

Area-based Assessment: East Luhansk Basic Service Unit Overview

Ukraine, July 2017

REACH Informing more effective humanitarian action

Introduction

Conflict between Ukrainian forces and armed opposition groups broke out in eastern Ukraine in 2014. Almost 10,000 people have been killed, 22,231 wounded, and about one million displaced from their homes by fighting¹. The humanitarian and recovery response to the crisis is hampered by information gaps regarding access to basic services in communities located close to the contact line.

REACH conducted an assessment of all settlements within 5 km of the contact line with two main objectives: 1. To understand how residents of communities in the area access basic services; 2. To identify gaps in service provision and understand challenges from the perspectives of both service providers and users. The results will be used to inform strategic planning by humanitarian and local government actors.

This assessment collected data at the community level from 100 communities. Interviews were conducted with 350 Key Informants (KIs) representing community members, members of the local administration, and representatives of health and education facilities. The assessment did not conduct representative sampling, and therefore results should be considered indicative only. Through network analysis, the assessed communities were clustered into seven Basic Service Units (BSUs) to determine the main constraints in service access and provision in each BSU.

Key Findings

This overview covers the East Luhansk BSU where 19 communities were assessed (Figure 1).

- Service access is best in the larger communities of Stanytsia Luhanska, Vilkhove, Shchastia and Petropavlivka. These communities have functioning health and education facilities, financial services and markets, and are connected to the water and sewage networks. However, health, education and waste disposal services in Stanytsia Luhanska have been badly affected by conflict.
- Eight of the smaller communities have particularly poor access to services because they have no education facilities, no running water and no primary healthcare facilities.
- Some basic services are available in seven communities, although residents still face access challenges caused by a lack of facilities, insufficient and expensive public transport and security risks due to shelling and landmines/ Explosive Remnants of War (ERW).
- Distance to facilities and the high cost of transport are the key challenges in accessing facilities and services. Public transport is insufficient across the BSU, so travelling to services is time-consuming and expensive.

Map 1: Locations of assessed settlements in the East Luhansk BSU



Figure 1: Communities assessed within the East Luhansk BSU

Settlement	Pop.	Settlement	Pop.
Stanytsia Luhanska	13,000	Staryi Aidar	320
Shchastia	9,250	Kriakivka	200
Petropavlivka	5,200	Lobacheve	190
Valuiske	3,990	Bolotene	75
Vilkhove	3,200	Orikhove-Donetske	56
Trokhizbenka	2,000	Malynove	51
Makarove	1,842	Pishchane	38
Nyzhnoteple	1,700	Serednoteple	20
Peredilske	300	Syze	15
Artema	550		

Figure 2: Profiles of KIs interviewed

Profile	Female	Male	Total
Community KI	54	8	62
Administration KI	12	6	18
Education facility KI	27	2	29
Health facility KI	10	4	14



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1. OHCHR, 'Report on the human rights situation in Ukraine', December 2016.

Protection

Protection risks are high across the BSU due to proximity to the contact line: 14 of the assessed communities are located under 3 km from the contact line. KIs in seven of the assessed communities reported daily or weekly shelling in some areas of their communities. This was confirmed by International NGO Safety Organisation (INSO) data in four communities, while the remaining three communities are within hearing range of daily or weekly shelling but have not been hit directly.

Landmine / ERW risks

Landmines/ERW are reported in 17 of the assessed communities, but not all hazardous areas have been marked. Mine Risk Education (MRE) is required in all but four of the assessed communities, particularly in Shchastia and Artema where MRE has reportedly only been delivered for schoolchildren.

Protection challenges for communities

Mines/ERW are the most frequently cited protection concern across all communities. Community tension, typically between internally displaced persons (IDPs) and residents, is the second most cited concern. Destruction of property due to shelling is a particular concern in Stanytsia Luhanska; KIs in Lobacheve and Makarove reported residents were concerned by the proximity of armed actors in these communities.

KIs reported protection services are unavailable or insufficient across the BSU.

Frequent shelling indicates a high need for psycho-social support (PSS) services, which are insufficient in 16 communities. KIs in Orikhove-Donetske, Vilkhove and Bolotene reported further PSS services are not required. Child Friendly Spaces are present in four communities, but more are required in all communities as KIs in these four communities felt the number available was insufficient.

Vulnerable groups

Specific protection concerns for women were reported only in Stanytsia Luhanska, where KIs stated that domestic violence is an issue and that services available for survivors of domestic violence are not sufficient.

