

UKRAINE: Humanitarian Situation Monitoring

Briefing note: Focus on settlements in Kharkivska and Donetsk oblasts

Context and Methodology

September 2022

To inform humanitarian actors, REACH has been conducting monthly **Humanitarian Situation Monitoring (HSM)** since March 2022 across Ukraine, covering: (i) accessible or government-controlled areas (GCAs), including both conflict-affected¹, newly accessible areas², and IDP-hosting settlements³, and (ii) hard-to-reach areas, including non-government controlled areas (NGCAs)⁴ and/or territories of active conflict⁵, and conflict-affected areas with no phone coverage⁶.

The **sixth round of HSM** specifically intended to inform strategic decision-making processes in alignment with the **Humanitarian Response Planning** timeline, as well as to allow humanitarian actors to get a better overview of how humanitarian needs have changed over time and receive indicative information on the areas where a higher level of need or service access concerns have been registered.

Data collection for the sixth round was conducted between **5th and 16th September 2022** by adopting the 'Area of Knowledge' (AoK) methodology in both urban and rural NGCAs. The current briefing note provides key indicative findings on the assessed settlements in **Kharkivska** and **Donetska** oblasts. 46 settlements in Kharkivska oblast and 77 settlements in Donetska oblast were assessed through a total of 260 interviews with key informants (KIs)⁷. Out of these, **40 settlements in Kharkivska oblast** and **58 settlements in Donetska oblast** were within **newly accessible areas** in these oblasts or located **within 30 km zone from the line of contact (LoC) or the state border with Russia** as of November 2022. These areas have been identified as **areas of interest** for the current analysis in terms of direct affectedness by hostilities, and in line with programming framework of multiple humanitarian actors. The remaining 25 settlements among those assessed were either located in the rest of GCAs or were categorised as NGCAs as of November 2022. **The briefing note focuses on the mentioned areas of interest aiming to inform and support programmatic and operational response in these areas.** The findings should be interpreted as indicative of the humanitarian situation in the assessed settlements as of September 2022, when the data collection was completed.

Interpretation of findings

For the sixth round, the Data Aggregation Plan used the **average approach** to aggregate the settlement response by using a severity scale in cases of **single-choice** questions. All KI responses from the same settlement were aggregated to have one data point for each variable per settlement. The findings are presented at the settlement and/or oblast level. In case of **multiple-choice** questions, the rule was to select all responses that have been reported/cited by at least one respondent if the number of respondents was smaller than 5, otherwise 2 out of 5 and more respondents.

