

# **WFP Ukraine**

## **Food Security Assessment**

January 2015



**World Food Programme**



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# Table of Contents

<b>1</b>	<b>Executive Summary</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Background</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>Methodology</b>	<b>6</b>
3.1	Quantitative Data Collection	7
3.2	Qualitative Data Collection	8
3.2.1	Key Informant Interviews	8
3.2.2	Focus Group Discussions	9
3.3	Limitations / Constraints	9
<b>4</b>	<b>Contextual Analysis</b>	<b>10</b>
4.1	Population Movement	10
4.2	Security situation	11
4.3	Finance Sector and Government Benefits	11
4.4	Food Availability & Access	12
4.4.1	Market infrastructure	12
4.4.2	Market Supply	13
4.4.3	Food and Non-Food Assistance	14
<b>5</b>	<b>Household Circumstances</b>	<b>15</b>
5.1	Household Demographics	15
5.2	Living Conditions	16
5.3	Displacement & Immobility	17
<b>6</b>	<b>Household food security</b>	<b>18</b>
6.1	Main sources of income	18
6.2	Food Access	20
6.2.1	Household Market Access	20
6.2.2	Food Consumption	22
6.2.3	Livelihood Coping Strategies	22
6.2.4	Reduced Coping Strategy Index	23
6.2.5	Expenditure on Food	24
6.3	Food Security Console	25
<b>7</b>	<b>Discussion</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>27</b>
	<b>Annexes</b>	<b>29</b>
1.	Sampled Sites	29
2.	Operational markets in strata B and C	30
3.	Prices for essential food items in Strata B and C	31

# 1 Executive Summary

The conflict in Eastern Ukraine following the annexation of Crimea has led not only to heavy casualties but a massive displacement of the population, currently estimated at around 1 million people. Ukraine's economic situation has also declined in the last 18 months with rising inflation, currently at 25%, and with significant difficulties in resupply of markets, as well as closures, in eastern Ukraine, food shortages are becoming more widespread in areas with active conflict, although supplies are getting through (according to key informant interviews).

The data was collected from five oblasts<sup>1</sup> in eastern Ukraine over the period of 4-5 weeks (13<sup>th</sup> October 2014 to 25<sup>th</sup> November 2014). A total of 480 households were interviewed in 48 locations, consisting of IDPs (both registered and unregistered, returnees, and residents). The Ukrainian conflict in the east has been separated into three geographical strata for the purposes of analysis and focus of attention for assistance. These strata are intended to define a constant state relating to risk relating to the conflict. Stratum A is the area in which no conflict has been experienced (and in which IDPs are the main focus), Stratum B is the area in which conflict is intermittent and is still held by the Ukrainian government (and in which IDPs, returnees, and residents are of interest), whilst Stratum C are geographical areas in which there is active conflict and are generally understood not to be in Ukrainian government control (with residents the main focus).

The analysis explores the food security situation of each of the populations within each stratum and the differences between them. Overall, despite food consumption patterns indicating relatively good levels of diversity (although up to 6.5% of households in some groups do not have adequate consumption) consumption coping (reduced coping strategy index, rCSI) scores are high and would indicate a higher likelihood of reduced energy intake by households.

The main food security issues are highlighted, in summary, below:

## **Stratum A:**

Contextually these locations are similar to the rest of Ukraine in that the recent economic shocks have resulted in food price increases and reduced job opportunities. However, with an influx of IDPs there is increased competition for available jobs. IDPs face a variety of problems gaining employment and tend to work as casual labour, rather than maintaining the skilled labour jobs they had once had. Household data indicates that IDP households tend to have less productive members in them with dependency ratios being 20 to 40 percentage points higher than the national average (45%). Thus, lack of work or low paying jobs has greater implications on the food security of these households who frequently depend on savings to pay rent (13-30% of total expenditure for registered and unregistered IDPs respectively) and food (about 55% of total expenditure). It appears that food consumption has mainly been impacted in terms of reduction of meal frequency, size, and allocation of food to children, rather than the overall quality. Although the food consumption score indicates a relatively diverse consumption, the reduced coping strategy index (consumption coping) is relatively high in this group with half of the registered IDPs reporting severe consumption coping in the previous 7 days as well as selection of less preferred foods. This points towards conservation of dietary practices in terms of diversity but reduced quality of this diet in addition to reduced intake by adults, and in part children. This is despite this group being the most frequently reporting food and non-food assistance (around 50%) from a variety of sources (government and non-government).

Registered IDPs in this stratum, although able to maintain food consumption patterns, 4% of the households were not able to support adequate diets but more than half of these households are coping with reduced amounts of food in the household. This group is currently the third priority for food assistance because they are currently receiving assistance and are not in harms way. However, this group will likely experience increased food insecurity due to exhausting savings. The provision of food assistance is likely to help protect assets and savings.

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<sup>1</sup> Dnipropetrovsk, Donetsk, Kharkiv, Luhansk and Zaporizhia oblasts

## **Stratum B:**

In addition to the economic crisis in Ukraine this stratum is experiencing pockets of intermittent insecurity, as well as some limitations of market supply due to disruption of the market infrastructure. This has resulted in around one third of households noting that the quality, and in some cases quantity of food as having reduced. IDPs in this stratum are much more vulnerable with more than half of the households engaging in severe consumption coping mechanisms, and around 90% of these household engaging in crisis and emergency livelihood coping indicating significant asset depletion. In addition 6.5% of registered IDPs were not consuming adequate diets. A high prevalence of returnees was also identified as engaging in crisis and emergency livelihood coping strategies (around 90%).

Few households reported receiving any kind of assistance (<20%). In addition, households closer to the locations included in Stratum C reporting that supply of products other than staples were starting to run short, combined with half of residents and returnees reporting difficulties accessing markets. In light of these observations there is a high potential that in parts of Stratum B households will start to be worse off as the winter proceeds.

Food insecurity was reported at relatively high levels for IDPs (9.7%) and returnees (13.5%) in this stratum. This would be the second priority for WFP in terms of ensuring food assistance is provided.

## **Stratum C:**

The situation in Stratum C is that of active conflict and heightened insecurity relating to movement, market access (80% of the households interviewed said they had problems accessing markets in the 30 days prior to the survey). Dependency on savings was a key income strategy of a third of those interviewed with 65% of residents engaged in crisis or emergency livelihood coping strategies. This group was the most food insecure in the overall assessment (14% of households), the main component of which was attributable to asset depletion. With qualitative data and interviews with key informants from this area market access was particularly difficult, with poor access in terms of quantity, quality and variety.

In addition to the direct threat to personal security experienced by households in Stratum C, there have been economic restrictions imposed by the Government of Ukraine, namely closure of banking facilities and restrictions on banking transactions, limiting access to cash from ATMs and the suspension of public offices including those providing social care, while social benefits can only be received upon registration in the Government controlled area.

Not only does this group have the highest food insecurity it is also in the most insecure environment. As the winter season progresses and the conflict intensifies, these households are certainly the most vulnerable, with the prospect of getting worse, and are the first priority for food assistance.

In terms of responses, insecurity, personal safety, and lack of freedom of movement are of paramount importance in terms of the modality of response. Cash responses in Stratum C and parts of Stratum B would put beneficiaries at risk and voucher based systems may not find adequate supplies in markets to support this. Food distributions would be the most appropriate modality in areas where risk of conflict is high or on going. For IDPs in Stratum A it is likely that they will benefit from food assistance in the form of cash or vouchers with the intention of protection of savings and ease of the burden to provide for a higher proportion of dependants within their households.

## 2 Background

The armed conflict that escalated between the government forces and armed groups since April 2014 in Donbas region (Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts) has resulted in displacement, deterioration of the humanitarian situation, and disruption of critical infrastructure (gas, power and water supply). Access to basic services (like health and market) has been affected.

The presence of humanitarian community in the conflict area was limited, though steps were being made to scale it up, and the information on food security among the affected population has been patchy and anecdotal. UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) initiated the Humanitarian Situation Monitoring (HSM) since June 2014 to inform planning for immediate response and for adequate preparedness measures in case of further deterioration of the humanitarian situation in Ukraine. The HSM covers five oblasts<sup>2</sup> in the east, Dnipropetrovsk, Donetsk, Kharkiv, Luhansk and Zaporizhia, applying a multi-sectoral key informant assessment methodology. The HSM provides almost real-time humanitarian updates and some indications about hotspot in terms of food insecurity as well. However a detailed information on food security of the affected population was required for WFP to make any programming decision.

WFP conducted secondary data analysis on food and nutrition security in July-August 2014, which describes the pre-crisis food and nutrition security situation of Ukraine. The analysis provides a good basis for emergency food security assessments and food security monitoring.

In this backdrop, this assessment is designed to assess the food security situation to provide timely and appropriate information for WFP programming.

## 3 Methodology

The main purpose of the research was to assess the needs of food assistance among the population directly affected by the ongoing conflict. The specific objectives were:

1. Estimate the number of population in need of food assistance (indicative figures),
2. Verify current assumptions on the food security situation based on desk review,
3. Provide field-based data (qualitative/quantitative) for the prioritization of beneficiary types.

The assessment was conducted from 13<sup>th</sup> October 2014 to 25<sup>th</sup> November 2014 and the implementation was outsourced to UMG (Ukrainian Marketing Group), a Ukrainian market research company based in Kyiv. UMG were selected for it's experienced field staff and local networks in eastern Ukraine, making UMG an ideal company for the purposes of this assessment.

To achieve these objectives the assessment employed qualitative research methods, complemented with quantitative household interviews. Qualitative methods (focus group discussions and key informant interviews) allowed verifying current assumptions on the food security situation, while quantitative part of research allowed validating all received information.

The assessment covered key 48 sites, in 32 raions, within the five eastern oblasts – Kharkiv, Dnipropetrovsk, Zaporizhia, Donetsk, and Luhansk. The five oblasts were stratified into three geographical areas, and these were based upon WFP's Food Security Context analysis:

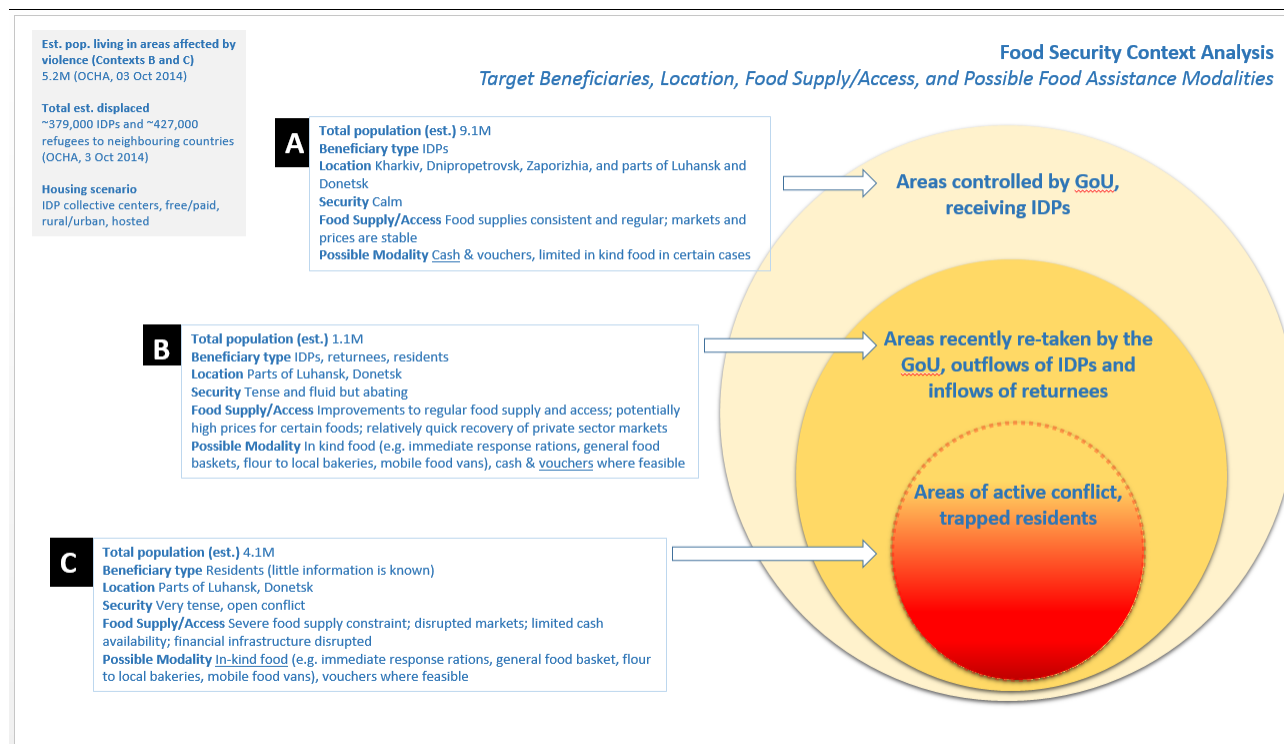
1. **Stratum A** - areas which are currently receiving large numbers of IDPs (8 raions);
2. **Stratum B** - areas which had previously experienced active conflicts but are now under the government control (16 raions);
3. **Stratum C** – areas not controlled by the Government (8 raions)

The overview of this conceptual framework for this analysis is presented in the following diagram:

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<sup>2</sup> Oblast is the second level administrative division (after the international country boundaries) in Ukraine (and is equivalent to that of "region" in other countries).