IDPs are reportedly living in 14 of the communities assessed. There are over 3,000 registered IDPs in Stanytsia Luhanska, according to the local administration, indicating a need for IDP-specific services such as documentation support in this area. Administrators reported high proportions of elderly people in all communities. Data from community KIs suggest elderly residents may struggle to cope with service access challenges related to distance and travel time.

Military checkpoints

Checkpoints control access to 13 communities². Checkpoints restrict entry and exit to the community for residents of Shchastia, Trokhizbenka, Vilkhove, Makarove and Syze. Entry and exit to Kriakivka is also affected by the Trokhizbenka checkpoint, but the checkpoint does not control entry to the community.

2. Residents reported checkpoints do not affect Orikhove-Donetske, Valuiske, Peredilske, Malynove or Artema.

Map 2: Courts and police stations in the BSU

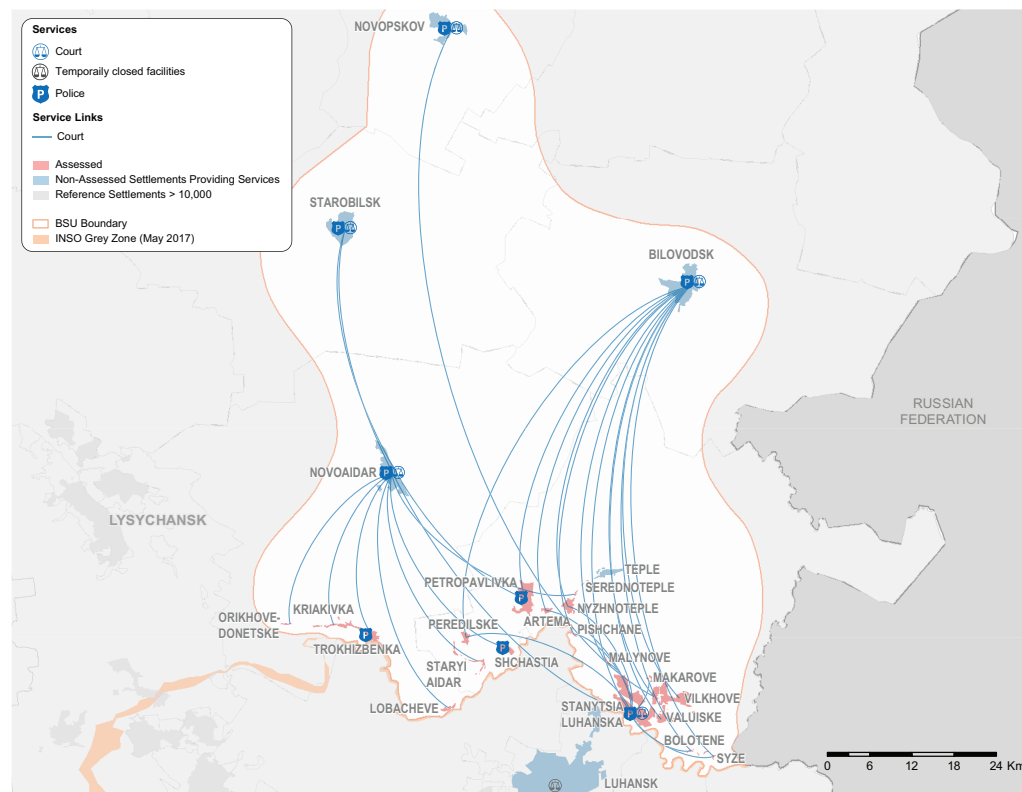


Figure 3: Key protection concerns reported²

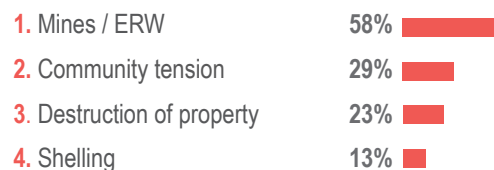
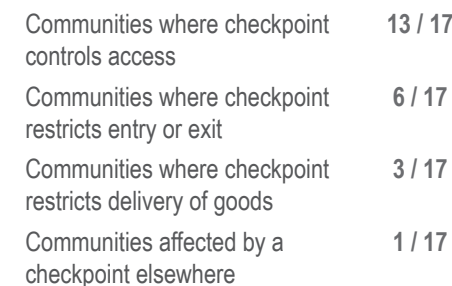


Figure 4: Checkpoints affecting communities



Education

There are 29 functioning schools in the BSU: 13 kindergartens, 14 all-grade schools, one primary and lower secondary school and one upper-secondary school. The main challenges in accessing education in the BSU are the distance to facilities, lack of transport and conflict-related security risks. KIs in Orikhove-Donetske, Malynove and Pishchane reported that all or almost all families with children have left these communities.

