



Key findings

- Subsistence farming continues to be a key practice for a considerable number of rural families, with 86 percent of agricultural households producing primarily for self-consumption.
- Involvement in agriculture remains a critical buffer against food insecurity, with households involved in farming showing more diverse diets, fewer experiences of food deprivation and reduced reliance on negative coping strategies.
- Agricultural households are experiencing increasing financial pressure, with incomes either remaining static or shrinking.
- Exposure to socioeconomic and war-related shocks significantly worsens food security outcomes, especially for households near the frontline, women-headed households, and internally displaced persons (IDPs).
- Widespread use of unsustainable coping strategies is eroding household resilience, particularly among IDPs and households facing repeated shocks.
- Declining production and limited access to inputs highlight the urgent need for targeted support to rural households and small-scale farmers.
- Vulnerable groups face amplified risks from compounding crises, consistently exhibiting higher food insecurity, more frequent shocks and greater reliance on negative coping strategies.



▶▶▶ METHODOLOGY

In July 2025, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), with support from the Food Security and Livelihoods Cluster in Ukraine, conducted an assessment of household food security and agricultural livelihoods. The objective of this assessment was to provide an overview of the food security and livelihoods situation in government-controlled areas of Ukraine, supporting evidence-based decision-making.

In total, 2 874 households were interviewed by phone across of government-controlled areas of Ukraine, forming a sample that is representative of the population of nine frontline oblasts.

The sampling strategy ensured representativeness of the total population, with a 95 percent confidence level and a 10 percent margin of error around the estimates.

Data collection was not possible in areas beyond the control of the Government of Ukraine, which at the time of the survey included the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and Luhanska oblast, as well as parts of Donetsk and Zaporizka oblasts. Sampling weights were applied during analysis to adjust for disproportionate sampling across strata and rural population segments.

Subsistence farming remains a key practice, with 86 percent of households producing for self-consumption

A total of 40 percent of surveyed households is engaged in agricultural production, with 86 percent of them doing so primarily for self-consumption – a trend consistent with findings from 2023 and 2024. This drive for self-sufficiency is widespread, including among urban households, 45 percent of whom rely on private plots for food production.

While engagement in agricultural activities dips from 41 percent to 35 percent near the frontline, the most striking divide is generational: 46 percent of households headed by individuals over 60 participate, compared with just 28 percent of those aged 18–40.

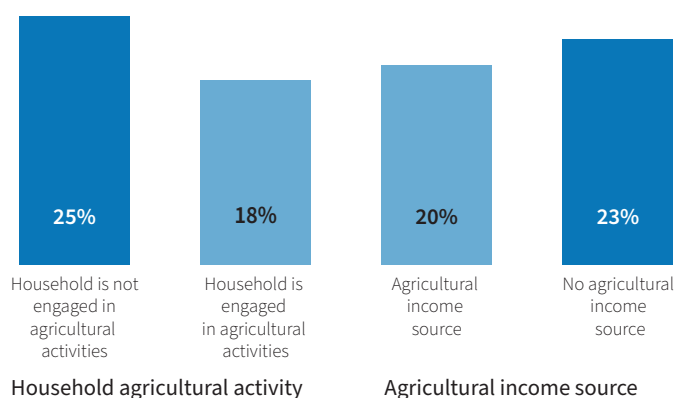
Involvement in agriculture serves as an important buffer against food insecurity

Households engaged in agriculture consistently achieve better food security outcomes. This pattern, observed in previous assessments from 2023 and 2024, is confirmed again in 2025 across three key food security metrics:

- Food Insecurity Experience Scale (FIES): agricultural households report fewer experiences of food deprivation;
- Household Dietary Diversity Score (HDDS): diets are more diverse and nutritionally adequate;
- Livelihood Coping Strategies Index (LCSI): reliance on negative coping mechanisms is significantly lower.

Agricultural engagement strengthens household self-sufficiency by providing a direct source of food, thereby reducing exposure to price volatility and market disruptions. This combination of better dietary access and reduced economic vulnerability underscores agriculture’s role as a crucial buffer against both food insecurity and broader economic shocks.

Figure 1. Prevalence of moderate and severe recent food insecurity (percent of households) by household agricultural activities or incomes



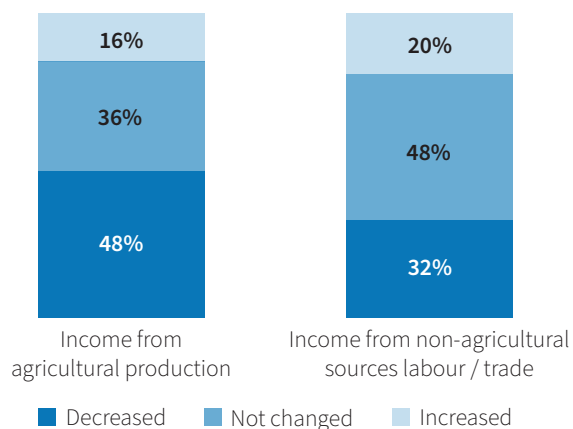
Source: FAO. (forthcoming). *Ukraine: household food security and agricultural livelihoods assessment – July 2025*. Kyiv.