**Figure 1: Summary of the Contextual Food Security Analysis (September, 2014)**



Within the selected raions both urban and rural sites were present to provide a balanced view on the situation. Sampling was indicative (not a representative), based on existing information on the potentially vulnerable areas. Average questionnaire length was up to 20-25 minutes. A full list of raions visited is listed in Annex 1.

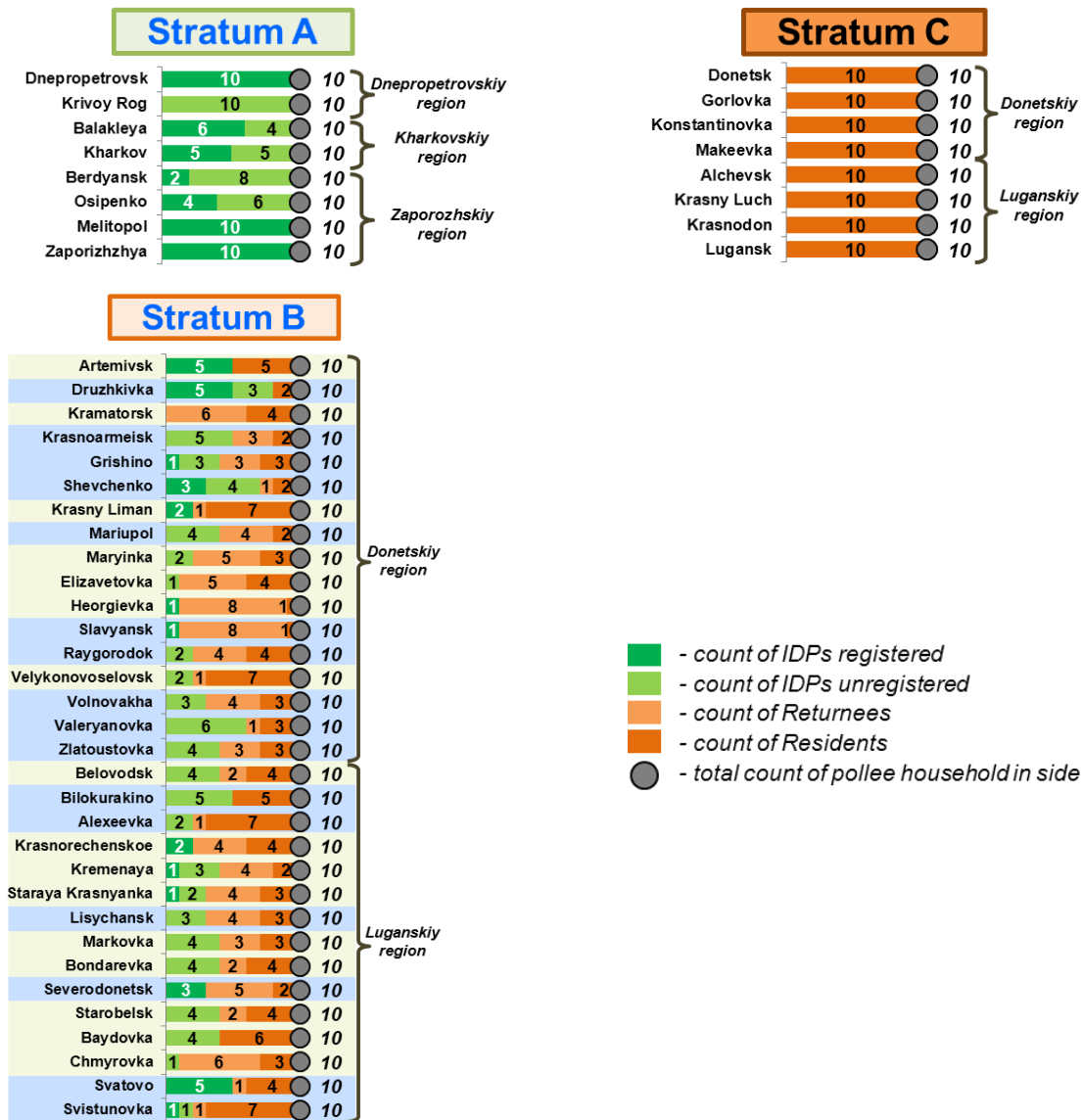
### 3.1 Quantitative Data Collection

In total, 480 households were interviewed (48 locations in 32 raions), 10 households per location. Household interviews were collected after the Key Informant Interviews as it has allowed for validation of data received from the qualitative part. The composition of IDPs (registered, non-registered), residents, and returnees differed by location across the strata (see Figure 2). In summary the sample consisted of:

- **Stratum A:** Total of 80 IDP HHs (47 registered and 33 unregistered)
- **Stratum B:** Total of 320 households; 107 IDP HHs (31 registered and 76 unregistered); 96 Returnee HHs; 117 Resident HHs.
- **Stratum C:** Total of 80 Resident HHs.

The standard definition of a household was used (a group of individuals, related or unrelated, that have a common cooking arrangement and recognising a single person as the head of that unit). Households were purposively selected, with the additional criterion that respondents were not located on the same street. This approach was taken, in the case of Stratum C, due to security concerns, and in Stratum A and B due to the lack of comprehensive lists of IDPs or returnees.

Figure 2: Sample Size by Raion and household type



## 3.2 Qualitative Data Collection

Within the qualitative research, 64 Key informant interviews and 32 FGDs in 32 raions were conducted (see Annex 1). FGDs were conducted after Key Informant Interviews, as this facilitated the identification of the correct individuals.

### 3.2.1 Key Informant Interviews

The primary selection criterion for Key Informant Interviews (KII) recruitment was respondents' involvement into affected population problem solving process. In addition data on markets (functioning and supply) was collected with those with specific knowledge of this information. To minimize bias and obtain as much information as possible two main audiences were targeted: representatives of administration / authorities (administrative officers) and representatives of NGOs or civil society / volunteers organizations working in the areas in question.

In strata A and B administrative officers / authorities working in the area of social policy / social security (for IDPs in Stratum A and both IDPs and / or residents in Stratum B) were approached and interviewed. Volunteers and / or representatives of NGOs (both local and international, e.g. Red Cross) were interviewed



throughout all three strata. Majority of KII were done face-to-face while in some cases they were conducted via telephone or Skype due to security concerns.

### 3.2.2 Focus Group Discussions

The following guidelines were followed:

- Stratum A: registered and non-registered IDPs located in collective centers, with relatives / friends and in rented apartments. As much as possible these were IDPs who were actively involved in solving problems for the affected group they represent and thus were more aware about the situation in general.
- Stratum B: a combination of IDPs (both registered and non-registered), residents and returnees (where applicable) on each focus group discussion (FGD) was ensured. Those invited were mainly those who had knowledge of general situation in the site (city / town / raion).
- Stratum C: only residents were invited to participate. No particular requirements were set for selection due to 2 reasons:
  - 1) General difficulties with recruiting due to people's fear to participate in any type of collective events or studies and give their opinions regarding the situation
  - 2) Relatively high level of knowledge of the situation in the researched area by any resident since it's the matter of survival

All FGDs were done face-to-face in spite of the increasing number of security incidents, while in two cases they were substituted by in-depth interviews because of serious security concerns.

### 3.3 Limitations / Constraints

Overall, it was difficult to ensure participation of active members of each community, particularly IDPs, in the focus group discussions. It was felt that those who participated did not necessarily have a very complete understanding of the situation in their communities.

A sudden increase of security incidents (end of October, in anticipation of parliament elections of October 26th) resulted in a change to the scheduled of qualitative data collection. That being:

- Change of sites within Stratum and oblast (i.e. Yasynuvata instead of Amvrosiivka in Donetsk oblast, Stratum C);
- Change of research method within particular site (i.e. in-depth interviews with residents instead of FGD in Stratum C);
- Change of interviewing process for KII (i.e. telephone or Skype interviews instead of face-to-face modality).

Furthermore, due to the nature of security incidents and situation within Stratum C the access to administrative officers there (representing the de-facto authorities) was not possible. As an alternative locally active volunteers / NGOs organizations were interviewed which may not have provided a complete overview.

Residents of Stratum C, mostly from Luhansk area, were not willing to openly discuss the situation there. It is likely that the real situation was worse than presented given concerns of the residents that accurate reporting may affect their personal safety. The situation reported in Luhansk, Alchevsk and Krasnodon was likely to have been downplayed during the focus group discussions.

The majority of the interviews were conducted in urban settings. In strata A and B the raions visited were heavily urbanized and hosted majority of IDPs. Rural areas were likely to have been preferred by those IDPs who had relatives or friends there.

Household interviews were not randomly sampled due to incomplete official lists of IDPs and reluctance to participate based on the perceived threat to personal security (particularly in Stratum B & C). Therefore, a snowball method was used, utilizing connections with volunteer organizations. In Stratum C, key informants

were interviewed via alternative means (Skype and similar means, and telephone) due to security concerns, although all of the household interviews were carried out face to face. However, as accessing the areas in Stratum C most severely affected by the conflict was difficult, the sampling may be more indicative of those just outside these areas.

## 4 Contextual Analysis

At the beginning of 2014, Ukraine has experienced a dramatic change in its political landscape. The new Government has been appointed, new President and Parliament have been elected later in 2014. However, tensions have been mounting in Ukraine ever since. As a result of ongoing hostilities between illegal armed groups and government forces, as well as the events that occurred in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea (ARC) in March 2014, Ukrainians have fled their homes and become increasingly vulnerable as the conflict intensified and spread. The violence in Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts increased in scale from May to September 2014 with a period of relative calm lasting until early January 2015.

As a result of fighting and hostilities, the humanitarian situation in larger part of Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts was increasingly deteriorating. The result is just over nine hundred thousand people displaced into other regions of Ukraine with neighbouring oblasts (Kharkiv, Dnipropetrovsk, and Zaporizhia) hosting the highest number of displaced, refugees estimated at more than half a million people, and approximately 1.4 million people in need of humanitarian assistance<sup>3</sup>. The situation is aggravated by disruption of critical infrastructure in the areas of the most intense fighting, including disruption of food and water supply, limiting access to basic services (like health and markets) etc. Overall, the humanitarian situation in parts of eastern Ukraine remains volatile and is continuing to deteriorate.

The sections within this component of the report provide the covariate shocks and factors that are affecting households within eastern Ukraine and affecting their food security. As these factors are not specific to the households the data is gathered either through secondary sources or qualitative data collection aspect of this assessment.

### 4.1 Population Movement

By the end of November the number of people fleeing from the areas not controlled by the government and staying within secure areas (current IDPs) was assessed at about 30% of pre-conflict population of Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts, which accounted for about 1.2 million people. Registration of IDPs in order to be able to receive the benefits, both regular and special benefits for IDPs, has also reportedly lead to rates of registration higher than the estimated numbers of those displaced.. It was also noted that many people were moving only short distances for short periods to avoid sporadic hostilities.

Peak periods of IDP movements were identified as:

- Wave 1: May 2014 – start of serious military actions in the East region peaking in 1st half of July due to the most active military operations and substantial infrastructure damage;
- Wave 2: August-beginning of September 2014 when the conflict expanded to the southeastern part of Donetsk oblast and some government-controlled areas were once again lost to armed groups;
- Wave 3: end of October – November 2014 due to increased military activity in Stratum C and Stratum B front line sites<sup>4</sup>.