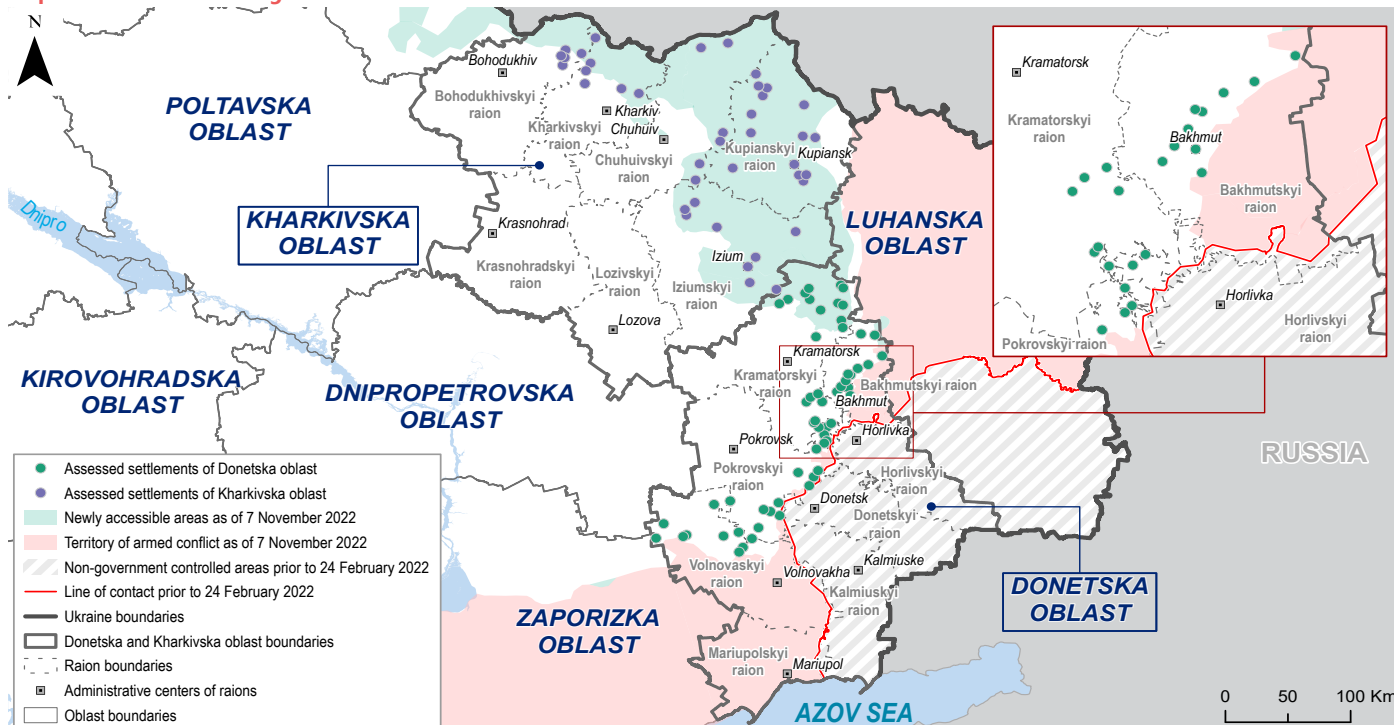
In this brief, the data represents a percentage of settlements (towns or villages) for which KIs reported a specific answer to a survey question. These statistics **cannot be extrapolated to represent a proportion (%) of the population**, and thus should be interpreted as indicative rather than representative. Given the small and purposive sample, these results only provide a basic understanding of the situation in the assessed regions.

Furthermore, given that the KIs were selected based on whether they fulfilled the selection criteria, there was no minimum number of KIs set per settlement. Therefore, findings on individual settlements should be interpreted with caution as they are considered indicative.

Key highlights

- At the time of data collection (in September 2022), the overall humanitarian situation in settlements within the areas of interest in Kharkivska oblast was reportedly **'severe'** in about a **quarter of assessed settlements**.
- In almost half of the assessed settlements in the areas of interest in Kharkivska oblast, the **level of need had not changed** over the preceding month.
- In more than half of the assessed settlements in the areas of interest in Donetska oblast, the **level of need was 'extreme'** or **'severe'**.
- About two-thirds of the settlements of interest in Donetska oblast reported that the **humanitarian situation had deteriorated** over the preceding month.
- Medicine, food, and financial resources** appeared to be the top priority needs in the assessed settlements in the areas of interest both in Kharkivska and Donetska oblasts. Additionally, **access to medicines, financial resources**, as well as **disruptions to telecommunications** were identified as the main concerns.

Map 1: Assessment coverage in the areas of interest in Kharkivska and Donetsk oblasts



Footnotes

- Conflict-affected areas are defined as oblasts identified by the Government of Ukraine as being conflict-affected.
- Areas that have been beyond the control of the Government of Ukraine since February 2022 and since then have been retaken, based on the monitoring of Live Universal Awareness Map (LiveUA).
- IDP-hosting settlements were identified based on KIs in the assessed settlements reporting presence of displaced people in their settlement at the time of data collection.
- Non-government controlled areas before 24 February 2022, including the Crimea, were not included in the geographic coverage.

5. Areas that are experiencing on the ground hostilities at the time of sampling, as monitored by LiveUA, including all hromadas that are touching the contact line at the time of sampling.

6. While some of the hard-to-reach areas may have phone coverage at the time of data collection, following the 'do no harm' principle, REACH has not contacted KIs in areas that were in NGCAs or areas that were experiencing active on the ground conflict.

7. KIs were selected based on their recent knowledge of the settlements of interest: they were either displaced from a hard-to-reach settlement within 7 days prior to data collection or in regular contact with people still living in the settlement in 14 days prior to data collection. KI responses were aggregated at the settlement level.