Education access challenges

All levels of education are available in eight communities. Children from other communities in the BSU travel to these communities to attend schools or to Novoaidar (25 km north of the contact line).

The chief access challenges in the BSU are the distance to facilities and the lack of transport to schools. KIs in Kriakivka reported school bus services to Trokhizbenka have stopped due to conflict. Security risks were most concerning for KIs in Stanytsia Luhanska, which is located on the contact line, and Staryi Aidar, where children have to travel towards the contact line to use schools in Shchastia.

Access to education is best in Petropavlivka and Nyzhnoteple, where facilities of all levels are available and KIs reported few challenges in access.

Education facility conditions

Twenty-two of the assessed facilities reported

some damage due to shelling, and 13 remain in need of repairs. Stanytsia Luhanska Specialised School (Grades 1-3) was completely destroyed by shelling and teaching now takes place in a kindergarten and a nearby office. Electricity shortages occur regularly at seven schools, only two of which have generators. Heating shortages were infrequent and only reported at three schools.

All schools except Peredilske Kindergarten are connected to the sewage network and have flushing toilets. However, two schools have no running water and one experiences daily shortages. Pupil-to-toilet ratios meet SPHERE standards³ at kindergartens (10 pupils per toilet on average), at the primary and lower secondary school (7 pupils per toilet) and at the upper secondary school (11 pupils per toilet). However, SPHERE standards are not met at all-grade schools where there are 44 pupils per toilet on average.

Challenges delivering education

Facilities in all nine settlements reported lack of supplies as their key challenge in delivering education services, followed by shortages of funds. Computers, gym equipment and stationery are the most required supplies.

Six facilities also reported a lack of qualified teaching staff. The pupil-to-teacher ratio varies from 7 pupils per teacher at kindergartens and all-grade schools to 10 per teacher at the upper secondary school.