IDPs fled away from the areas not controlled by the Government (Stratum C) both to the areas over which the Government's control had been re-established (Stratum B), and further to safe areas of Ukraine that have not directly experienced the conflict (Stratum A). As stated previously these are the stratifications used by

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<sup>3</sup> Strategic Response Plan Ukraine 2015 (prepared by UNHCT)

[http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/2015\\_SRP\\_Ukraine\\_20141205\\_0.pdf](http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/2015_SRP_Ukraine_20141205_0.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> Data of the National Security and Defense Council indicates that on 26 November 2014 there was a record number of IDPs fleeing from Donbas area – 5670 people per day. It was 10 times more than it's been average per day up till that moment. (Source: [www.rnbo.gov.ua](http://www.rnbo.gov.ua))

the assessment as a determinate of vulnerability of the population and used in a dynamic manner as the situation evolves.

## 4.2 Security situation

The conflict in the East part of Ukraine started in April 2014, when the Ukrainian government initiated antiterrorism operation (ATO) against armed groups that had violently occupied several administrative buildings in several sites of Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts.

During the assessment those that had been displaced at the beginning of the conflict did not expect to be away from their homes beyond 2-3 months. This may have resulted in a lack of preparation for longer stay in terms of winterization needs, income, or a longer-term accommodation plans.

As for latest security incidents, starting from research week 2 (20<sup>th</sup> October 2014) increase of military activity has been observed in such sites as:

- Luhansk oblast: Lysychansk, Luhansk, Krasny Luch surroundings, northern part of Luhansk oblast (previously considered as secure): Popasnyanskyi, Bilovodskiy raions
- Donetsk oblast: Mariupol suburban area, raions close to front line (Mar'inka, Dzerzhynsk, Avdiivka, Volnovakha, Artemivsk), Donetsk city, Horlivka

During the assessment the secondary reports indicated a large number of roads, bridges, airports and railway connections had been heavily damaged due to fighting and were completely inoperable at the moment. Almost all energy and coal industry facilities were damaged which had further lead to significant drop of economy.

Overall, the continued insecurity has resulted in extending damage of infrastructure and continued waves of displacement.

## 4.3 Finance Sector and Government Benefits

Since the beginning of hostilities in Ukraine in early 2014, there has been a marked increase in inflation rates that currently sits at 25%. The Ukrainian government has a wide-ranging social safety net system covering unemployment, elderly, disabilities as well as maternity and child benefits, amongst other criteria. The current crisis has lead to the closing of government buildings and therefore the inability for many vulnerable people to claim the assistance that is even more pertinent at this time.

Currently the Government of Ukraine is registering IDPs in areas outside of current conflict<sup>5</sup>. This provides them the opportunity to recover their usual social benefits (pensions, scholarships, benefits for moms with babies on maternity leave, benefits for single parent HH, etc.). IDPs can also apply for additional assistance from the government, which is currently set at 442 UAH (23.3Euro<sup>6</sup>; for those able to work) and 884 UAH (46.7Euro<sup>1</sup>; for disabled / retired / kids) per person per month<sup>7</sup>. This is a monthly assistance designed to support the livelihoods of the IDPs for the period of up to 6 months. However many of the IDP households interviewed believed it would not sufficiently assist in their resettlement and re-integration.

The most extreme financial situation is faced by residents in Stratum C, where government completely suspended payment of social benefits as well as salaries of public employees (those employed in kindergartens, schools, hospitals, prisons, etc.), resulting in HHs rapidly running out of financial means.

In Stratum A and most part of Stratum B banks and ATMs are operational and cash is generally available. In some banks (namely OschadBank, PrivatBank) there were long queues during periods when social benefits were paid out due to significantly increased number of beneficiaries.

In some parts of Stratum B marked by higher insecurity due to its proximity to the areas of intense conflict ('buffer zone'), many banks' offices and ATMs were not operational. For example, in Dzerzhynsk only 20% of bank offices functioned which caused difficulties with accessing cash.

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<sup>5</sup> The registration system has been established by the Government's Resolution No. 509 as of 1 October 2014

<sup>6</sup> Using 18.87 UAH = 1 Euro (conversion rate of Google finance dated 5/1/15)

<sup>7</sup> The procedures, criteria and amount of the monthly assistance to IDPs are established by the Government's Resolution No. 505 as of 1 October 2014

In Stratum C many banks and all ATMs were not operational, thus making cash availability one of the major problems.

There are no particular limitations on electronic or bank card payments within strata A and B. In Stratum C they were possible in big supermarkets (Donetsk oblast and some parts in Luhansk oblast) up to 1<sup>st</sup> of December 2014 when the national regulator suspended all the transactions with the territories not under Government control.<sup>8</sup> . Thus, regardless of resources within the banking system, all households will have problems accessing their wealth within Stratum C, unless they have cash from prior to the enactment of this resolution. However, this will be a finite resource and as with time, may well force more households to leave this zone.

## 4.4 Food Availability & Access

The conflict in Eastern Ukraine, as well as the general economic state of Ukraine, as lead to a number of changes in the availability of food in markets as well as limiting access to affected households. This has been a key issue influencing food security in Eastern Ukraine and declines in physical availability of food in markets is set to continue as the situation has failed to be resolved.

### 4.4.1 Market infrastructure

Interviews with key informants and discussions with focus groups indicated that in Stratum A and the parts of Stratum B not affected by military activity (i.e. Dobropillia, Svatove, Starobilsk, etc.) the market infrastructure wasn't affected by conflict – the amount of markets and shops is enough, and no changes in opening hours were observed.

#### Stratum B:

In areas previously experiencing conflict and areas with occasional security incidents (military activity) of Stratum B (i.e. Slovyansk, Artemivsk, Krasnyi Lyman, Mariupol, Severodonetsk) infrastructure damage level was observed to be none to as high as 25% (in Slovyansk, Krasnyi Lyman). However, shortened operating hours (no 24/7, early closing) and some store closures have been noted as a result of the conflict. This reportedly had little affect on the ability to provide food to residents and IDPs.

In sites located within the current buffer zone in Stratum B (i.e. Dzerzhynsk, Mar'inka, Volnovakha) the situation is more pronounced and characterized by significant number of supermarkets closing down, both due to damage and fear of operating due to active conflict. Here food is available mostly in small shops, which puts certain limitations on food stock and assortment.

#### Stratum C:

Level of infrastructure damage in Stratum C is changing everyday due to renewed military actions. Some market chains are still operational, although not all stores, and not in all districts / sites. Among those were Karavan, Obzhora, Amstor , Brusnichka . In Luhansk area majority of the operating supermarkets had restricted access to goods and customers are required to request products, rather than select freely. For big cities (Donetsk, Luhansk, Horlivka) situation with markets is generally better in central districts whereas in remote areas markets and stores are often closed, forcing people to travel under dangerous conditions to other areas in search of food.

Market situation within Stratum C seem to differ significantly from site to site. Possible reasons for that may be:

- **Intensity and frequency of security incidents** resulted in high level of infrastructure damage (i.e. up to ¾ of total markets in Horlivka, Yasynuvata, Luhansk, etc.), and are experiencing significant issues with the supplies of adequate quantities of food.
- **Overall perceived safety level** – unsafe environment (in terms of high risk to be robbed, fear of being taken hostage etc.) has the strongest effect on opening hours which tend to be limited to daylight periods (e.g. in Krasnyi Luch shops, pharmacies, hospitals, etc. were open till 15:00 the latest). For example the situation in Donetsk oblast was claimed to be absolutely insecure

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<sup>8</sup> Resolution №466 of National Bank of Ukraine

– it was dangerous to move around, to carry cash or any other valuables. In Luhansk oblast, the response of the interviewees indicating relatively secure environment often contradicted to other reports on limited street lighting due to lack of power, presence of armed groups, hungry stray dogs on the streets (especially smaller settlements like Krasnyi Luch) etc.

- **Regulatory policies / actions undertaken by de-facto authorities** like imposing additional fees on local retail shops which has led to the shutdown of many retail businesses. . In other cases the owners were urged to keep the shops open irrespectively of the conditions of the operation and the security situation (e.g. in Horlivka).

**NB:** More detailed information on quantity of operational markets by site is available in Annex 2.

#### 4.4.2 Market Supply

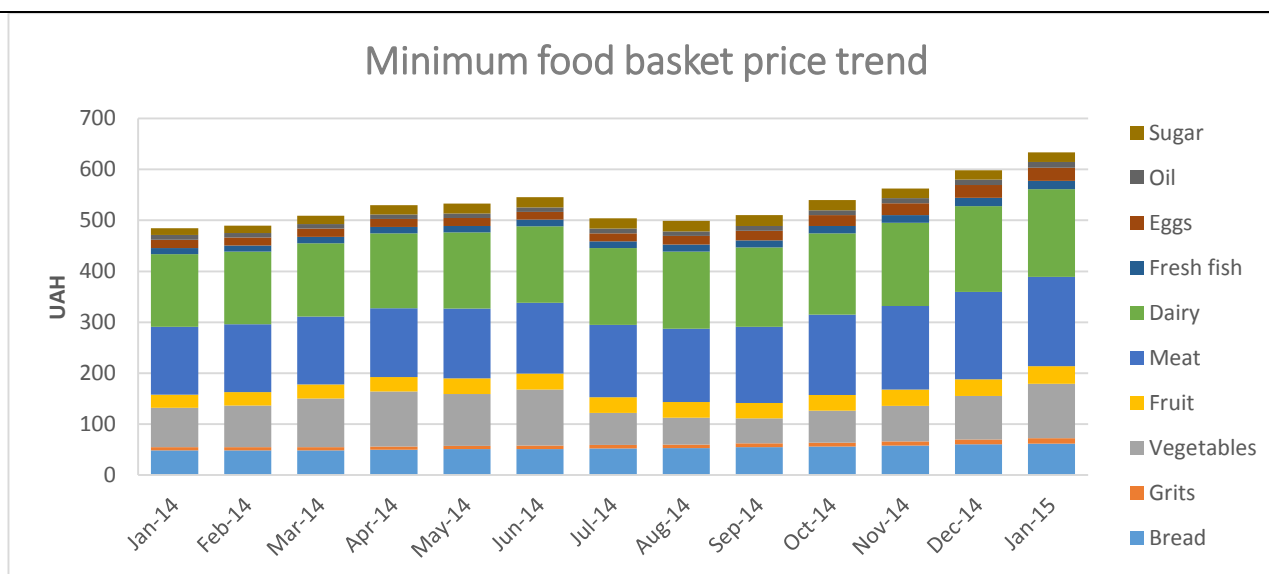
Supply of food to markets in Strata A and B (with exception of several sites in the ‘buffer zone’) may be described as regular, with no particular constraints.

If compared to the pre-conflict period the key differences appear as follows:

- Concentration of IDPs in some areas, in addition to the residents, leads to sharp increase of the demand which, naturally, requires increased supplies of food commodities both in terms of frequency and amount;
- The assortment of dairy, meat, fresh fruit and vegetables narrows down and offers cheaper options resulting from demand change due to shrinking purchasing power of the residents (macro-economic reasons) as well as lack of financial means among IDPs due to conflict and associated re-location consequences.

Situation in the ‘buffer zone’ sites of **Stratum B** depends likewise on the intensity and frequency of security incidents and is characterized by intermittent lack or insufficiency amount of bread, meat, dairy, fruits and vegetables (present in shops but not in sufficient quantity) due to irregular supply dependent on military activity.

**Figure 3: Minimum food basket price 2014-2015<sup>9</sup>**



Source: UkraAgroPromProduktivnist, Ministry of Agriculture and Food of Ukraine, <http://www.uapp.kiev.ua/>

In **Stratum C** food supply is rather limited and irregular. Supplies from the government-controlled areas are partially restricted, with some products being delivered from Russia. Essential food commodities are available but in lower quantities and/or not on regular basis. In some locations (e.g. Krasnyi Luch), which are

<sup>9</sup> Monitoring of 587 local markets across the country. The prices are presented for the minimum food basket established by the Cabinet of Minister of Ukraine. The unit is the minimum standard of consumption (quantity) for each food item recommended by the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, Resolution No 656 as of 14 April 2000.

close to areas of intense fighting, delivery of supplies was seriously affected with the main supply routes being too dangerous to pass. Supply of infant formula/baby food (namely baby dairy – kefirs, yoghurts) and perishable goods (dairy, meat) have been particularly affected. Poultry has also increased in price or was not available due to local production shutdown or changes in source.

Within the research area prices for key food items went up by 30% (i.e. bread, milk) to 75-80% (fresh meat, cheese, namely in Stratum C) comparing to pre-conflict situation with only local vegetables (the so-called “borsch set”) remaining on the previous year level or even lower, which is due to good and extensive crop.