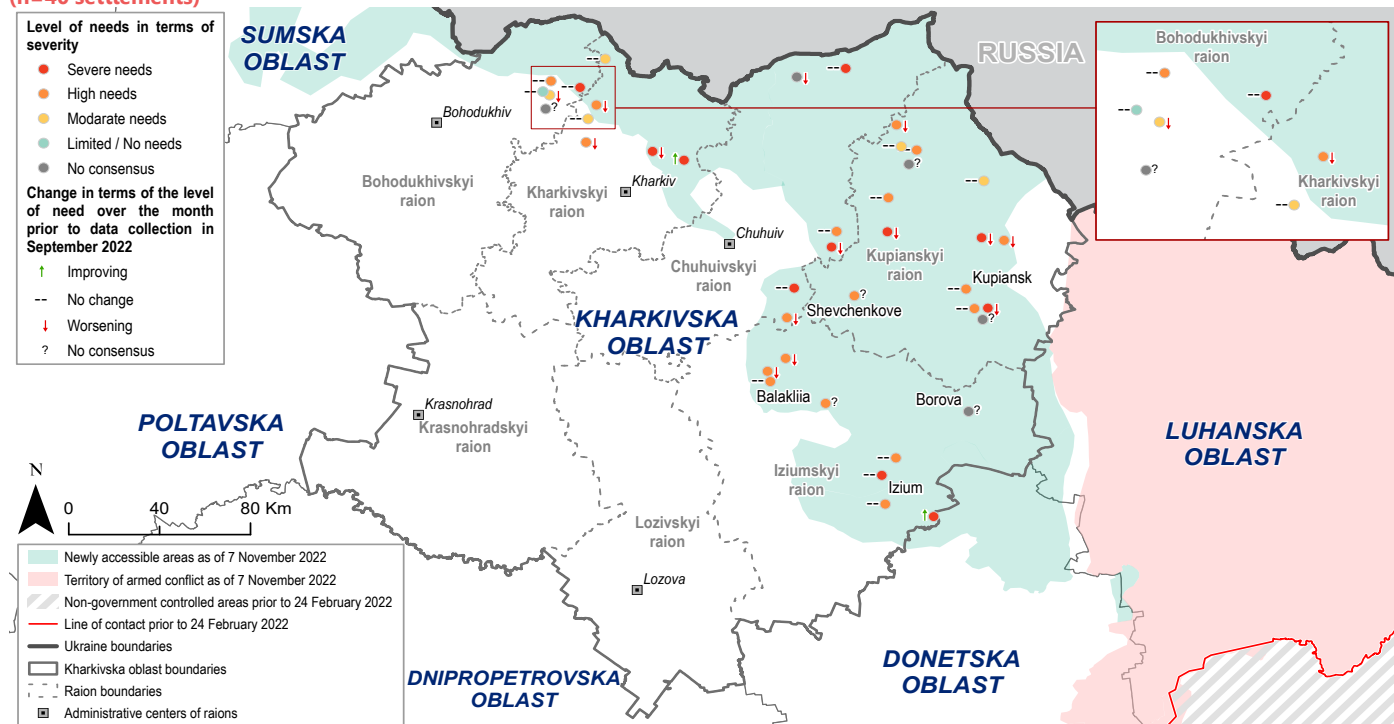
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Kharkivska oblast

September 2022

Map 2: Overall severity of needs and change in terms of the level of needs reported by KIs in the areas of interest in Kharkivska oblast (n=40 settlements)



- While 'extreme' level of overall need was not reported in any of the assessed settlements in Kharkivska oblast, the level of need was reportedly **'severe'** in **28% (n=11/40)** of the settlements in the areas of interest, corresponding to 'very poor living conditions and most people finding it difficult to meet basic needs, leading to serious concerns for physical and mental wellbeing'. Among other settlements, this was the case in **Izium**. In **18** other settlements, including in **Balakliia**, **Kupiansk**, and **Shevchenkove**, the level of need was reportedly **'high'**.
- Furthermore, in **35% (n=14/40)** of the assessed settlements in the areas of interest, KIs reported that the humanitarian situation had deteriorated over the preceding month. In around half of the assessed settlements, including in **Izium**, **Balakliia**, and **Kupiansk**, KIs reported that the humanitarian situation (and the level of overall need) had **not changed over the preceding month**.