Map 3: Schools and kindergartens in the BSU

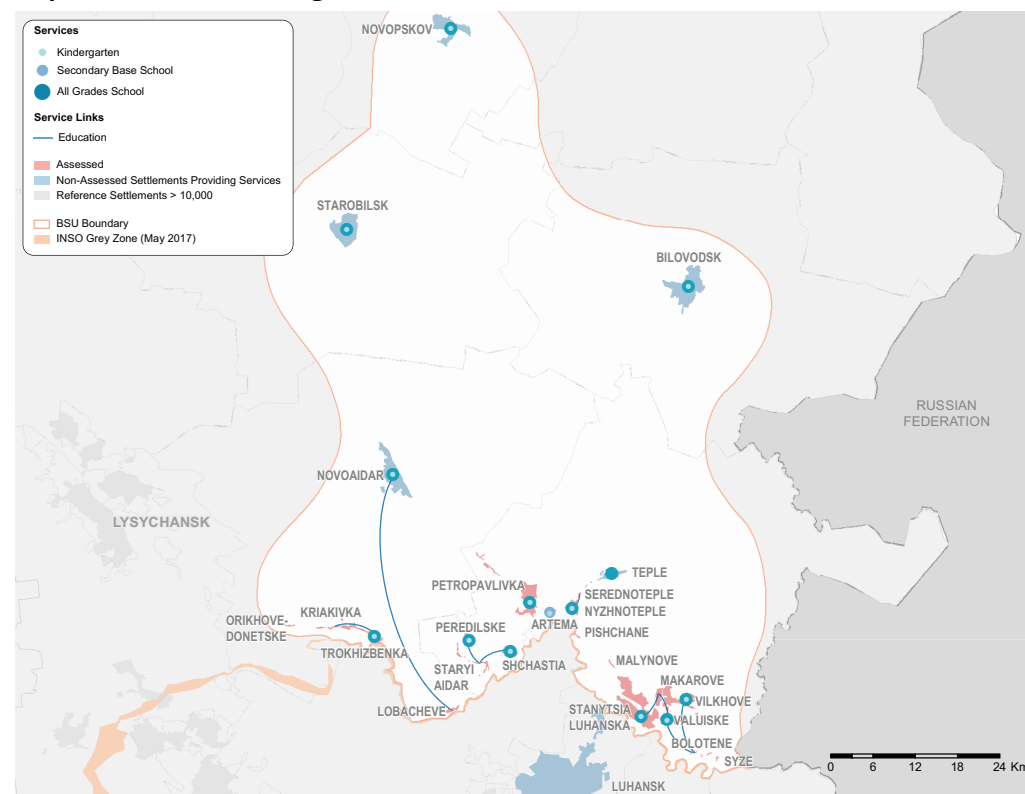


Figure 5: Key education challenges reported⁴

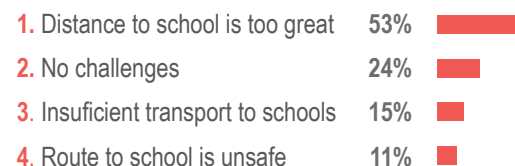
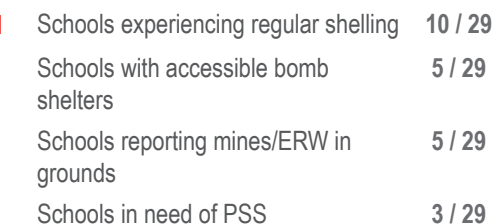


Figure 6: Protection issues in schools



3. The Sphere Project, 'Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Humanitarian Response'.

4. KIs could report more than one challenge.

There are 13 functioning facilities in the BSU: five ambulatory clinics, three paramedic-midwife stations, two city hospitals, one raion hospital, one ambulance station and one rehabilitation clinic for children. Residents of 10 communities are able to access primary healthcare from a clinic or a paramedic-midwife station within their communities. Residents in the remaining communities travel to these facilities or to Novoaidar to use both primary and secondary healthcare. Some residents of Malynove reported travelling across the contact line into the non-government controlled area to go to hospitals in Luhansk City. Pharmacies are available in seven communities.

Healthcare access challenges

Lack of facilities was the key challenge reported in accessing healthcare, cited by KIs in all communities except Stanytsia Luhanska, Petropavlivka and Shchastia. Distance, the cost of transport and the cost of healthcare were also common challenges across the BSU.

KIs also cited the lack of qualified specialists and doctors as an issue, which was reportedly particularly acute in Stanytsia Luhanska.

Security risks when travelling were highlighted in two communities: Pishchane and Bolotene. Pishchane residents travel to Petropavlivka for healthcare, using a road that runs along the contact line through a heavily-mined area exposed to almost constant shelling.

Residents in Bolotene use healthcare in Valuiske and must also travel through an area contaminated by landmines and ERW.

Health facility conditions

All 13 facilities assessed are functioning, but 6 reported unrepaired shelling damage. Seven reported ongoing shelling, and five of the seven do not have accessible bomb shelters.

Four facilities in the BSU have no water supply and there are infrequent shortages at three other facilities. Flushing toilets are available at nine facilities, while the remaining four rely on pit latrines; seven facilities reported an insufficient number of toilets available for staff and patients. Five facilities are experiencing electricity shortages, which occur daily at facilities in Stanytsia Luhanska. None of these facilities have electricity generators.

The paramedic-midwife station in Kriakivka is in particularly poor condition, reporting heavy shelling damage, no water supply and daily electricity shortages.

Lack of qualified doctors and insufficient funding are the top challenges in delivering care, both reported by 9 of 13 facilities. Facilities in Stanytsia Luhanska and Shchastia reported they have insufficient nurses and doctors. Availability of medication is reportedly poorest at facilities in Stanytsia Luhanska, Shchastia and Peredilske. The number of ambulances available in the BSU is insufficient, reported as an issue by four facilities.

