focus on people living in the front lines, as well as other vulnerable groups scattered around the country including IDPs, evacuees and people affected by air strike

Figure 18: Share of Households Expressing Food Needs



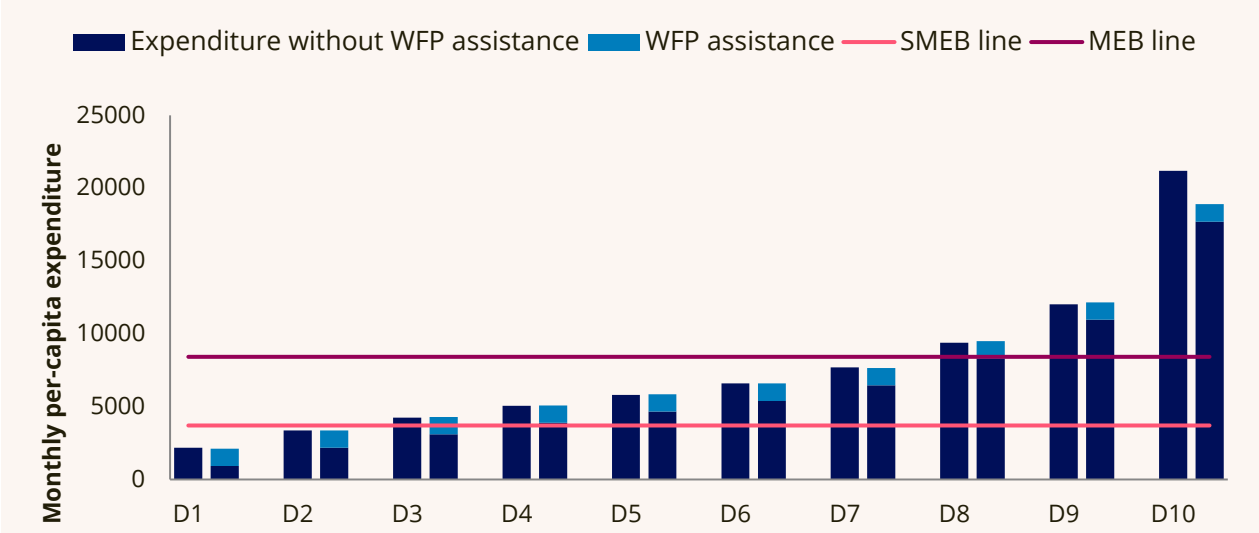
WFP has remained one of the leading providers of humanitarian food assistance in Ukraine since the full-scale invasion in 2022, with strong strategic advantage in providing assistance in the frontline. Operating alongside a network of other 25 organizations delivering either in-kind food or cash-for-food assistance, WFP contributed significantly to food assistance, reaching over 250,000 people monthly in 2025.

A core component of WFP's strategic advantage lies in its strong operational footprint in areas closest to the frontline including having a network of cooperating partners (CPs), warehouses and local offices closer to the frontline. In fact, more than 98% of WFP's total food assistance in 2025 was delivered within 20 km of the frontline. Notably, WFP continue to provide more cash assistance than in-kind, positioning it as a key actor for a future transition toward more flexible, universal cash assistance in frontline areas.

WFP assistance is targeted toward households with the lowest economic capacity. WFP implement a rigorous targeting framework both at geographical and household level with the developed algorithm able to identify most vulnerable people in the frontline. When households are sorted into ten expenditure deciles, strong evidence on the ability of WFP targeting framework to reach the most vulnerable emerges: assisted households consistently report much lower pre-assistance food and non-food spending compared to non-assisted households, especially in the lowest deciles. Figure 18 show that in the lowest expenditure decile, assisted households has only UAH 928 expenditure per capita per month without assistance, compared with UAH 2,185 among non-assisted households in the same decile. This pattern persists across the distribution. Even in the middle deciles (3–5), assisted households report significantly lower pre-assistance expenditure compared with non-assisted households. This confirms that WFP support is concentrated among economically constrained households.

At the same time, data highlight a significant contribution of WFP's cash assistance on household consumption where it covers around 78% of the gap between household capacity and SMEB. In the lowest three deciles, assisted households receive around UAH 1,185 per capita, which represents 55–70% of their baseline expenditure. Without this support, these households would experience severe reductions in consumption, but with WFP assistance, total expenditure rises to comparable level to their non assisted counterpart. For example, in decile 1, total expenditure increases from UAH 928 (baseline) to UAH 2,096 due to WFP assistance, substantially narrowing the gap with non-assisted households (UAH 2,185). Among household receiving assistance, WFP assistance covers up to 48% of the expenditure gap for the lowest decile, 78% for second decile and 100% for the third decile.