Most reported priority needs across the settlements in the areas of interest in Kharkivska oblast (n=40)

1	Medicine	83% n=33	+
2	Financial resources	68% n=27	\$
3	Food	50% n=20	🍲

- In addition to the top priority needs mentioned above, the need for **non-food items (NFIs)**, **employment**, and **internet/phone network** was reported by a quarter or less than a quarter of the assessed settlements.
- Disruptions to telecommunications, access to financial services, and access to medicines** were the top concerns identified by KIs in **88% (n=35/40)** of the assessed settlements in the areas of interest in Kharkivska oblast.* **Access to NFIs, safety concerns, access to healthcare services, access to food, and information on humanitarian assistance** were also highlighted as main concerns by KIs in over two-thirds of the assessed settlements.

! DAMAGE

- Hostilities directly affected most of the assessed settlements. The scale of damage to infrastructure was particularly high in **Izium**, **Babenkove**, **Savyntsy**, **Tsyrkuny**, and **Chkalovske**, where KIs reported that **more than half of the infrastructure had been damaged** since the escalation of hostilities in February 2022. Damage to nearly the full spectrum of infrastructure was reported in **Izium**, **Savyntsy** and **Tsyrkuny**.

📡 UTILITIES (WATER, GAS, ELECTRICITY)

- The **supply of basic utilities such as water, gas, and electricity was already reported as regularly disrupted** in many settlements at the time of data collection in September 2022. The situation is likely to have further deteriorated in the assessed settlements following the additional damage to key infrastructure in the following months (incidents were reported throughout Ukraine, including in Kharkivska oblast).¹
- At least some disruptions to utilities were reported at the time of data collection in September 2022:

🔌 **Electricity** was reportedly disrupted in **31 out of 40** settlements. In **11** of these settlements, the supply was reportedly disrupted **'all the time'**. In **Kupiansk**, **Balakliia**, **Babenkove**, **Kamianka**, and **Oleksandrivka**, the disruptions were reportedly for 'a few hours per day'.

🔥 **Gas supply** was reportedly disrupted in **22 out of 40** settlements. In **11** of these settlements, the supply was reportedly disrupted **'all the time'**.

💧 **Water supply** was reportedly disrupted in **20 out of 40** settlements. In **five** of these settlements (**Kalynove**, **Studenok**, **Kurylivka**, **Bezruky**, and **Tsyrkuny**), the supply was reportedly disrupted **'all the time'**.

📞 TELECOMMUNICATIONS

- Phone network was reportedly disrupted 'all the time'**^{**} in **45% (n=18/40)** of the assessed settlements in Kharkivska oblast, including in **Balakliia**, **Izium**, and **Kupiansk**, among other settlements.
- Internet network coverage** was reportedly disrupted **'all the time'**^{*} in **13 out of 40** assessed settlements. In **11 out of 40** assessed settlements, internet network disruptions were reportedly **'often'** (8-12 hours a day).

* Recall period - 14 days prior to data collection in September 2022.

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Kharkivska oblast

September 2022

🔑 ACCESS TO HOUSING AND WINTERISATION

- In **14 out of 40** settlements in the areas of interest in Kharkivska oblast, KIs reported that most people **had not had access to safe and adequate housing conditions**.*
- In **2 out of 14** settlements where KIs reported that most people had not had access to safe and adequate housing conditions,* the reported degree of barriers was **'severe'**. These settlements were **Babenkove** and **Chkalovske**. Furthermore, **damage to housing and shelters** appeared to be the main barrier in terms of accessing safe and adequate housing.
- Across the assessed settlements, the most reported sources of heating were **gas (85%, n=34/40)**, **wood (78%, n=31/40)**, and **electricity (70%, n=28/40)**.
- The most reported barriers in terms of accessing heating during winter were the **lack of money**, **lack of fuel stock**, and **high prices**.

🛡️ PROTECTION

- The following safety concerns were reported in the assessed settlements in Kharkivska oblast:
 - Exposure to armed violence/shelling (68%, n=27/40)**,
 - Damage or destroyed property (63%, n=25/40)**,
 - Threat of missile attack (60%, n=24/40)**,
 - Restricted population movement (50%, n=20/40)**,
 - Property unlawfully occupied by others (48%, n=19/40)**,
 - Looting of private property (48%, n=19/40)**,
 - Presence of landmines/unexploded ordnance (UXO) (43%, n=17/40)**.
- In addition, safety concerns in relation to **housing and/or land being used for military purposes**, as well as **trauma or psychosocial distress** were reported in **40% (n=16/40)** of the assessed settlements, followed by concerns in relation to **abduction or forced disappearance (33%, n=13/40)**.
- Noteworthy, **discrimination of certain population groups** appeared to be a protection concern in **Borova**, **Prykolotne**, **Kupiansk-Vozlovyi**, and **Vovchansk**.