The cost of minimum food basket continuously increased from UAH 485 in January 2014 to UAH 633 in January 2015 (31% year-on-year basis) (Figure 3). This raise is overall consistent with the national inflation which lies at around 25% with core consumer prices increasing steadily since January 2014 (see Figure 4).

Meat, dairy products and vegetables contributed heavily to the growth of food basket price in absolute terms (the price grew by 42, 29 and 30 UAH respectively), whereas prices for grits and eggs have shown the highest growth year on year (69 and 59 percent increase respectively).

**Figure 4: Core Consumer Prices (Ukraine January 2014 – January 2015 with projection)**



Increase of food prices are explained by both seasonality factors and growing energy prices that particularly affect the food processing industries.

In the course of the assessment in October-November 2014, some observations were made regarding the food prices situation in Stratum B and C. Overall, no significant differences in food prices between the two stratum were observed except for dairy group which is more expensive in Stratum C due disruption of supply routes as described above. Other variations of prices are mostly explained by existing local patterns and supply and demand factor<sup>10</sup>. (more detailed information is available in Annex 3).

#### 4.4.3 Food and Non-Food Assistance

Overall, few interviewed households did not report having received food or non-food assistance. About half of the IDP households in Stratum A reported receiving some form of assistance. However, this is not to say that all those interviewed were eligible for assistance offered based on the various criteria of the organizations working in this area. In the other two strata less than 20% of IDPs in Stratum B received food assistance, and around a quarter of the residents in Stratum C reportedly received food assistance. Even fewer households, other than IDPs in Stratum A, reported receiving non-food assistance such as social benefits / cash (less than 10% of households), see Figure 5.

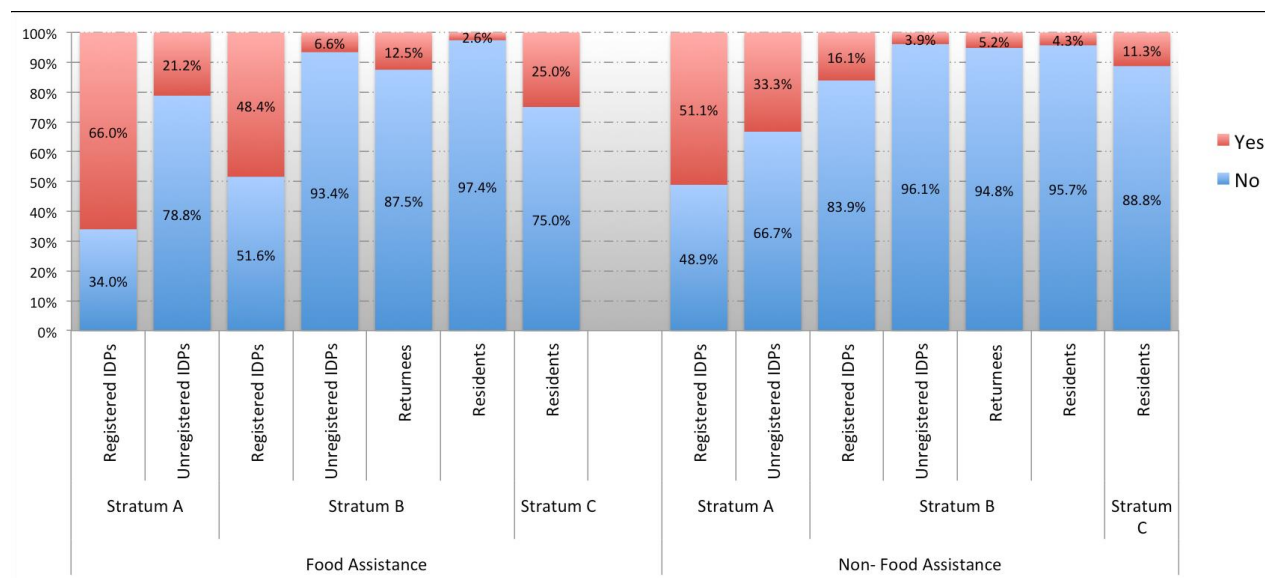
<sup>10</sup> For example, some there were reports from surveyed households that food prices in Kramatorsk (Stratum B) usually were higher than in nearby sites even in the pre-conflict period.



One important observation from the assessment was that unregistered IDPs were concerned about the registration process, which would have enabled the access to assistance, due to perceived threat to their families safety and home’s security at point of origin. In addition, what was clear from the assessment was that assistance offered to IDPs and residents alike was not as coordinated and complete, in terms of ration adequacy and duration, as could be, leaving room for improvements in coordination for both targeting and ration provision.

Overall, targeting was to principally women with young children, lactating women, elderly, disabled, and those who had completely lost their homes.

**Figure 5: Percentage of households reporting to have received assistance**



## 5 Household Circumstances

The following section considers the physical description of the households interviewed, their internal structure, as well as household displacement.

### 5.1 Household Demographics

Households tend to be quite small in size, with around 3 people on average (ranging from 2 to 8). This does not vary much between strata. However, 20% of IDP households in Stratum A reported 5 or more people in them, more than IDP households or residents elsewhere. Households in Stratum C were less likely to have children or young children in them. Within this stratum households were also less likely to have elderly household members, which was a little contrary to anecdotal observations. Approximately 1 in 5 IDP households (both in Strata A and B) had chronically ill household members, indicated increased vulnerability of significant proportion of IDPs (registered and unregistered). The disproportionately larger number of chronically ill members in Strata A and B may be indicative of poor health care access in Stratum C, which is corroborated by information gathered qualitatively.

There are slightly more male adults in unregistered IDP households and anecdotally may relate to concerns over recruitment into the military.

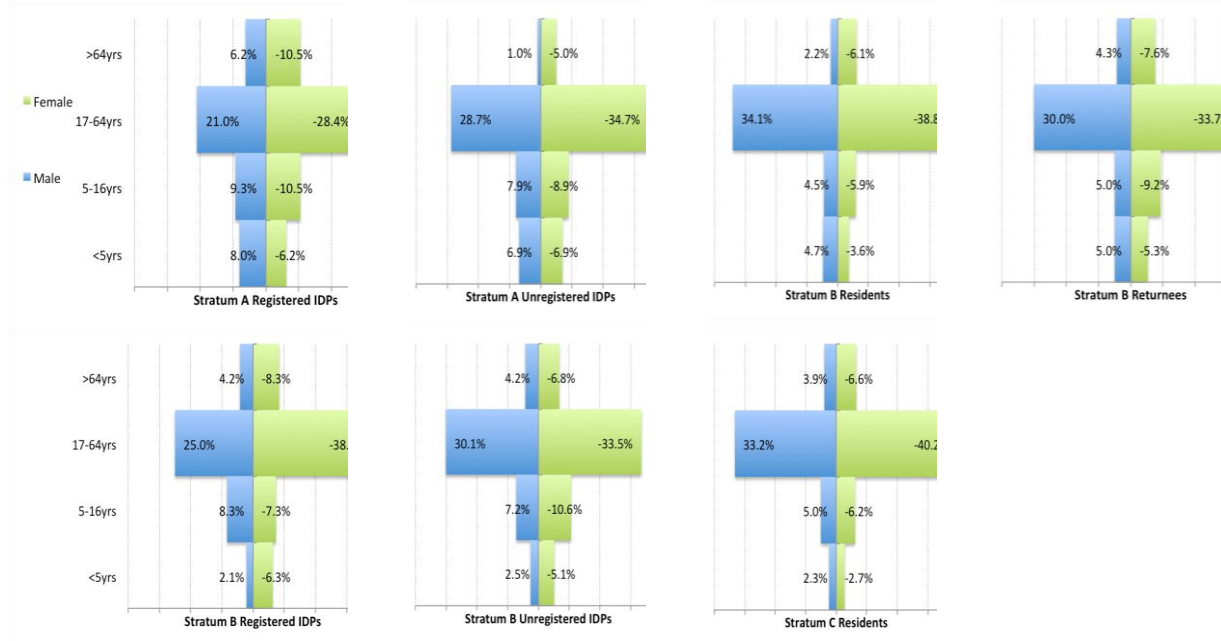
Dependency ratios<sup>11</sup> were generally much higher for IDPs than other household types (60% to 90%, compared to 45% of the residents in Strata B and C which is similar to that of the national figures (43%)<sup>12</sup>), indicating that there is a heavier financial / care burden on the productive household members in these households, leaving them more vulnerable to food insecurity. It also illustrates that displacement is more likely to be of

<sup>11</sup> the ratio (expressed as a percentage) of those household members >64 year olds + <17 year olds / 17-64 year olds.

<sup>12</sup> World Bank 2013

household members in the non-working age range<sup>13</sup>. Unregistered IDPs tend to have a lower dependency ratio (approximately 60%, still higher than the national figures of 45%), and although these households have fewer elderly and young compared to those of working age, they are still less independent than residents. Resident populations in the sample are more reflective of the normal national profile of households, indicating that the family units left behind may be remaining as the original family unit, or at least with a similar proportion of dependents and productive members.

**Figure 6: Household Demographics**



## 5.2 Living Conditions

There were a variety of constraints and difficulties in the locations surveyed and between various groups. In summary:

### **Stratum A**

According to the focus group discussions with IDPs those living in communal or shared spaces were the most vulnerable, having difficulties in accessing refrigeration and cooking facilities.

About half of IDPs currently located in Stratum A live in rented apartments / houses, where a significant price increase for rented estate is observed. Residents are reluctant to lend housing to IDPs (presumed risk of non-payments, robbery, damage, etc.). This affects mainly non-registered IDPs, who have to re-structure their expenditures – relatively less money is left for food. However, considering that non-registered IDPs in general have means to support themselves, this factor isn't likely to influence their food insecurity status significantly.

It was estimated that 10-20% of the total IDP population were living in collective centres at the time of the assessment. Another 15-20% share housing with their relatives/friends. This category of people may consist of both registered and non-registered depending on the social status / income level.

About one third of IDPs are located in collective living areas (i.e. dormitories, recreational zones, camps, etc.)/ These are registered IDPs who didn't have where to go to and turned to authorities and / or IDPs' centres to receive housing and food support.

<sup>13</sup> Ages 0-14 and 65plus years



## **Stratum B**

Key informants were asked to report the degree of destruction / damage of housing in this area. Particularly where there was heavier conflict (i.e. Slovyansk, Lysychansk) reports assessed that this was up to 10% of the housing. Some sites in this stratum serve as IDP transit points (providing short-term housing & “primary” assistance) rather than long-term settlements, i.e. Lysychansk, Krasnoarmiysk, Volnovakha. Difficulty in accessing drinking water, due to low quality of piped water, remains one of major problems for 5 raions of Donetsk oblast: Oleksandrivskiy, Krasnoarmiyskiy, Dobropilskiy, Volnovaskiy, Mar’inskiy. Delivering water by tank cars as well as boring wells helps only partially and doesn’t resolve the problem in general.

With the increased fighting and shelling along the contact line, reported in January 2015, the damage to both infrastructure and housing in the adjacent settlements of Stratum B is likely to increase significantly, prompting more and more people to leave the area.

## **Stratum C**

The majority of residents and returnees live in own apartments / houses. Main specifics are:

- Problems with electricity & gas supply were reported for Donetsk city, Amvrosiivskiy raion, Horlivka.
- Situation with damage is worsening every day due to continuous military activities (i.e. Donetsk, Horlivka, Luhansk, Rovenky, etc.)
- In areas with / close to current active gunfire (Krasnyi Luch, Rovenky, Horlivka, Donetsk, etc.): many people spend most of the time in shelters / basements and therefore have very limited possibilities to cook meals;
- Some sites suffered more than others, i.e. Khryaschuvate, Novosvitlivka (Krasnodonskiy raion) where the settlements were seriously damaged by shelling;

Depending on the site up to 15% of residents seem to share housing with their relatives / friends. This decision may be connected to psychological factors, i.e. fear to stay alone or to lose a close one in a difficult/ life endangering situation.

Living conditions become cramped, with extended family members seeking refuge, as well as children whose parents are engaged in the conflict, and it is possible that there is an increased burden financially due to reduced opportunity to work and potentially limited savings. This is evidenced in that larger households report higher consumption coping index scores as well as livelihood coping strategies.

Assessing the overall situation with living conditions the situation of those who are hosted in dormitories, hostels, community halls (no matter IDP or resident) is most vulnerable due to:

- Heating issue – many of these locations are usually not suitable for cold period;
- Lack / absence of fridges to preserve perishable food;
- Absence / lack of kitchen facilities – unlike dormitories where kitchen facilities are shared, recreational sites usually imply restaurant / canteen feeding – thus, offering no possibility to cook individually.
- Those sheltering in basements / bomb shelters have increased problems in cooking and accessing food.