Figure 19: Expenditure by Decile, Assisted and Non-Assisted Households



WFP's assistance translates into a measurable and meaningful reduction in food insecurity and vulnerability among frontline households. Using a causal inference statistical approach, WFP assistance is estimated to reduce the probability of low economic capacity among assisted households by 18.3 percentage points after accounting for baseline differences and household characteristics[17]. In practical terms, this means that WFP assistance enabled around one in every five assisted household with low economic capacity to meet their subsistence (food) needs. In a frontline area where close to one million people are food insecure, this represents an important contribution to stabilizing household well-being and narrowing vulnerability gaps. WFP assistance effectively offset the severe consumption constraints faced by frontline households and smooth food consumption, thereby protecting the most at-risk households from further deterioration. It is important to note that this estimate captures the impact of WFP assistance alone; the combined effect of assistance delivered by

other humanitarian actors is not included, suggesting that the total contribution of humanitarian food assistance to reducing food insecurity among frontline households is likely larger.

Thus, as food insecure households also face multidimensional vulnerability, with regular monthly WFP assistance, households become less worried about food and substitute their limited income in pursuing other non-food need. WFP assistance allows families to allocate their limited income to urgent non-food needs, such as repairing damaged homes, purchasing fuel or generators, or covering additional expenses related to disrupted services without compromising [18]their food intake.

CONCLUSION

The assessment shows that an estimated two million war-affected people in Ukraine, primarily frontline residents and IDPs, require prioritization for humanitarian food assistance. Frontline communities face the most acute needs, with over half of priority food assistance cases (1.2 million people) living within 50 km of the frontline, where conflict and economic disruption are most severe. At the same time, food insecurity continues to rise nationwide, with 2025 assessments identifying 1.5 million additional people in need compared to 2024.

Looking at 2025 in retrospect, the report shows that escalating hostilities sharply increased civilian harm, making it the deadliest year since the invasion, with most conflict events and civilian casualties concentrated in frontline areas. Households in these locations face compounded vulnerabilities, including higher concentrations of elderly people, IDPs and returnees, extensive housing damage, deteriorating health conditions, limited livelihood opportunities, and high dependence on assistance. At least one in four frontline households is food insecure, with nearly half also experiencing multidimensional deprivation, particularly large families, households with persons with disabilities, and older people living alone, many of whom continue to rely on negative coping strategies.

Against this backdrop, declining humanitarian funding and rising needs pose a critical risk to the ability of vulnerable households to access the food assistance they depend on. The evidence presented in this report underscores the essential role of WFP assistance, which not only stabilizes household food consumption but also generates positive welfare effects among the most vulnerable populations exposed to ongoing conflict-related shocks.

Structural drivers explain why food insecurity in frontline areas is so persistent and so difficult to escape without external support. Conflict proximity destroys income sources, damages housing and essential services, and collapses local markets simultaneously. These shocks fall hardest on the demographic profile that dominates the frontline: elderly residents, people with disabilities, displaced and returned households with limited labour capacity. The interaction between structural exposure and demographic vulnerability produces pockets of deep, chronic deprivation in the 0–20 km zone that cannot resolve themselves without sustained external intervention. Declining humanitarian coverage in this context is not a marginal reduction in support; it is the removal of the only functioning buffer available to the most exposed households.

Ensuring the continuity of food assistance at regular, preferably monthly, intervals remain the operational minimum necessary to prevent a deepening of humanitarian

needs and to protect the progress achieved in stabilising the food security and wellbeing of frontline communities in Ukraine. As global humanitarian pressures intensify and funding competes across multiple crises, the case for Ukraine must be made on evidence. This report provides that evidence. Acting on it is the responsibility of donors and partners.

Three operational priorities follow directly from the evidence.

First, the 0–20 km zone must be insulated from any proportional funding cuts. Where feasible, humanitarian actors should pursue blanket coverage in this area, and, where this is not achievable across the entire 0–20 km zone, prioritize blanket coverage in the immediate frontline-adjacent locations. Market access in this zone has effectively collapsed, own-income is near zero for close to half of households, and no viable alternative food source exists. A coverage reduction here eliminates, rather than merely reduces, the food security buffer for the most exposed population. Due to market disruption, the 0-20km zone is particularly suited for in-kind food distribution.

Second, cash transfer values should be reviewed against the inflation trajectory documented which is constantly increasing. Transfers calibrated on earlier price baselines now cover a substantially smaller share of household need than intended, creating an effective real-terms cut without any explicit policy decision having been made. Moreover, due to the overlapping vulnerabilities across the frontline, a single sector intervention cannot fully address the compounding nature of vulnerabilities. The unified cash transfer initiative is a welcome development.

Third, the WFP assistance contribution analysis, showing an almost 20 percent reduction in low economic capacity, provides a rigorous and quantitative basis to defend Ukraine's humanitarian allocation in an increasingly competitive global funding environment. It is important to note that this analysis reflects the effect of WFP assistance alone; if the cumulative impact of assistance delivered by other humanitarian actors were incorporated, the overall effect size would likely be even larger. This is particularly relevant in countering the emerging perception that food insecurity in Ukraine is limited or no longer acute, an interpretation that may be partially explained by the high concentration of humanitarian assistance mitigating visible outcomes rather than the absence of need. In a crowded humanitarian landscape, such misperceptions risk diverting resources away from Ukraine; therefore, this evidence should be systematically and proactively deployed in donor engagement to substantiate continued support alongside other global crises.