👤 Vulnerable population groups

- In nearly half of the assessed settlements (**45%, n=18/40**) in the areas of interest in Kharkivska oblast, KIs reported being aware of groups of people experiencing safety concerns.* The groups experiencing more safety concerns than others included:
 - Older persons (10 of 18** settlements where KIs reported the presence of groups facing safety concerns),
 - Men of conscription age (n=10/18)**,
 - People with physical disabilities (n=8/18)**.
- In addition to the population groups that were facing safety concerns, KIs also reported that some groups of people in the settlement were able to meet their everyday needs to a lesser extent, including:
 - Older persons** (reported by KIs in **36 out of 40** settlements),
 - People with physical disabilities (n=32/40)**,
 - People directly harmed by the current violence (n=20/40)**,
 - People with chronic illnesses (n=20/40)**,
 - People with mental health issues (n=16/40)**.
- Also, **men of conscription age** were identified as a group less able to meet their everyday needs in **Balakliia**, **Slatyne**, and **Vovchansk**.

🔑 ACCESS TO FOOD AND NFIs

- In **17 out of 40** settlements in the areas of interest in Kharkivska oblast, KIs reported that most people **had not had access to enough food**.*
- Among these settlements, KIs in **Volokhivka** reported that the degree of barriers that people faced in terms of accessing enough food was **'extreme'**, and in **12** settlements the reported degree of barriers was **'high'**.
- In most (**n=14/17**) of the settlements with food access issues, KIs also reported that **most people had not had access to NFIs**.*
- 'Extreme' degree of barriers to accessing NFIs** was reported by KIs in **Volokhivka**. The degree of barriers was **'severe'** in **Lytvynove**, **Babenkove**, **Tavilzhanka**, **Kurylivka**, and **Ivanivka**.
- Lack of money** and **closure of stores** were the most reported barriers to accessing both food and NFIs.

🏥 ACCESS TO HEALTHCARE SERVICES

- In half of the assessed settlements in Kharkivska oblast (**n=20/40**), KIs reported that most people had **not had access to healthcare services/facilities**.* In **six** of these settlements, the reported degree of barriers that people experienced in accessing healthcare was **'extreme'** (**Babenkove**, **Oleksandrivka**, **Volokhivka**) or **'severe'** (**Dvorichna**, **Kurylivka**, **Ivanivka**).
- Among the assessed settlements where KIs reported that people had not had access to healthcare services, **pharmacies were particularly reported as inaccessible** to people.* **Hospital care**, **family doctor/primary care facility**, **specialty hospital care**, and **emergency healthcare** were also commonly reported as inaccessible.
- The most reported barriers to accessing healthcare were the **non-availability of services needed**, **non-availability of sought medicines in stores or pharmacies**, and **shortage of medical personnel**.

🧑 ACCOUNTABILITY TO AFFECTED POPULATIONS

- The following information needs on humanitarian assistance were most reported by KIs in the areas of interest in Kharkivska oblast (**n=40 settlements**):

How to get money/financial support	<div></div>	90% (n=36)
How to get food	<div></div>	85% (n=34)
How to get healthcare/medical attention	<div></div>	78% (n=31)
Information about humanitarian assistance and agencies	<div></div>	53% (n=21)
How to register for assistance from the Ukrainian government or humanitarian agencies	<div></div>	53% (n=21)

- In the majority of the assessed settlements (**75%, n=30/40**), KIs reported **no preference for any of the two modalities of assistance** (i.e., multi-purpose cash or in-kind assistance) over the other, while in **8** settlements the preference was given to **multi-purpose cash assistance**.
- Volunteers** were identified as the most reliable providers of aid (reported by KIs in **37 out of 40** assessed settlements), followed by **international and national aid organisations** (i.e., international non-government organisations (INGOs), civil society organisations (CSOs)) (**n=25/40**).
- Delivery of aid appeared to be most reliable by **road** (reported by KIs in **27 out of 40** assessed settlements), followed by **humanitarian convoy (n=13/40)**, and **home delivery to persons with limited mobility (n=10/40)**.