## **5.3 Displacement & Immobility**

Based on focus group discussions, the key reason for re-location for most of IDPs was safety concern (own and family) – direct threat to life due to military activity, although for others it was to remain in areas controlled by the government of Ukraine.

IDPs stay outside their native settlements on average six and a half months, with those moving to Stratum B locations remaining outside the conflict zone for a longer time than those who moved to Stratum A, possibly explained by stronger family links and accommodation availability.

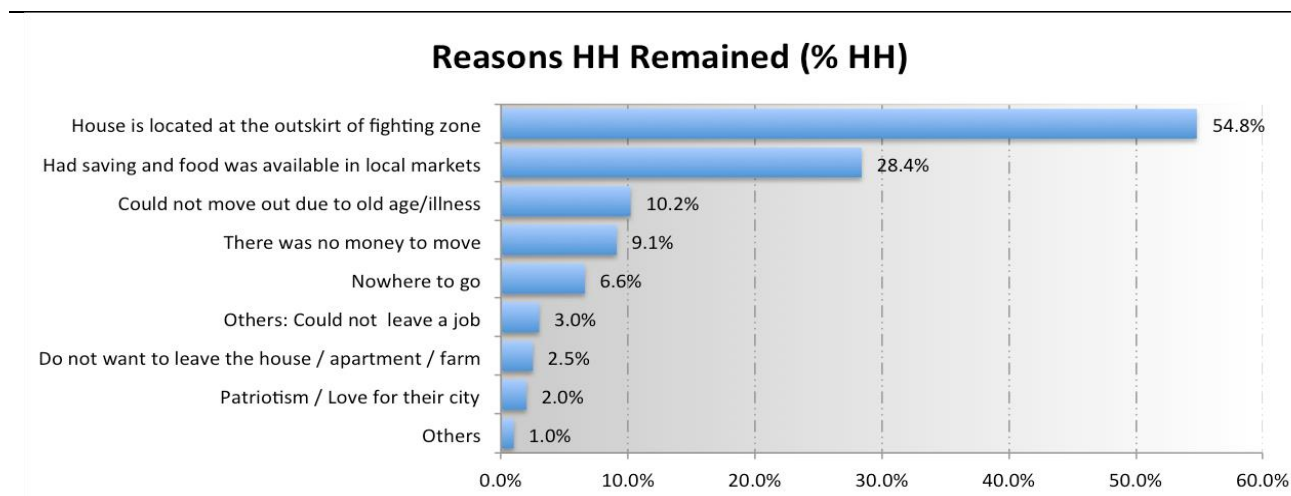
Based on household interview data it was reported that a number of households were returning back to their original location and commenced in August, peaking in September-October, having spent approximately 50 days away. During this time the majority of households (just less than two thirds) lived off savings, about a third finding support from relatives or friends and a small proportion (about 10%) gaining support from NGOs or civil society. From discussions in focus groups some reasons behind these households return were:

- Impossibility to sustain proper level of living on new places due to absence of accommodation and financial problems combined with impossibility to find new job;
- Prolonged official cease-fire pushed IDPs to go back for short periods to check that property was safe (given the reports of illegal takeovers and robberies of the apartments and houses belonging to IDPs) etc.

It is quite possible that the returnees were mainly registered IDPs that did not, after fleeing the insecurity, gain adequate assistance from governmental support systems (and presumably other agents) to maintain an acceptable lifestyle. Their return may or may not reflect an adequate degree of safety in their home locations, nor adequate access to food.

In Stratum C about half of residents stayed at their settlements because their houses were located at the outskirts of fighting zone (50%). It should be noted that it was not possible to interview households that were in the directly affected / non-government held areas for this assessment. The threat wasn't that obvious and most likely was considered short-lived. Moreover, about 1/3 of people had savings and didn't foresee problems with cash availability, and relatively easy access to food in the markets, at the time of the assessment. A similar pattern was seen for residents in Stratum B, see Figure 7.

**Figure 7: Summary of why interviewed residents in Stratum B & C remained behind**



However some households, those with generally older members and / or seriously ill, did not consider relocation due to physical conditions of household's members. These constrains were more commonly reported in Luhansk oblast than in Donetsk.

## 6 Household food security

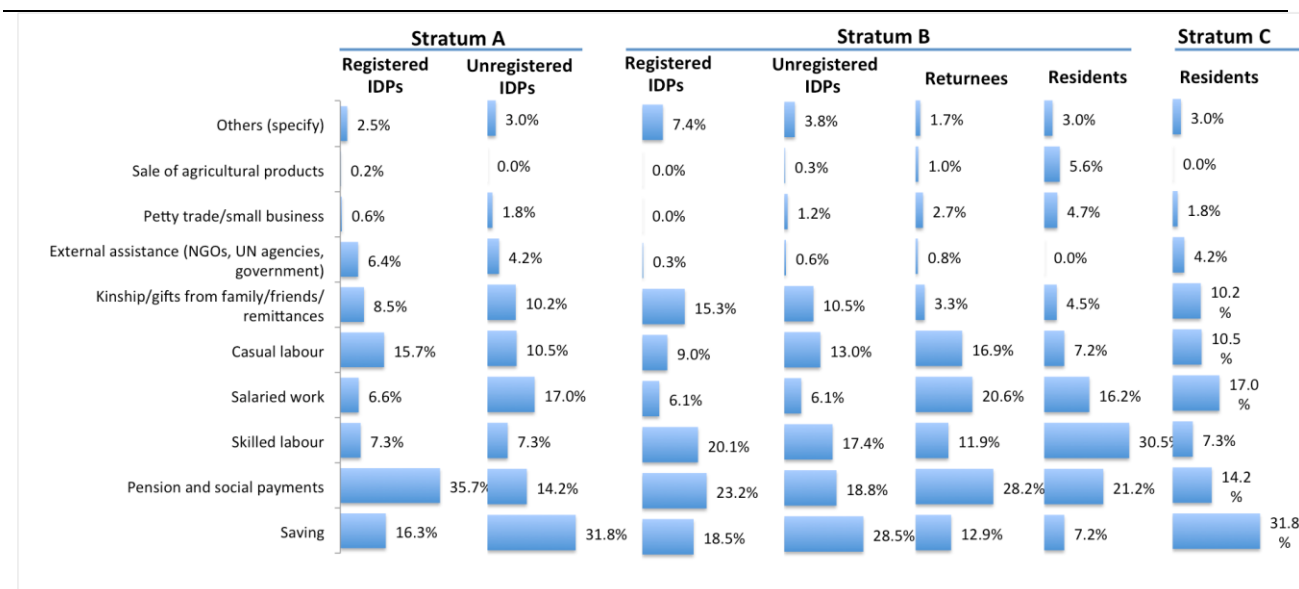
This section is to describe the key elements of household food security. The analysis is taken in the context of the issues raised during the previous section on context.

### 6.1 Main sources of income

Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts are historically the most urbanized and industrialized regions of Ukraine, meaning high share of salaried work complemented by skilled labour income sources and relatively low share of agricultural supply (households' own production and farming business).

The significant destruction of the core industries and infrastructure in Donbas significantly affected the labour market and led to the job losses by the majority of the population, and this especially affected the employees of budgetary and the social sphere. For example, 85% year-on-year decline in industrial output was reported for Luhansk oblast in September; while Donetsk oblast reported a 59% decline in industrial production. Overall, expert assessments indicated that by October Donbas has lost 80% of its industrial potential<sup>14</sup>.

**Figure 8: Main sources of income by population group (mean share of total income reported)**



NB: Skilled labour and Salaried Work are likely to have been perceived as the same thing

Now the resource-rich industrial belt is practically not working, with further decline since autumn 2014, although there are no official figures for the numbers that have lost work.

Important differences between groups that are noteworthy are the following:

1. In Strata A and B pensions and social payments are important sources of income for around a quarter of the population.
2. For IDPs and Residents in Stratum C the use of savings is particularly important for a quarter to a third of the population, indicating an important vulnerability to long term exposure to shocks for these households. This particularly applies to Luhansk oblast', where an average share of savings spent in total income is about 50%. Such high share of savings as an income source is likely to be caused by general situation with government related payments in the area (seized pensions, social benefits, salaries payments to public sector employees as well as closed manufacturing facilities and mines).
3. Salaried work and skilled labour are less important for IDPs as a source of income then for residents and returnees in Strata B and C.
4. Significantly more registered IDPs report benefiting from social payments than unregistered IDPs (not shown in **Error! Reference source not found.**). There are a number of factors influencing registration, but it is possible that these households (at the time of the assessment) were above the means test threshold. This is not to say that they will run out of funds soon if they are not gaining income from other sources.

<sup>14</sup> Socio-Economic Vulnerability And Risk Assessment, UNDP Ukraine, 5 November 2014, <http://www.humanitarianresponse.info/system/files/documents/files/VRA%20October%202014.pdf>

5. More IDPs than others reported using kinship and gifts from friends/family as a main source of income than other groups (around 10% of households), and would indicate that there are a significant number of households that are particularly vulnerable.
6. Casual labour is also an important source of income for a significant percentage of IDPs and returnees (Stratum B). This may indicate that IDPs have difficulty in integrating to the labour market equitably or, in the case of the returnees, difficulty in returning their previous income activities, or limited permanent labour opportunities locally.

The analysis of the main sources of income is difficult to interpret, as there is no baseline information to refer to. Thus understand change and the reasons for differences between groups are not so straightforward without significant amounts of speculation.

## 6.2 Food Access

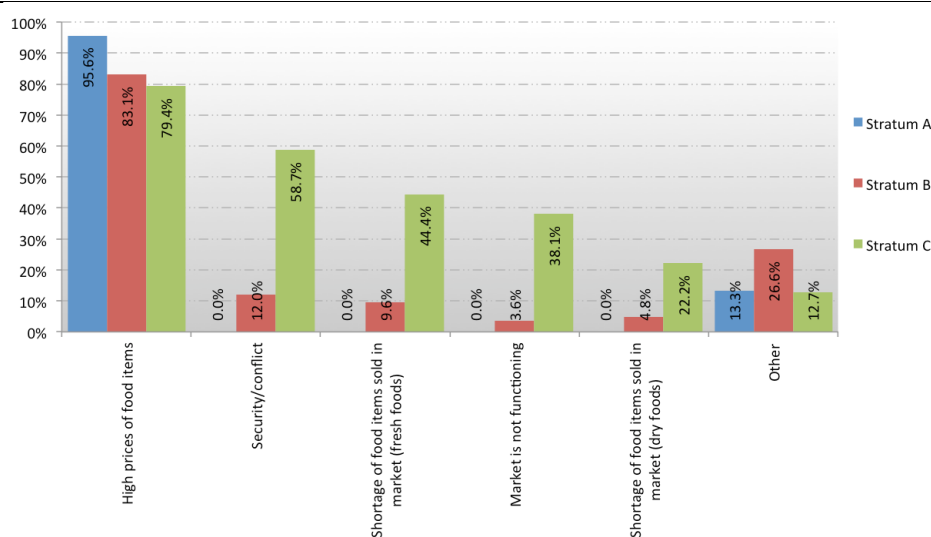
This section covers all aspects of how households gain access to food. The FCS and FCGs are part of the access indicators, as well as livelihood coping, and expenditure patterns. These three core indicators are processed using WFP's Consolidated Approach for Reporting Indicators of Food Security (CARI). The result of this is the classification of the household's food security status<sup>15</sup>.

### 6.2.1 Household Market Access

Overall only one of ten respondents indicated not having access to the markets. Returnees, those coming back to the buffer zone areas, appear to experience difficulties accessing markets more than others, but may be related to orientating themselves within the current situation of insecurity in how to safely access markets. In terms of issues accessing markets 60-80% of households reported having some form of difficulty accessing these markets in the month prior to the survey.

In terms of constraints Figure 9 indicates that high prices for food items seem to be the most pronounced, namely for IDPs running out of financial means (savings, no / low salaries) and residents in Stratum C, not having access to their money (no cash available, no salaries / pensions / benefits paid).