Agricultural households are facing a challenging financial reality of static and shrinking incomes

Widespread financial vulnerability is evident in frontline areas, where households depend heavily on social support: 42 percent rely on pensions and 36 percent on other benefits as their primary income, with 3 percent report having no income at all. This precarious situation has intensified over the past year, with one in three households experiencing a decline in earnings.

Income declines were reported by 48 percent of households whose primary income comes from agriculture, a substantially higher share compared with 32 percent among those relying on other sectors, underscoring the sensitivity of market-based farming to price volatility and broader economic instability. Conversely, subsistence farming provides a critical non-monetary safety net by ensuring direct access to food. Households that combine subsistence farming with reliable, non-market cash transfers demonstrate greater resilience, as this diversified strategy reduces exposure to both market shocks and income fluctuations. These findings highlight the central role of subsistence agriculture in strengthening household resilience in war-affected areas.

Figure 2. Percentage of households reporting a change in income compared to the previous year, by type of income

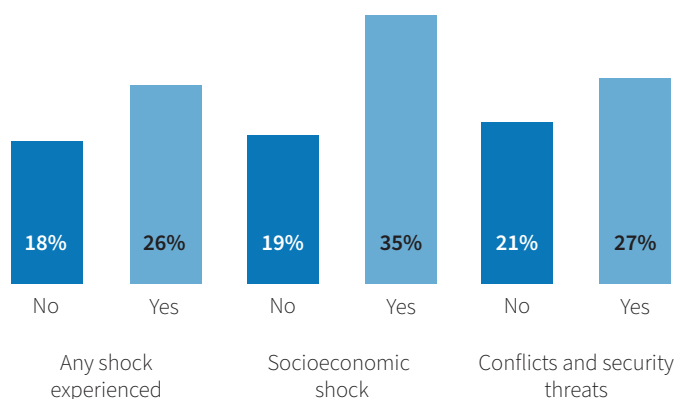


Source: FAO. (forthcoming). *Ukraine: household food security and agricultural livelihoods assessment – July 2025*. Kyiv.

Exposure to socioeconomic and war-related shocks significantly worsens food security outcomes

Households living near the frontline are far more exposed to a range of livelihood shocks, including violence, active hostilities, insecurity and socioeconomic instability. This exposure has a direct and measurable impact on food security: households reporting even one recent shock are significantly more likely to face moderate or severe food insecurity. This clear link shows the urgent need for targeted support to improve food security outcomes for the most vulnerable groups: those in frontline areas, women-headed households and IDPs.

Figure 3. Prevalence of moderate and severe recent food insecurity (percent of households) by household experiencing shocks in the past three months, by type of shock



Source: FAO. (forthcoming). *Ukraine: household food security and agricultural livelihoods assessment – July 2025*. Kyiv.

Widespread use of unsustainable coping strategies erodes household resilience

Over 75 percent of the surveyed households have resorted to coping strategies to manage financial hardship. The most common actions include spending savings, borrowing money, seeking additional income, and reducing essential expenditures such as those for health and education. IDPs are significantly more likely to rely on these emergency measures compared to permanent residents.

While such strategies may help households maintain food security in the short term, they are unsustainable. Without targeted support, continued reliance on negative coping strategies will deplete household resources, weaken their ability to absorb future shocks, and ultimately erode their long-term resilience.

Declining production and limited access to inputs highlight the urgent need for targeted support to small-scale producers

Small-scale agricultural production is declining under the weight of severe, interlocking challenges. Producers consistently report limited access to essential inputs like seeds, fertilizer, and animal feed, alongside the constraints imposed by mine contamination and region-specific issues, including the critical need for irrigation in Khersonska oblast or machinery in Kharkivska oblast.

The impact on agricultural output has been severe. In crop production, nearly one-third (30 percent) of producers

reported smaller harvests, a figure that rises sharply to 45 percent in the heavily affected Khersonska oblast. A parallel crisis grips the livestock sector, where 20 percent of surveyed producers reported losing animals due to the war. Among surveyed evacuees, 70 percent had to abandon their livestock when fleeing their homes.

Targeted assistance is therefore critical to help producers mitigate these challenges, stabilize production, and ultimately support household food security and resilience.

Vulnerable groups face amplified risks from compounding crises

Three population groups consistently emerge as the most vulnerable: internally displaced persons, households near the frontline, and those headed by women. These groups experience a compounding set of challenges, consistently showing higher levels of food insecurity, more frequent exposure to shocks, and a greater reliance on damaging coping strategies, all while surviving on precarious incomes.

Given the scale and persistence of these disadvantages, targeted assistance is not just beneficial but essential to strengthen their resilience and protect their livelihoods against multiple, overlapping shocks that threaten their livelihoods.



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