End Note

[1] International Organization for Migration (IOM), Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) – Ukraine. Available at: https://dtm.iom.int/ukraine

[2] International NGO Safety Organisation (INSO), Conflict Data Dashboard. Available at: https://ngosafety.org/conflict-data-dashboard/

[3] OHCHR, Ukraine: Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict – December 2025. Available at: https://ukraine.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/2026-01/Ukraine%20-%20protection%20of%20civilians%20in%20armed%20conflict%20%28December%202025%29_ENG.pdf

[4] Black Sea News, "Russian Attacks on the Ports of Greater Odesa," available at: https://www.blackseanews.net/en/read/239081

[5] World Bank, listening to Ukraine: Poverty Note (2024). Available at: https://thedocs.worldbank.org/en/doc/2c2d81f33cb64ac4695818d3cf988fa2-0080012024/original/Listening-to-Ukraine-Poverty-Note.pdf

[6] OCHA, Ukraine: Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan 2026. Humanitarian Programme Cycle. January 2026. Available at: https://www.unocha.org/attachments/f431c763-f667-4d8f-9120-8cf2a1dc0d6c/Ukraine%20HNRP%202026%20Humanitarian%20Needs%20and%20Response%20Plan%20EN.pdf

[7] For this analysis, WFP-assisted and non-assisted households were matched on observable characteristics including household composition, income, and proximity to the frontline, and a Difference-in-Differences estimator was applied to isolate the causal effect of assistance from pre-existing differences between the two groups. A technical annex with full methodological details is available on request.

[8] Ukraine Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan 2026 (January 2026) [EN/UK] | OCHA

[9] The food insecurity prevalence is measured using the Consolidated Approach for Reporting Indicators of Food Security (CARI). See The Consolidated Approach for Reporting Indicators of Food Security (CARI) for further reading about CARI

[10] The Food Consumption Score tells us how well a household has been eating over the past week. It looks at the variety of foods they ate and how often they ate them, giving more importance to foods that are more nutritious.

[11] The Reduced Coping Strategies Index (rCSI) is used to assess the adequacy of a household's current food consumption.

[12] The Livelihood Coping Strategies for Essential Needs (LCS-EN) indicator measures how households respond when they lack sufficient income to cover basic needs. These strategies are grouped by severity: *stress* strategies such as spending savings, borrowing money, or taking on additional work; *crisis* strategies such as reducing expenditures on health or education or selling productive assets; and *emergency* strategies including selling a house or land, relocating to seek work, or engaging in high-risk or exploitative income sources.

[13] The two thresholds are the Survival Minimum Expenditure Basket (SMEB), set at 3,708 UAH per capita per month, and the Minimum Expenditure Basket (MEB), set at 8,422 UAH per capita based on the Factual Minimum Subsistence Level published by the Ministry of Social Policy of Ukraine (June 2025). Households with expenditures below the MEB are considered unable to meet essential needs without assistance, while those below the SMEB face severe restrictions in meeting even basic survival requirements.

[14] Incidence reported at admin3 level; number of incidences is calculated based on ACLED database, where incidence reported in media are recorded

[15] The threshold used in this analysis is grounded in the Government of Ukraine's official subsistence minimum calculation for June 2025, which specifies the cost of the minimum food basket per person per month. This threshold represents approximately 60% of the total subsistence minimum (UAH 8,422) shown in the national calculation table. In the harmonized dataset, this threshold corresponds to the upper expenditure limit of the bottom 40% of the population living within 0–50 km of the frontline and has subsequently been adopted by the Cash Working Group (CWG) as the reference value for estimating the transfer gap in Ukraine.

[16] MDDI components and further analysis can be found in Multidimensional Deprivation Index (MDDI)

[17] To estimate the causal impact of WFP assistance on household food insecurity, a Difference-in-Differences (DiD) approach was applied using paired pre- and post-assistance data for the same households. The method compares changes in food insecurity among households that received assistance (treatment group) with changes observed among similar households that did not receive assistance (control group), thereby controlling for baseline differences and time-invariant unobserved factors. In this framework, households were assigned a treatment indicator (treat = 1 for those receiving WFP assistance) and a time indicator (post = 1 for the post-assistance period). The interaction term (*post* × *treat*) captures the net impact of assistance by isolating how much food insecurity changed for treated households beyond any change observed in the control group. The model further adjusts for key household characteristics such as employment status, household composition, dependency ratios, and income vulnerability to account for structural differences that may influence food insecurity. This approach allows for a robust estimation of the effect of WFP

assistance on reducing food insecurity specifically within the conflict-affected 0–50 km zone.

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