Map 4: Hospitals and clinics in the BSU

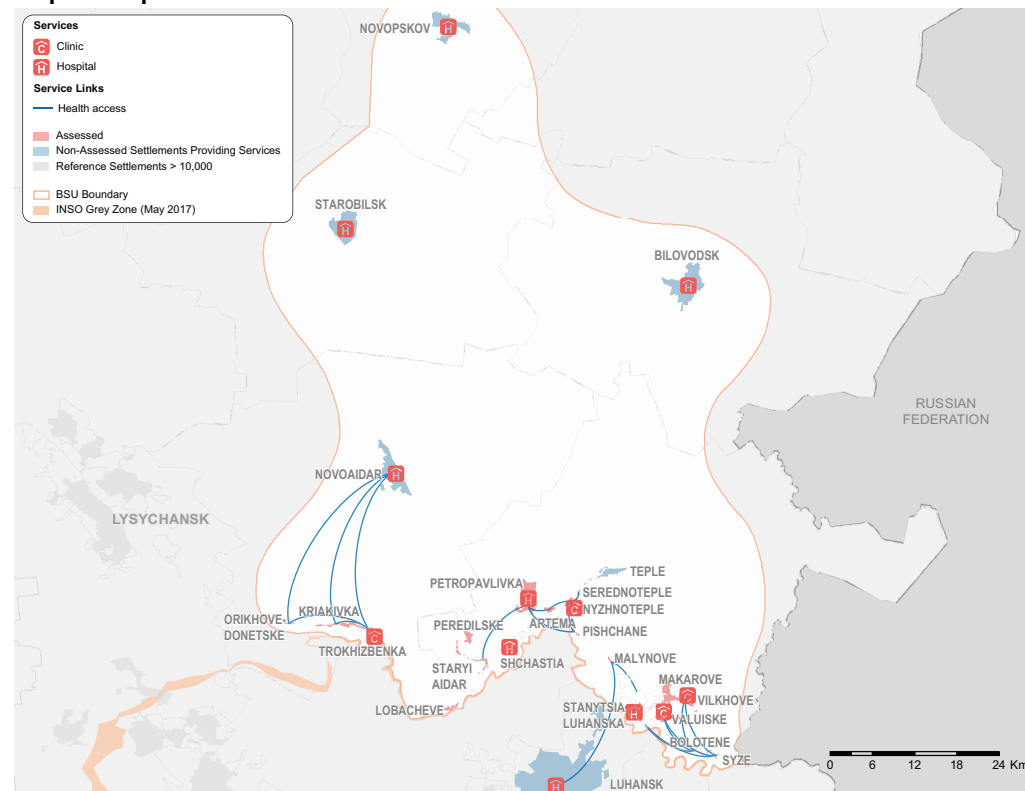


Figure 7: Key healthcare challenges reported⁵

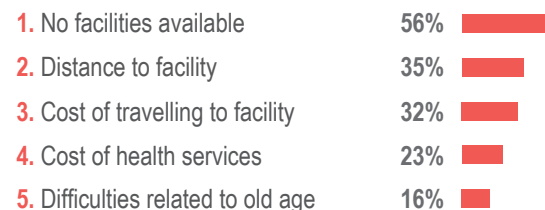
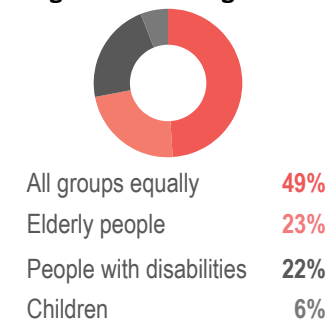


Figure 8: Groups facing most challenges in accessing healthcare



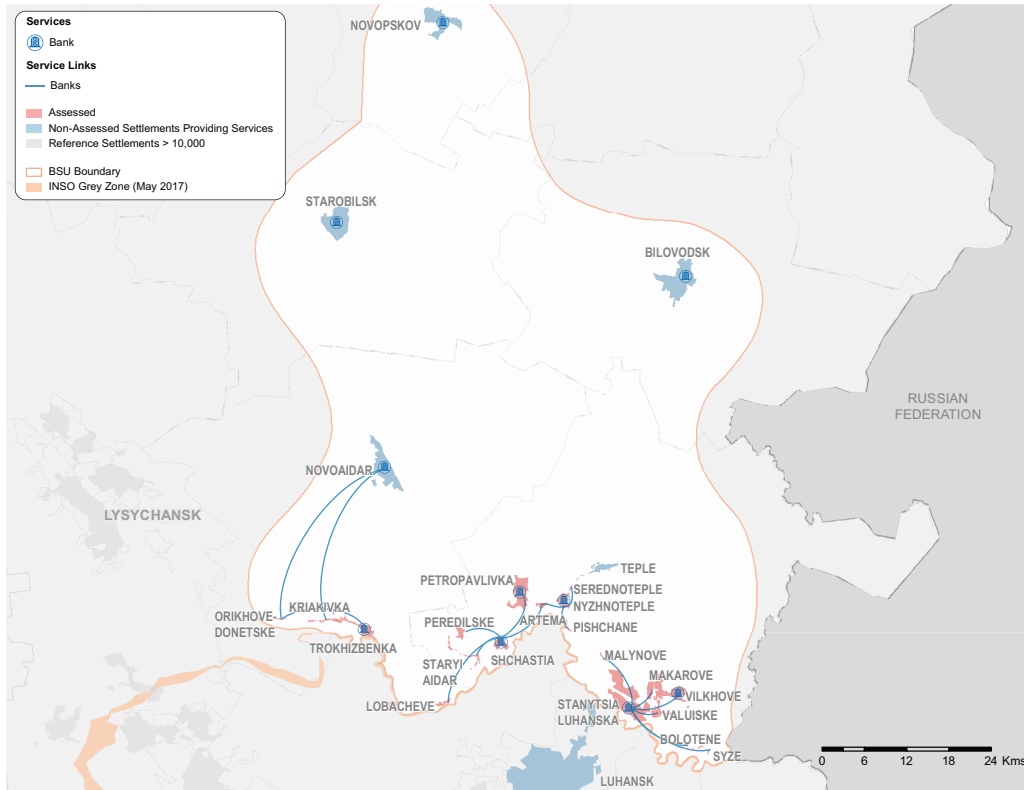
5. KIs could report more than one challenge.