**Figure 9: Most important issues reported by households having difficulty accessing markets by Stratum**



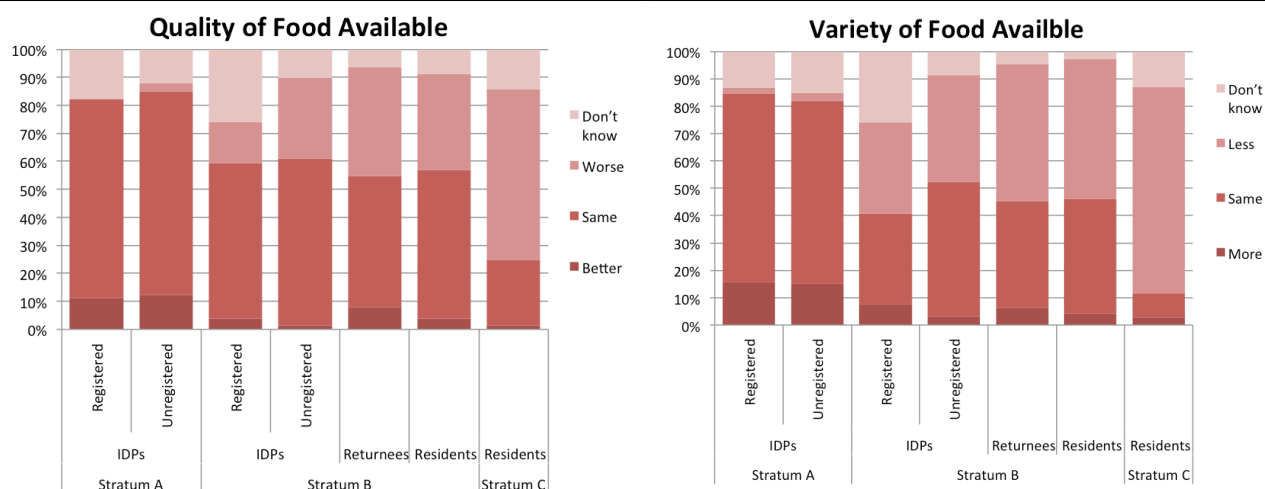
According to information from focus group discussions, those areas of Stratum B close to Stratum C and all of Stratum C reported increased number of security incidents (gunfire / shelling), which hinder physical access to food significantly. People tend to stay in shelters most of the time (i.e. parts of Donetsk and Luhansk cities, Horlivka, Rovenky, Dzerzhynsk, Mar'inika, parts of

Lysychansk, etc.), and have problems in restocking food from markets or even receiving/collecting food assistance. Other information points to how military activity that transects main roads is causing supply chain disruption to certain areas (i.e. Krasnyi Luch).

<sup>15</sup> <https://resources.vam.wfp.org/CARI>

Problem of fresh and dry foods not being available on the market is relevant only to residents from Stratum C and people (residents, returnees, IDPs) from front line sites of Stratum B.

**Figure 10: Perception of Food Quality and Variety in markets by household type and stratum**



The quantity, diversity and quality of consumed food was reportedly lower for all population categories affected by the conflict (IDPs, residents, returnees). This was a more important issue with the residents in Stratum C. The exception is residents of Stratum B where military action had not been experienced (for example: Svatove, Starobilsk, Dobropillia, Velyki Novosilky, etc.) – where the perceptions are that access remained ‘as before’.

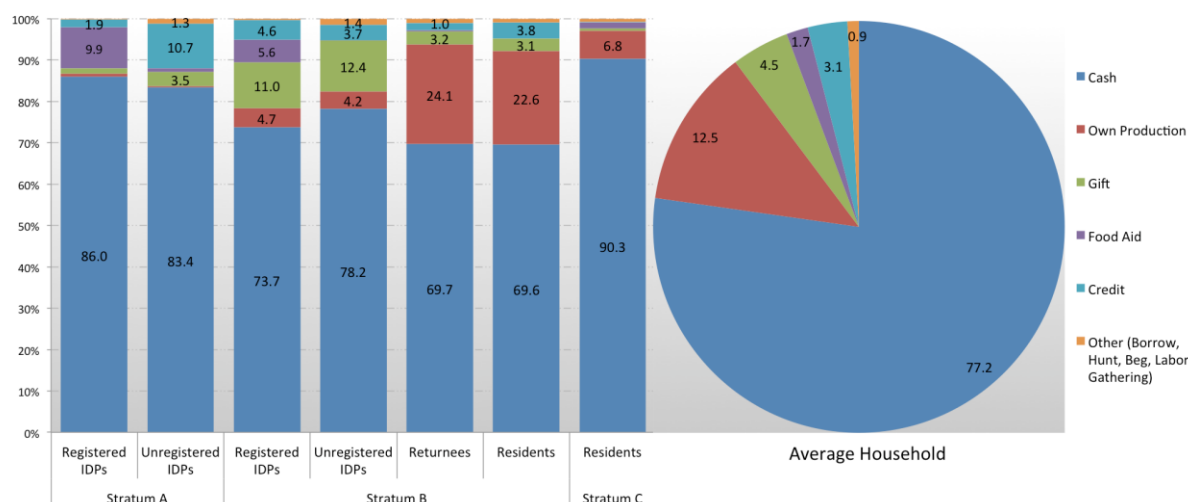
With increased choice of cheaper food options of lower quality (processed meats from fresh meat, seasonal vegetables etc.) by residents and IDPs within Stratum C, and in part Stratum B, as a money saving exercise the supply side in these areas appears to have changed to meet changes in demand, based on key informant interviews.

Higher food prices were reported by most to all households regardless of where there were located. This reflects the current national economic crisis, driven by political instability (conflict in the East) and resulting in inflation as well as devalued currency.

### 6.2.1.1 Sources of food

Understanding the main sources of food provides an insight into where vulnerabilities lie in terms of food access. Overall about 75% of households reported the main source of food was through purchase with cash.

**Figure 11: Main sources of food – by Stratum and Household type (with Average household indicated on right)**



This was the highest in Stratum C (90%). For IDPs in Stratum A cash was the main manner in which food was purchased for about 85% of households. About 20-25% of returnees and residents in Stratum B reported acquiring food from “own production” but is most likely to represent pickled and persevered vegetables from kitchen gardens or small plots. Food assistance was only apparent for registered IDPs and shows low coverage amongst those interviewed at the time of the assessment.

### 6.2.2 Food Consumption<sup>16</sup>

The food consumption score (FCS) is a measure by which food consumption (both diversity and frequency over a 7-day recall period, with more nutrient dense foods being given a higher weight in the analysis) is analyzed, and the score being used to categorize consumption into three food consumption groups (FCG) – poor (FCS of ≤21), borderline (FCS of 21.5 - 35), and acceptable (FCS of >35). This represents the household’s current status in terms of food security.

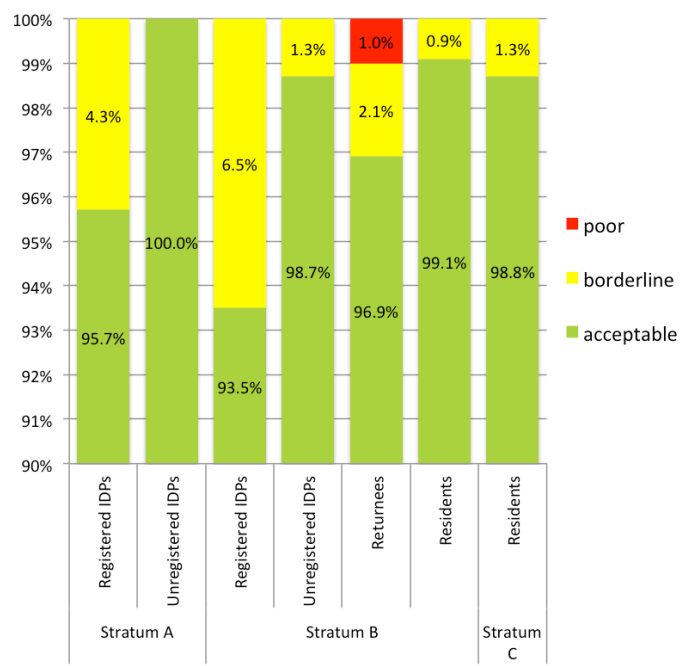
The analysis indicated that the FCS of each of the population groups was similarly high (67-75), with less than 1% of the population assessed with a diet classified as “poor” and less than 2% of the population assessed with “borderline” diets (see Figure 12).

The reduced coping strategy index indicates that households are having increased problems in accessing the quality of food they are used to. It is likely that despite the food consumption patterns appearing to be relatively normal, the quality of the food, and thus the nutritional value and subsequent impact on health, is likely to be less than optimal (i.e. similar amounts of kcal but fewer micronutrients). However, as pointed out in a following section, the reduced CSI points towards a reduction in daily energy intake.

There were very few differences between stratum and household types, with few instances of foods being missing or greatly reduced. However, Residents and Returnees in Stratum B consumed eggs and meat once more per week than other households, as was the case for “other fruits” (i.e. those not orange in colour).

Other observations of note were that larger households reported better food consumption patterns (mainly from the contribution of increased consumption of milk). However, the reduced CSI is also higher in larger households indicating greater difficulty accessing food. One possible explanation for this is that small households (of 2) contain only adults. In these households milk is not as frequently consumed, reducing the FCS. With a common coping strategy being to reduce meals of adults to feed children, these households will not utilize this more severe coping strategy and thus have a lower CSI. Therefore the disparity between the groups is most likely driven by the presence of children rather than broader food security issues, and this remains consistent with the observation of lower consumption in Stratum C (where a lower proportion of children were reported in households).

Figure 12: Percentage of HH by type in Food Consumption Group



### 6.2.3 Livelihood Coping Strategies

Livelihood-based coping strategies, representing asset depletion, were formulated into **3 groups** for their use in the classification of food security (CARI):

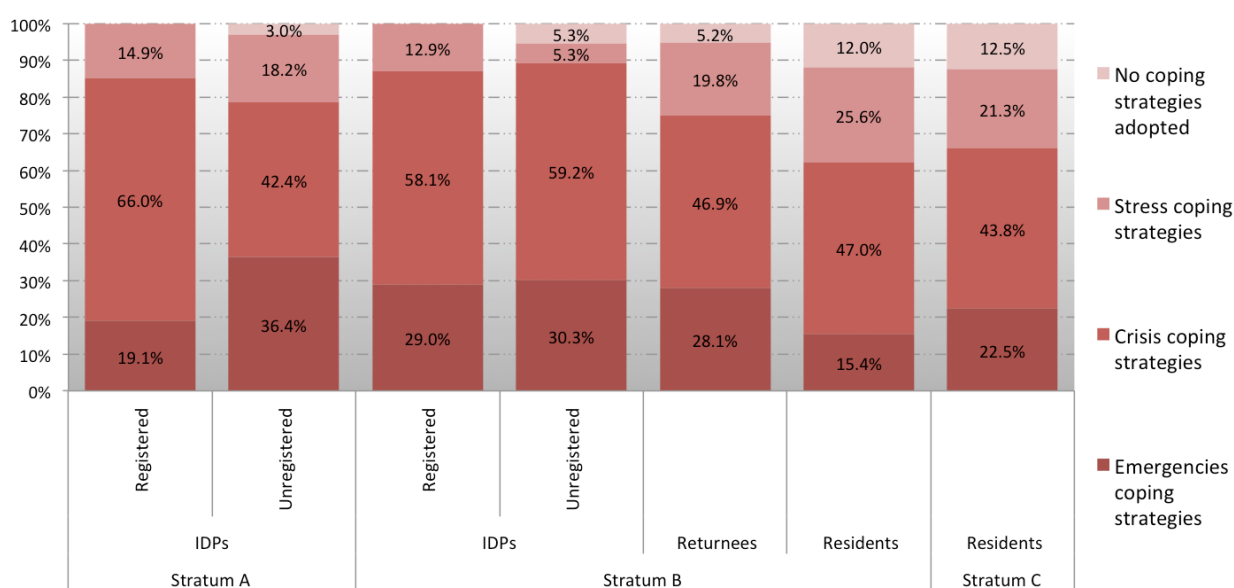
<sup>16</sup> There was a module on infant consumption patterns. However, only 13 households responded, too few to analyze the data with any degree of accuracy.



- **4 stress strategies:** Spent savings; Borrowed money or food from a formal lender or bank; purchased food on credit or borrowed food; Sold household assets/goods.
- **3 crisis strategies:** Reduced non-food expenses on health (including drugs) and education; Withdrew children from school; Sold productive assets or means of transport.
- **3 emergency strategies:** Entire household migrated; Sold house<sup>17</sup> or land; Begging.

It should be noted that these coping strategies are in response to the need to access food. However, in this case many households responded, particularly when it comes to “entire household migrated” not as a response to accessing food but for personal safety, Figure 13 illustrates this well. This can be clearly seen in that IDPs responded to this most frequently (as expected) but it does mean that this has an influence by elevating the proportion of those defined as food insecure.