* Recall period - 14 days prior to data collection in September 2022.

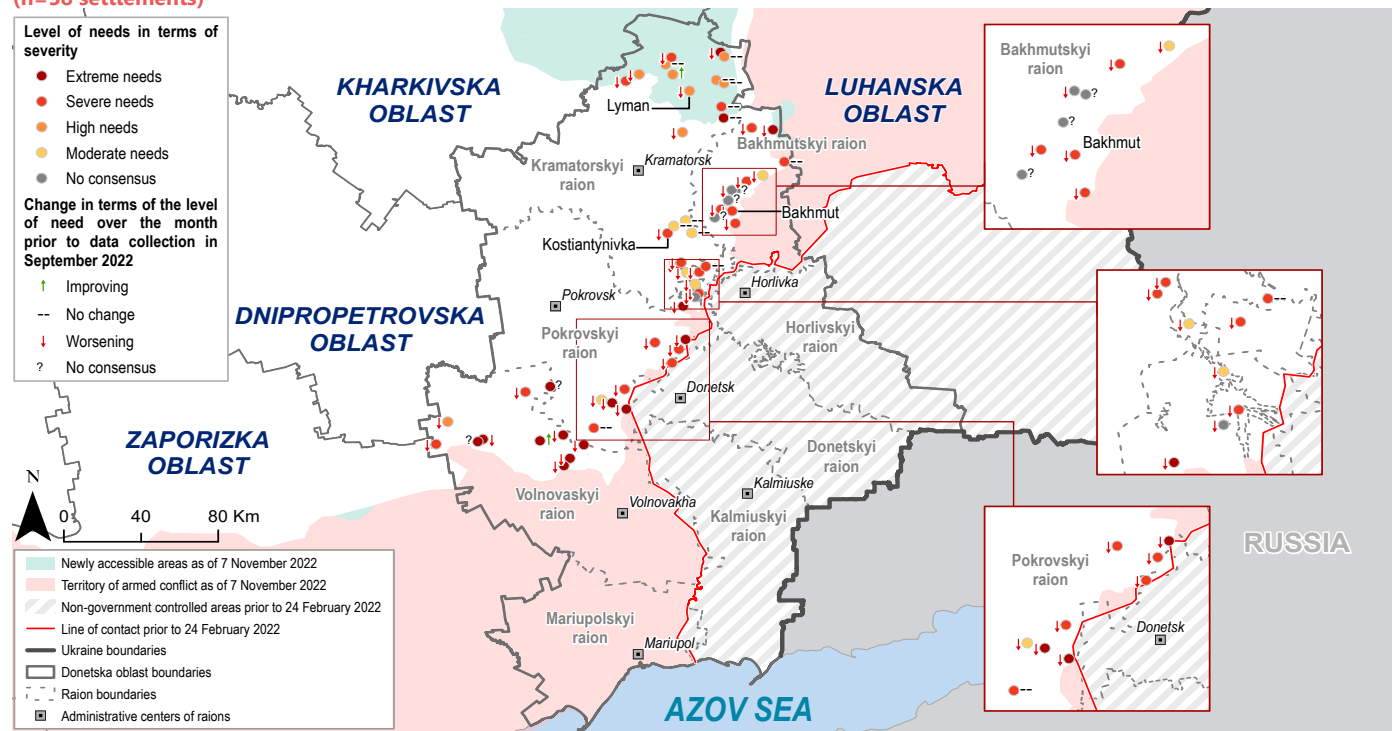
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Donetska oblast

September 2022

Map 3: Overall severity of needs and change in terms of the level of needs reported by KIs in the areas of interest in Donetsk oblast (n=58 settlements)



- In **64% (n=37/58)** of the assessed settlements in the areas of interest in Donetsk oblast, KIs revealed that the level of overall need was either **'extreme'**, corresponding to the 'loss of life or imminent risk of loss of life as a result of the lack of access to services, food, shelter or other life-saving assistance' or **'severe'**, corresponding to 'very poor living conditions and most people finding it difficult to meet basic needs, leading to serious concerns about physical and mental wellbeing'.
- In addition, in **67% (n=39/58)** of the assessed settlements in the areas of interest, KIs reported that the **humanitarian situation had deteriorated** over the preceding month.