Markets and Livelihoods

Functioning shops are available in all communities in the BSU except Pishchane and Serednoteple. Residents of these communities buy food in Nyzhnoteple, 8 km from Pishchane and 4 km from Serednoteple. KIs in Lobacheve did not provide data on shops or market access.

FSPs are available in 6 communities and are used by residents of all 19 assessed communities. Residents of Orikhove-Donetske and Kriakivka also use FSPs in Novoaidar.

Map 5: Banks and ATMs in the BSU



Challenges accessing markets

Distance to shops is the primary reported challenge in the BSU, followed by high prices of products and the cost of transport to markets. Public transport is unavailable or very limited from 14 of the assessed communities, and this was also reported as a key challenge. Security risks while travelling were highlighted in Pishchane due to mines and shelling affecting the community's main access road. High prices

were the only challenges reported in Shchastia and Stanytsia Luhanska.

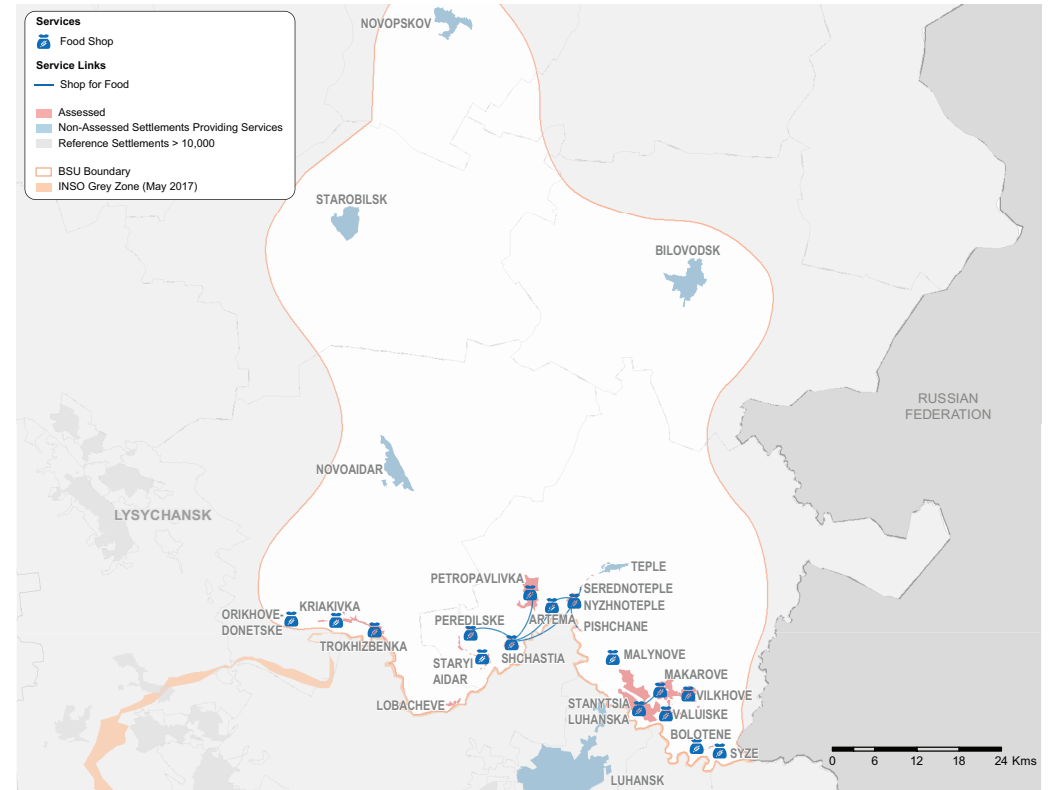
Checkpoints and delivery restrictions

Military checkpoints restrict the delivery of some types of goods in Trokhizbenka, Kriakivka and Syze. KIs reported that deliveries of coal, wood, construction materials and food are restricted in all three communities.

Challenges accessing FSPs