**Figure 13: Coping strategies by HH type and Strata**



In some cases IDPs managed to successfully move their businesses from conflict areas to safer locations. This included some public service employees (e.g. Luhansk local authorities offices were evacuated to Severodonetsk, and Donetsk – to Kramatorsk) as well as employees of some companies. This accounts for 5-25% of IDPs, located mostly in bigger cities (Kharkiv, Dnipropetrovsk, Zaporizhzhia, Severodonetsk).

As is seen from the main sources of income the most important livelihood coping strategy was reported as spending savings (approx. 75-90% of HHs reporting). Reduced non-food and health expenditures was second most frequently reported (60-80% of HHs). Withdrawing children from school was more frequently reported by IDPs but is most likely to be due to relocation. To a small degree (around one in eight households) IDPs and returnees more frequently reported selling household assets, than residents. The sale of productive assets was also not frequently reported.

#### 6.2.4 Reduced Coping Strategy Index

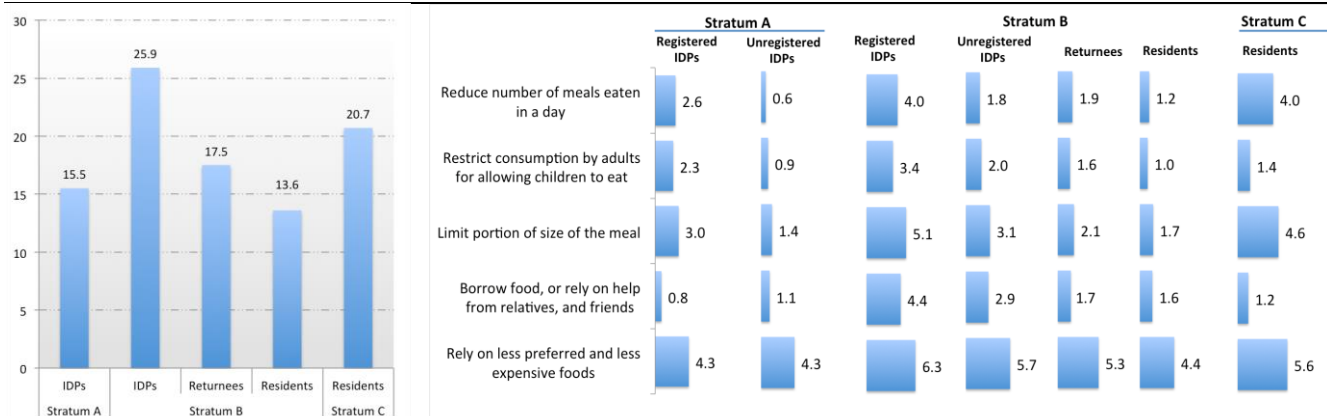
The reduced coping strategy index (rCSI)<sup>18</sup> is similar to that of the livelihood coping strategies. However, it provides additional insight into the household’s difficulties in accessing food, particularly what is happening within the household. The outcome is a weighted score based on the severity of the coping mechanism used

<sup>17</sup> Sale of land or houses was not possible in conflict areas as the registrar’s office was closed, precluding this as an option.

<sup>18</sup> [http://documents.wfp.org/stellent/groups/public/documents/manual\\_guide\\_proced/wfp211058.pdf](http://documents.wfp.org/stellent/groups/public/documents/manual_guide_proced/wfp211058.pdf)

and the frequency (in the 7 days prior to interview). There is some research that supports the observation that higher rCSI scores are correlated with a reduction in caloric intake<sup>19</sup>.

**Figure 14: Reduced CSI by Household Type and Stratum and mean frequency of strategy use by HH type and stratum**



The most frequently reported coping strategy indicated within this tool was consuming less preferred or less expensive food items. This seems a likely consequence in the changes in the market structures and access, as well as the decrease in disposable income<sup>20</sup>. IDPs in Stratum A were less likely to report on support from relatives/friends and may reflect a reduced access to social support networks. This was also the case for Residents in Stratum C, and may reflect the case that many of their connections are also experiencing problems and are unable to support them.

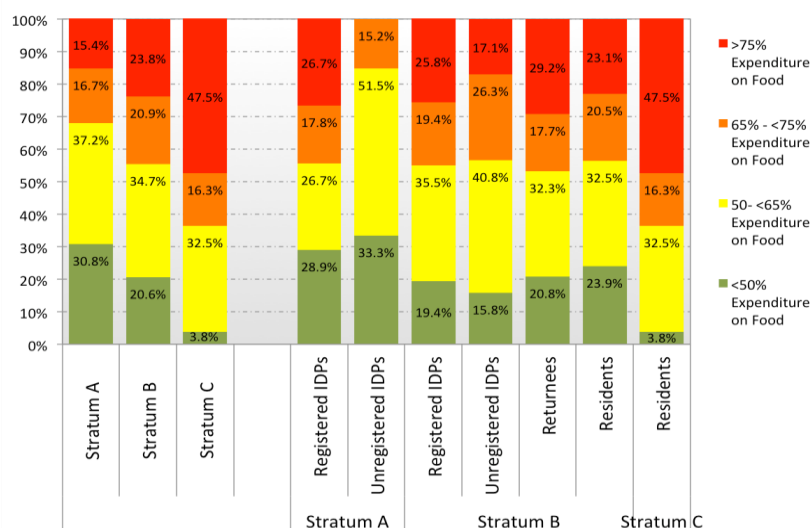
IDPs in Stratum B and Residents in Stratum C were under the highest food stress (with the largest rCSI score). Although this indicator is not incorporated into the final classification of the food security category, it provides a useful insight into what households are doing to cope with the changes in access to food.

### 6.2.5 Expenditure on Food

Food expenditure as a share of the total expenditure<sup>21</sup> is useful measure of poverty or issues accessing food. It is also one of the indicators used for the CARI categorizations, and represents the household’s economic vulnerability.

Overall, a higher percentage of households (residents) in strata C indicated that they spent 75% or more on food. This observation is likely to be due to the lack of availability of any other commodities to spend money on and they may also be more likely to be homeowners than to be renting. During times of crisis,

**Figure 15: Share of Expenditure on food (% of total) – by household type and Stratum**



<sup>19</sup> Maxwell, Daniel, Clement Ahiadeke, Carol Levin, Margaret Armar-Klemesu, Sawudatu Zakariah, and Grace Mary Lamptey (1999). "Alternative Food Security Indicators: Revisiting the Frequency and Severity of 'Coping Strategies.'" Food Policy 24(4): 411-429.

<sup>20</sup> Anecdotally some households may be reporting this as reduction in confectionary for children etc.

<sup>21</sup> The thresholds for expenditure (food expenditure as a % of total) used in this analysis were <50% (Food Secure), 50-<65% (Marginally Food Insecure), 65-<75% (Moderately Food Insecure), ≥75% (Food Insecure).



conservation of cash and focus on basic needs seems more likely of an explanation than poverty. To a lesser extent (as prices have not increased so significantly) increased food prices will, in part, account for some of the increased proportion of food expenditure.

In terms of other expenditures, Unregistered IDPs in Stratum A had the highest proportionate expenditure on rent (approximately 30%) compared to other household types by stratum. Residents in Stratum C had the least expenditure on rent (around 8%), but is likely to reflect own home ownership.

### 6.3 Food Security Console

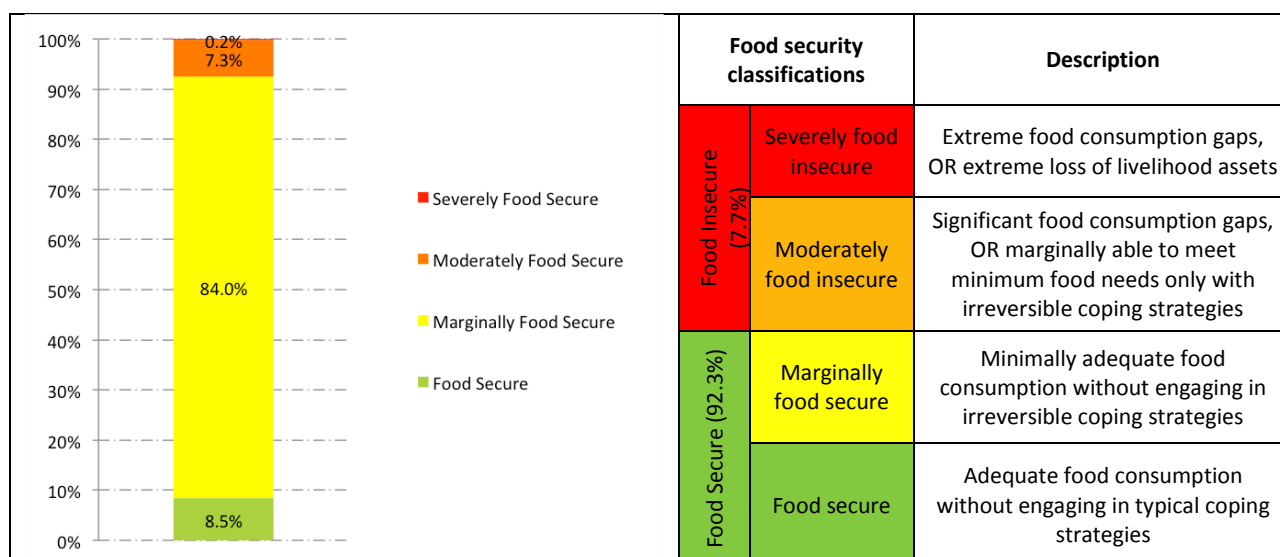
The CARI tool provides an analysis of household food access taking into their current status (consumption) and coping capacity (economic vulnerability and asset depletion). The components, analyzed previously, are combined for the final food security classification, the summary of which is presented in Table 1.

Initial estimations of food insecurity had used national poverty rates of around 20% of the population. This food security analysis refines this proportion of the population to the most vulnerable and those with more acute food needs, being approximately 8% of the assessed population. Of the approximately 5.2 million people affected by the current conflict this represents around 400,000 people that require more immediate assistance (of the 1.1 million previously identified).

**Table 1: CARI Console (Food Security Classifications)**

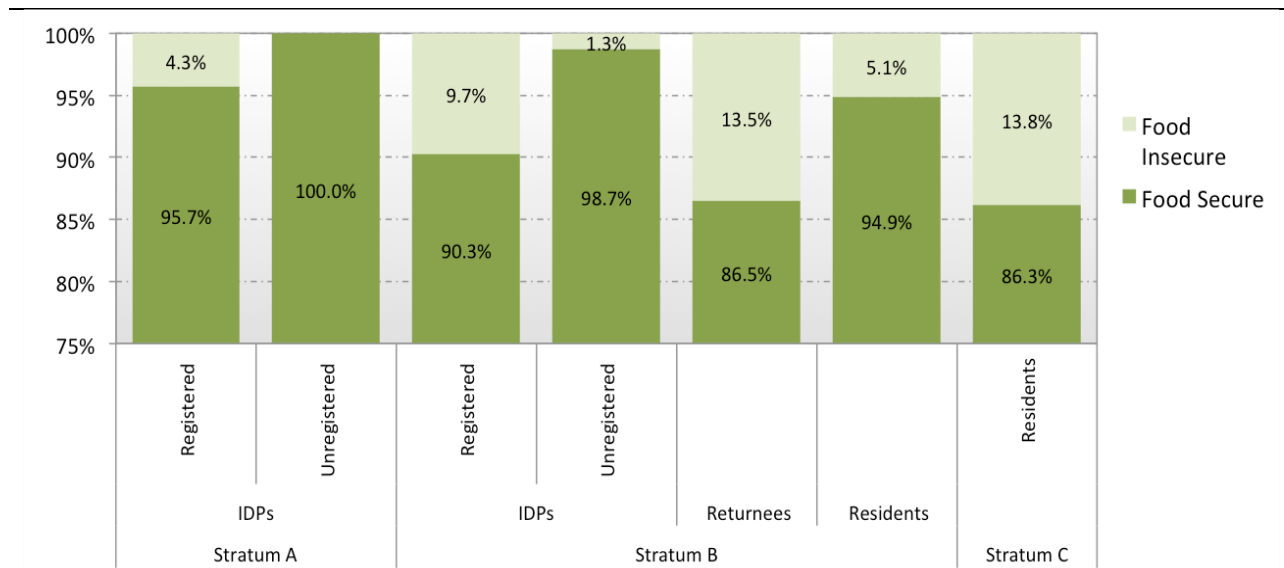
Domain		Indicator	Food secure		Food insecure	
			Food Secure (1)	Marginally Food Secure (2)	Moderately Food Insecure (3)	Severely Food Insecure (4)
Current Status	Food Consumption	Food Consumption Group	97.9%	-	1.9%	0.2%
	Economic Vulnerability	Share of expenditure on food	19.5%	34.7%	19.5%	26.4%
Coping Capacity	Asset Depletion	Livelihood coping strategy categories	7.1%	18.1%	50.6%	24.2%
	<b>Food Security Index Shares</b>		8.5%	84.0%	7.3%	0.2%
			<b>92.5%</b>		<b>7.5%</b>	

The following summarizes the situation in terms of the experience that households in each category are facing.