Most reported priority needs across the settlements in the areas of interest in Donetsk oblast (n=58)

1	Medicine	70% n=41	+
2	Food	70% n=41	🍲
3	Financial resources	48% n=28	💰

- In addition to the top priority needs mentioned above, the need for **drinking water (38%, n=22/58)**, **electricity (14%, n=8/58)**, **evacuation (12%, n=7/58)**, and **NFIs (12%, n=7/58)** was reported by KIs.
- In the majority of the assessed settlements in the areas of interest, KIs highlighted that the **non-displaced population** of the settlement was experiencing higher level of needs compared to returnees and IDPs. Notably, in these settlements, KIs were either not aware of new arrivals of returnees, or reported that there were **no new arrivals of returnees***, or that the **influx of newly arrived returnees was 'small'**.*
- Safety concerns (98%, n=57/58)** and **access to financial services (95%, n=55/58)** were the most reported concerns in the assessed settlements, followed by **disruptions to telecommunications (93%, n=54/58)**, **access to medicines (90%, n=52/58)**, and **education (90%, n=52/58)**.

! DAMAGE TO INFRASTRUCTURE

- KIs in **56 out of 58** assessed settlements reported there was infrastructure (including housing) damaged since the escalation of hostilities in February 2022. Across these settlements, the most frequently reported types of infrastructure damaged included **roads** (reported by KIs in **91%** of settlements, **n=51/56**), **schools and education facilities (77%, n=43/56)**, **markets and grocery stores (75%, n=42/56)**, **industrial facilities (61%, n=34/56)**, and **utility networks (n=33/56)**.
- In **10 out of these 56** settlements (Soledar, Velyka Novosilka, Vremivka, Zakitne, Avdiivka, Oleksandropil, Lyman, Opytne, Kamianka, and Bohoiavlenka), KIs informed that **'all or almost all' of the infrastructure was damaged**.

📡 UTILITIES AND WINTERISATION

- In over half of the assessed settlements of interest in Donetsk oblast (**n=34/58**), KIs reported that most people had **not had access to housing suitable for winter conditions**. In addition, across all the assessed settlements, KIs identified the following barriers for most people to access heating during winter: **lack of fuel stock (n=52/58)**, **lack of money (n=44/58)**, and **high prices (n=39/58)**. KIs also highlighted destroyed or damaged heating system (**n=27/58**), **non-availability of infrastructure (n=23/58)**, and **lack of heating devices (n=20/58)** as the main barriers. This aligns with reports on the recurrent attacks against essential civilian infrastructure disrupting access to key services.²
- Furthermore, at least some disruptions to utilities were reported at the time of data collection in September 2022:
 - Gas supply** was reportedly disrupted in **56 out of 58** settlements. In **55** of these settlements, the supply was reportedly disrupted **'all the time'**.
 - Electricity** was reportedly disrupted in **55 out of 58** settlements. In **30** of these settlements, the supply was reportedly disrupted **'all the time'**.
 - Water supply** was reportedly disrupted in **51 out of 58** settlements. In **33** of these settlements, the supply was reportedly disrupted **'all the time'**.

* Recall period - 14 days prior to data collection in September 2022.

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Donetska oblast

September 2022

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

- **Phone network** was reportedly **disrupted 'all the time'*** in **36% (n=21/58)** of the assessed settlements of interest in Donetsk oblast, while in **34% (n=20/58)** of the settlements, KIs reported that phone connection was disrupted 'a few hours a day'.
- **Internet network coverage** was reportedly **disrupted 'all the time'** in **33% (n=19/58)** of the assessed settlements. Furthermore, in **nine** settlements, internet network disruptions reportedly occurred '**often**' (8-12 hours a day).