FSPs are available in only six of the assessed communities, which leads to the most common access challenge reported: the distance to FSPs. Queues at FSPs were also a key issue, indicating that the services available are unable to cope with the numbers of users. In Stanytsia Luhanska KIs reported that banks are unable to meet all requests for withdrawals because they do not have sufficient cash reserves.

Map 6: Most visited locations for food shopping in the BSU⁶



6. KIs in Lobacheve did not provide data on market access.

Availability

Food availability is best in urban areas, while the shops in other settlements offer smaller ranges of products. Stanytsia Luhanska was an exception: although it is the largest community in the BSU, fresh vegetables and meat were not available in all the shops assessed.

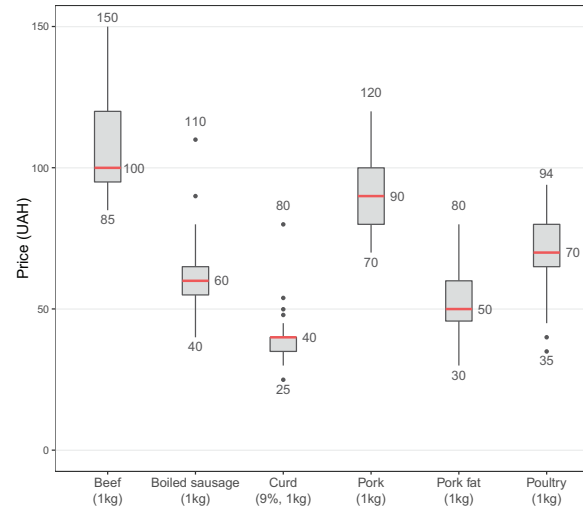
Availability of meat products was poor across the BSU, particularly beef, which was only available in six communities, and pork, which was only available in eight communities. In rural areas, it was more difficult to buy some vegetables due to a lack of demand.

Prices

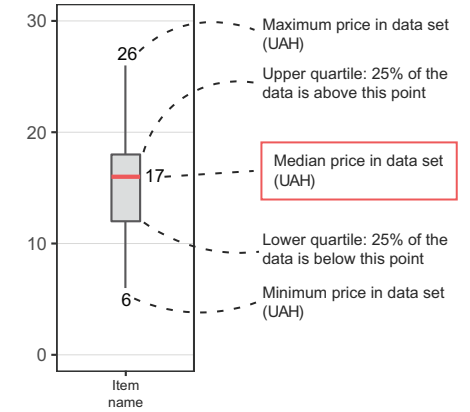
Prices for dry products were consistent across the BSU. The cost of meat and fresh vegetables varied more than dry products, with prices of butter, carrots, oil and milk showing the greatest variance across the BSU.

This was due to rural reliance on self production for dairy products and vegetables. KIs identified self-production as very common in rural communities, particularly for root vegetables and dairy products. Therefore root vegetables are more expensive in rural areas due to a lack of demand, and dairy products are cheaper in rural areas.