The following table indicates the food security situation by household type and stratum, this is presented as household being defined as food insecure (moderate and severe) or not.

**Figure 16: Percentage of Households that are considered Food Insecure by Household Type and Stratum**



## 7 Discussion

This assessment was carried out in October - November of 2014. Since then temperatures have dropped and fighting has intensified, leading to additional access restrictions, which has a direct affect on the food security situation of the population in eastern Ukraine.

Household food insecurity is predominately driven by physical access to food due to difficulties in the transportation of food into conflict zones as well as reduction in the quality of food available. In addition, economic slump, changes in how social benefits, pensions, and the closure of government offices resulted in a significant reduction in access to income. To compound this banks within the conflict zone have closed or their ATMs are no longer dispensing cash.

What is apparent is that the proportion of households that are classified as being food insecure is small. However, relative poverty levels are at about 20% in this part of Ukraine and what this analysis is more than likely to illustrate is the households that are more acutely affected by the current crisis and require immediate assistance.

On the whole, households with 2, 3, or 4 members tended to be more food insecure (using the CARI tool) than households with 5 or more people. It is possible that this, slightly counter intuitive observation, is driven by the presence of children in the larger households. This in turn, seems to result in the increased reporting of milk consumption (a higher quality food) increasing the FCS. It is known that these larger households are struggling as the observations of increased scores in the rCSI were made, with important understanding provided about how food is allocated within households that have children. The proportion of those households that are food insecure is not likely to be so much higher as a result of this (as only 10% of the sampled population currently have more than 4 people in them).

The displaced population has encountered difficulties in securing substantial work, whether that is due to a lack of employment opportunities as a consequence of the general economic crisis in Ukraine, or due to issues of integration in their new location. With the likelihood that these households are continuing to draw on savings, it is likely that they will exhaust these soon, becoming more reliant on government safety nets that may not cover living costs adequately.

This is exacerbated, with funds less likely to cover needs, by the heavy reliance on markets for food (being a predominately urban community that was sampled from, or IDPs that have moved to urban centres) and the market price increases caused by the current economic and political crisis.

Overall, food consumption profiles are not in the Poor and Borderline categories. When looking into this issue it appears that many food items/groups are being maintained in the diet but are being substituted by lower quality items, due to lack of market supply, or as a coping mechanism to reduce expenditure. Although the energetic value of the diet consumed is likely to suffice for now (although to some extent reduction in meal frequency and size has been reported by IDPs and returnees, as well as residents in Stratum C) the change in quality is not necessarily providing a healthy diet, with the replacement food items being higher in saturated fats (such as switching to processed meat instead of fresh meat) or lower in nutrient content, old or canned vegetables/fruit.

The analysis also highlights that food assistance does not show highly in the food sources of IDPs or other populations that are targeted for assistance. This does indicate that a more substantial and coordinated effort has the opportunity to improve coverage.

In conclusion, **8% of the population sampled is classified as food insecure**. This is **approximately 400,000 people in need of food assistance**. In Stratum C, and parts of Stratum B these households would require that assistance in-kind due to security considerations, as well as physical access. IDPs, particularly in Stratum A would benefit from cash or vouchers in that markets are freely accessible, although the feasibility of this would need to be assessed.

## 8 Recommendations

This assessment has identified three priority groups for food assistance in all three strata. It is very likely that the patterns of household food security in all three strata will persist over the next months. However the intensification of fighting and possible spill-over to new sites may lead to a larger number of households becoming food insecure.

The **priorities for food assistance** are depicted below in order of criticality:

1. **Vulnerable residents in Stratum C.** This group have the highest food insecurity and lives in the most insecure environment. According to most recent findings, the overall food security situation in DPR is alarming. The three pillars of food security (availability, access, utilization) have been affected in a mounting, systematic manner, contributing to an increasing level of food needs.

As the winter season progresses and the conflict intensifies, these households are certainly the most vulnerable, with the prospect of getting worse, and are the first priority for food assistance.

In terms of responses, insecurity, personal safety, and lack of freedom of movement are of paramount importance in terms of the modality of response. Cash responses in Stratum C (except for, possibly, Donetsk city) would put beneficiaries at risk and voucher based systems may not find adequate supplies in markets to support this. Food distributions would be the most appropriate modality in areas where risk of conflict is high or on going.

Overall, the **approach of the food assistance** in Stratum C should be two-folded: a) systematic food assistance to the already identified people who need food assistance; b) contingency component envisaging urgent prepositioning to meet the rapidly emerging needs

2. **IDPs and returnees in Stratum B.** IDPs in this stratum are much more vulnerable than in Stratum A with more than half of the households engaging in severe consumption coping mechanisms, and around 90% of these household engaging in crisis and emergency livelihood coping indicating significant asset depletion. In addition, households closer to the locations included in Stratum C reporting that supply of products other than staples were starting to run short, combined with half of residents and returnees reporting difficulties accessing markets. In light of these observations there is a high potential that in parts of Stratum B households will start to be worse off as the winter proceeds.

The recent developments in terms of security and sharp displacement are confirming the trend of vulnerability in the Stratum B. It is important to note, that Stratum B is the area which is naturally faces the need to host the largest number of IDPs especially in the situation of rapid displacement or evacuation of civilians.

Since the Stratum B is quite mixed in terms of security and supplies, especially parts of Stratum along the conflict line, the recommended **modality of response** should be a combination of food parcels and cash or vouchers in safer areas. It is important to

3. **Registered IDPs in Stratum A.** Although able to maintain food consumption patterns, some households were not able to support adequate diets and more than half of these households are coping with reduced amounts of food in the household.

For IDPs in Stratum A it is likely that they will benefit from food assistance in the form of cash or vouchers with the intention of protection of savings and ease of the burden to provide for a higher proportion of dependants within their households.

### **Further monitoring and assessment**

With the current intense fighting along the conflict line, increased insecurity and volatility of the situation the needs are hardly quantifiable and become invalid or outdated within a short period of time. The needs can be best identified in a reliable and timely manner only at the field-level, including through a field level joint cluster monitoring of the needs and close collaboration with the authorities. Increased field presence and establish of permanent monitoring systems will help identify and validate the food needs of the vulnerable population.

# Annexes

## 1. Sampled Sites

Stratum	Oblast	Site	
<b>A</b>	Dnipropetrovska	Dnipropetrovsk	2 KII + FGD
		Kryvyi Rih	2 KII + FGD
	Kharkivska	Kharkiv	2 KII + FGD
		Balakleya	2 KII + FGD
	Zaporizka	Zaporozhi	2 KII + FGD
		Melitopol	2 KII + FGD
		Prymorsk	2 KII + FGD
<b>B</b>	Donetska	Mariupol	2 KII + FGD
		Kurakhove (Mar'inskiy raion)	2 KII + FGD
		Slovyansk	2 KII + FGD
		Volnovakha	
		Kramatorsk	2 KII + FGD
		Krasnoarmiysk	2 KII + FGD
		Krasnyi Lyman	2 KII + FGD
		Artemivsk	2 KII + FGD
		Dzerzhynsk	1 KII
		Vuhledar	1 KII
	Luhanska	Dobropillia	2 KII + FGD
		Severodonetsk	2 KII + FGD
		Lysychansk	2 KII + FGD
		Starobilsk	2 KII + FGD
		Melovatka village (Svativskiy raion)	2 KII + FGD
		Bilokurakine	2 KII + FGD
		Bilovodsk	2 KII + FGD
Markivka			
Novonikolske village (Kreminskiy raion)	2 KII + FGD		
<b>C</b>	Donetska	Konstantinivka	2 KII + FGD
		Donetsk	2 KII + FGD
		Horlivka	2 KII + FGD
		Amvrosiivka	1 KII
		Yasynuvata	2 KII + FGD
	Luhanska	Luhansk	2 KII + FGD
		Alchevsk	1 KII + FGD
		Krasnodon	2 KII + FGD
		Krasnyi Luch	1 KII + 2 IDI
		Rovenky	IDI

## 2. Operational markets in strata B and C<sup>22</sup>

### Operational markets: Stratum B

Site	Number of supermarkets	Number of open-air markets	Number of smaller shops
Mariupol	35	31	≈ 1000-1200
Artemivsk	5	3	≈ 100
Slovyansk	6	5	≈ 100
Krasnyi Lyman	2	2	≈ 25
Krasnoarmiysk	5	4	≈ 80
Dobropillia	3	2	≈ 30
Volnovakha	3	1	≈ 15
Severodonetsk	12	4	≈ 50
Lysychansk	7	4	≈ 500
Svativskiy raion (Melovatka village)	0	0	≈ 5
Starobilsk	1	2	≈ 70
Bilovodsk	1	2	≈ 50
Bilokurakine	0	2	≈ 30
Kreminnyi raion (Novonikolske village)	0	0	≈ 5
Markovka	0	2	≈ 50

### Operational markets: Stratum C (Donetsk oblast)

Site	Number of supermarkets	Number of open-air markets	Number of small shops
Konstantynivka	6	3	≈ 80
Donetsk	23	9	≈ 1800
Horlivka	11	4 +10*	≈ 200
Yasynuvata	0	2	≈ 30

\* 4 big open-air markets and 10 smaller ones in different city districts

### Operational markets: Stratum C (Luhansk oblast)

Site	Number of supermarkets	Number of open-air markets	Number of small shops
Luhansk	51	5	≈ 530
Krasnodon	1	2	≈ 300
Alchevsk	10	3	≈ 450
Krasnyi Luch	3	1*	≈ 15

\* Official central market. Another 5-6 spontaneous markets are irregularly functioning in different town districts.

<sup>22</sup> Information as of November 2014

### 3. Prices for essential food items in Strata B and C

The data obtained from qualitative part of the assessment as well as market observations. This is only to reflect and compare the price trends in Stratum B and Stratum C.

Figure 1. Comparison of food prices before and after start of conflict in Stratum C

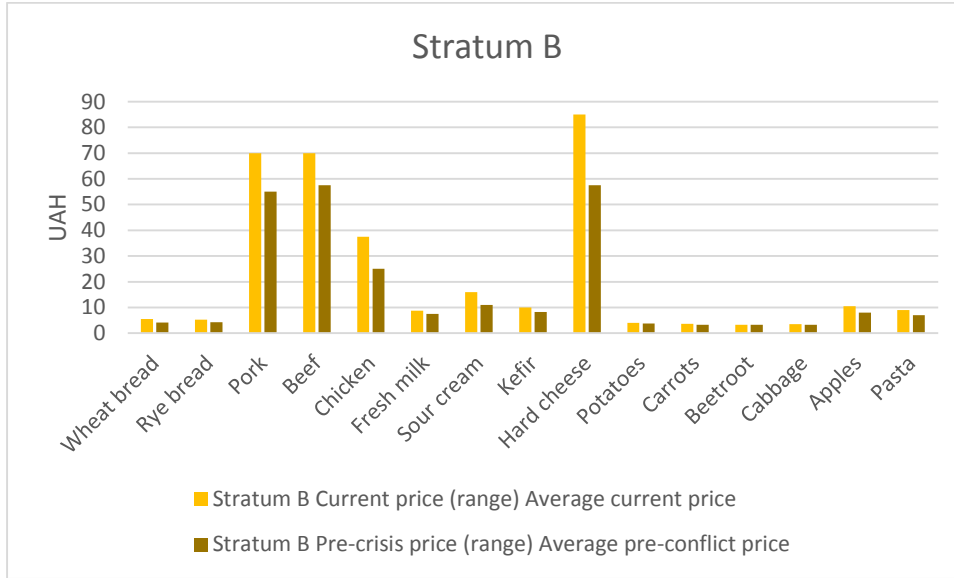


Figure 2. Comparison of food prices before and after start of conflict in Stratum C