ACCESS TO HEALTHCARE SERVICES

- In **74% (n=43/58)** of the assessed settlements in the areas of interest in Donetsk oblast, KIs reported that most people had **not had access to healthcare services/facilities**.* In **21** of these settlements, the reported degree of barriers that people experienced in accessing healthcare was '**extreme**' or '**severe**'.
- Amongst the assessed settlements where KIs reported that people had not had access to healthcare services and/or facilities,* the most reported types of services/facilities not accessible were: **pharmacies, family doctor/primary care facilities**, followed by **specialty hospital care, hospital care**, and **maternal and newborn care**. Sexual health services, mental health care, and social support and counseling programmes were also commonly highlighted as inaccessible.
- The most reported barriers to accessing healthcare were:
 - **non-availability of services needed,**
 - **movement restrictions,**
 - **non-availability of sought medicines in stores or pharmacies,**
 - **shortage of medical personnel.**

PROTECTION

- As highlighted above, KIs in nearly all the assessed settlements in the areas of interest (**n=57/58**) reported **safety concerns** as the main concern in the settlement in the 14 days prior to data collection. The following safety concerns were particularly highlighted across the assessed settlements:
 - **Exposure to armed violence/shelling (90%, n=52/58),**
 - **Threat of missile attack (83%, n=48/58),**
 - **Damaged or destroyed properties (74%, n=43/58),**
 - **Trauma or psychosocial distress (72%, n=42/58),**
 - **Restricted population movement (67%, n=39/58),**
 - **Presence of landmines/UXO (67%, n=58/40),**
 - **Looting of private property (64%, n=37/58).**

Vulnerable population groups

- In more than half of the assessed settlements (**64%, n=37/58**) in the areas of interest in Donetsk oblast, KIs reported being aware of groups of people experiencing safety concerns.* The groups experiencing more safety concerns than others included:
 - **Older persons (n=32/37),**
 - **People with physical disabilities (n=31/37),**
 - **People with chronic illnesses (n=26/37).**
- The **same groups** mentioned above, as well as **people with mental health issues** were also identified by KIs as population groups able to meet their everyday needs to a lesser extent in over half of the assessed settlements.

ACCESS TO FOOD AND NFIs

- In **72% (n=42/58)** of the assessed settlements in the areas of interest in Donetsk oblast, KIs reported that most people **had not had access to enough food**.*
- The degree of barriers that people faced in terms of accessing enough food was '**extreme**' in the settlements of **Vodiane** and **Shevchenko**, and in **17** settlements the reported degree of barriers was '**severe**'.
- Furthermore, in **81% (n=47/58)** of the assessed settlements, KIs reported that **NFIs were inaccessible** by most people in the settlement.*
- Amongst these settlements, '**extreme**' degree of barriers to accessing NFIs was reported by KIs in **Novhorodske, Krymske, Vodiane, Zakitne, and Kamianka**. The degree of barriers was reportedly '**severe**' in **14 out of 47** settlements where KIs reported that most people had not had access to NFIs.*
- **Lack of money, lack of items in stores, and high prices** were the most reported barriers to accessing both food and NFIs.

ACCOUNTABILITY TO AFFECTED POPULATIONS

- The following information needs on humanitarian assistance were most reported by KIs in the areas of interest in Donetsk oblast (**n=58 settlements**):

How to get money/financial support	93% (n=54)
How to get healthcare/medical attention	93% (n=54)
How to get food	90% (n=52)
How to get shelter/accommodation/shelter materials	74% (n=43)
How to get water	67% (n=39)
How to apply for compensation to damaged or destroyed housing	67% (n=39)

- In addition, KIs also reported the need for information about **how to recover personal documents, how to access government social benefits and assistance, information about humanitarian assistance and agencies, news on what is happening in other parts of Ukraine related to the ongoing hostilities, and relocation or evacuation**.
- In the majority of the assessed settlements (**81%, n=47/58**), KIs reported **no preference for any of the two modalities of assistance** (i.e., multi-purpose cash or in-kind assistance) over the other, while in **seven** settlements the preference was given to **in-kind assistance**.
- **Volunteers** were identified as the most reliable providers of aid by KIs in **76% (n=44/58)** of the assessed settlements, followed by **international and national aid organisations** (i.e., INGOs, CSOs) (**n=42/58**), and **religious institutions** (**n=23/58**).
- Delivery of aid appeared to be most reliable by **road** in **78% (n=45/58)** of the assessed settlements.

Endnotes

1. REACH, [Ukraine - Energy infrastructure damage: Situation overview for 10-24th October 2022](#), November 2022.
2. International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), [Russia-Ukraine international armed conflict: Immense damage to essential infrastructure will cause major suffering as winter looms](#), 2 November 2022.

* Recall period - 14 days prior to data collection in September 2022.