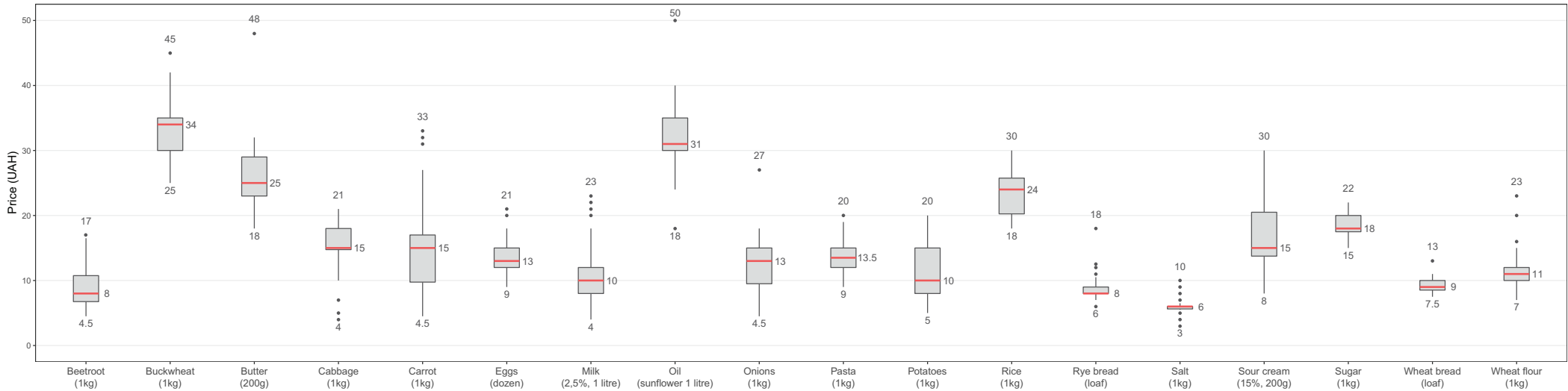
Boxplot 1: Prices of meat and curd



How to read a boxplot



Boxplot 2: Prices of other food items



Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)

Access to drinking water

Running water is available in only six communities within the BSU: Artema, Nyzhnoteple, Petropavlivka, Shchastia, Stanytsia Luhanska and Valuiske. Shortages are infrequent in the communities with running water, occurring most frequently in Artema.

In the remaining 13 communities residents rely on wells for drinking water and KIs reported that most households do not treat the water before drinking it.

WASH challenges for communities

KIs felt there were few WASH challenges in the assessed communities, with the majority reporting there were no challenges.

Inability to empty septic pits was the most common challenge, reported as a key issue in 10 communities. KIs reported the cost of emptying septic pits can be very high and conflict has disrupted some waste tanker services across the BSU.

In all six communities connected to the water network, KIs reported that during shortages some residents are unable to flush toilets.

Waste management

Waste collection services are available in Petropavlivka, Valuiske, Shchastia and Stanytsia Luhanska. There are designated dumping sites in seven communities. Nine communities have no waste collection services




and no designated dumping sites.

Therefore burning, burying and illegal dumping are the most common methods of waste disposal in the BSU. In the communities where waste collection services and dump sites are available KIs reported that not all residents use these services, except in Shchastia.

Figure 9: WASH situation in assessed communities

Communities following bad waste disposal practices	18 / 19
Communities without running water	13 / 19

Figure 10: Key WASH challenges reported⁷

1. No challenges	55%	
2. Inability to empty septic tank	32%	
3. Insufficient water to flush toilets	18%	

Shelter

Accommodation types

Rented accommodation is relatively rare in this BSU for both IDPs and non-displaced residents, as administrators reported 80-100% of IDPs live in self-owned accommodation in nine assessed communities, while 80-100% of non-displaced residents in 16 communities also live in self-owned accommodation.

Housing damage

Shelling has damaged housing in 12 communities assessed within the BSU, according to data provided by administrators. Damage density was particularly high in Stanytsia Luhanska due to frequent conflict in this area.

Figure 11: Density of housing damage in assessed communities

Community	Number of damaged units	Damaged units per 100 residents
Stanytsia Luhanska	5,556	43
Perediliske	55	18
Staryi Aidar	55	17
Trokhizbenka	312	16
Orikhove-Donetske	5	9
Kriakivka	17	9
Nyzhnoteple	127	7
Artema	40	7
Malynove	3	6
Valuiske	55	1
Shchastia	81	1
Petropavlivka	26	1

Access to construction materials

Construction materials are fully available in Shchastia, Syze, Serednoteple and Vilkhove but are either limited or unavailable in all other communities assessed.

Utility shortages

All communities in the BSU are connected to the electricity network but 11 experience shortages, which are most frequent in Lobacheve and Petropavlivka.

Heating fuel is available in the BSU but availability was reportedly an issue in 11 communities. KIs in Syze highlighted that residents are unable to collect firewood due to landmines/ERW around the community.

The key reported challenge in obtaining heating fuel is the cost of fuel, followed by problems with fuel deliveries and issues related to fuel quality.

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7. KIs could report more than one challenge.