Zimbabwe Livelihoods Assessment Committee (ZimLAC)

2024
Rural Livelihoods Assessment

Mashonaland East
Provincial Report

Foreword

The 2024 Zimbabwe Livelihoods Assessment Committee (ZimLAC) Rural Livelihoods Assessment (RLA) was undertaken against the background of the 2023/2024 El Niño induced drought. This RLA, the 24th since inception, was guided by the urgent need for the Government of Zimbabwe to determine the impact of the El Niño induced drought on households in the rural areas and provide evidence to inform decision making. The assessment will also ensure the timely development of holistic and robust response programmes.

Considering that this was a unique year, the ZimLAC engaged various data collection approaches to enhance ground-truthing of contextual issues affecting food and nutrition security in different geographic areas. In that regard, the household interviews and community Focus Group Discussions were complemented by interviews with selected Chiefs (together with the Headmen and other traditional leaders who fall under their jurisdiction) and district level Key Informant Interviews. This multi-pronged approach contributed towards collation of in-depth insights into pertinent rural households' livelihoods issues which include demographics, health, nutrition, WASH, social protection, food consumption patterns, income sources, income levels, expenditure patterns, coping strategies, shocks and food security.

We would like to extend our sincere gratitude to the Government of Zimbabwe and its Development Partners for the financial and technical support which enabled us to undertake the survey in a timely manner. We remain indebted to the food and nutrition security structures at both provincial and district levels for their support. We appreciate the rural communities of Zimbabwe, the local authorities as well as Traditional Leaders for cooperating and supporting this assessment. We submit this report to you for your use and reference in your invaluable work towards addressing priority issues keeping many of our rural households vulnerable to food and nutrition insecurity.

George D. Kembo (Dr.)

DIRECTOR GENERAL/ ZIMLAC CHAIRPERSON

Table of Contents

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements

The technical and financial support received from the following is greatly appreciated:

- Office of the President and Cabinet
- Food and Nutrition Council
- Ministry of Finance, Economic Development and Investment Promotion
- Ministry of Lands, Agriculture, Fisheries, Water and Rural Development
- Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare
- Ministry of Health and Child Care
- Ministry of Local Government and Public Works
- Rural District Councils (RDCs)
- Ministry of Women Affairs, Community, Small and Medium Enterprise Development
- United States Agency for International Development (USAID)
- ZIMSTATS
- United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)
- START NETWORK
- United Nations World Food Programme (WFP)
- UNDP

- Catholic Relief Services
- Adventist Relief Agency (ADRA)
- World Vision
- Red Cross
- Bindura University of Science Education
- Marondera University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology
- Plan International
- CARITAS
- Lower Guruve Development Association
- Mwenezi Development Trust
- LID Agency
- Abundant Life For All (ALFA)
- Members of Parliament (Shamva, Murehwa South, Murehwa West and Murehwa North Constituencies)
- St Daniels Rehabilitation Centre
- JF Kapnek Trust Zimbabwe
- Takunda

- Family Aids Caring Trust (FACT)
- Valley of Hope
- Simukai
- AMALIMA Loko
- Midlands AIDS Service Organisation
- ZVANDIRI
- Aqua Culture Zimbabwe
- CARE International
- Nutrition Action Zimbabwe
- Mavambo Trust
- Mavambo Orphan Care
- Zimbabwe Prisons and Correctional Services
- CIMMYT
- Zimbabwe Council of Churches
- Heather Chimoga Orphan Care
- Harare Rotary Club CBD
- Centre for Agro-Entrepreneurship & Sustainable Livelihoods Trust
- Africa Ahead

Acknowledgement of Financial Support

Introduction and Background

Introduction

- ZimLAC plays a significant role in operationalising Commitment Six, of the Food and Nutrition Security Policy (GoZ, 2012), in which the "Government of Zimbabwe is committed to ensuring a national integrated food and nutrition security information system that provides timely and reliable information on the food and nutrition security situation and the effectiveness of programmes and informs decision-making".

- The information system is critical in informing decision making as it provides evidence for timely response by Government.

- ZimLAC livelihood assessments' results continue to be an important tool for informing and guiding policies and programmes that respond to the prevailing food and nutrition security situation with 11 urban and 24 rural livelihoods updates having been produced to date.

Zimbabwe Livelihoods Assessment Committee (ZimLAC)

ZimLAC is a consortium of Government, Development Partners, UN, NGOs, Technical Agencies and the Academia which was established in 2002 and is led and regulated by Government. It is chaired by FNC, a Department in the Office of the President and Cabinet whose mandate is to promote a multi-sectoral response to food insecurity and nutrition problems in a manner that ensures that every Zimbabwean is free from hunger and all forms of malnutrition.

ZimLAC supports Government, particularly FNC in:

- Convening and coordinating national food and nutrition security issues in Zimbabwe.

- Charting a practical way forward for fulfilling legal and existing policy commitments in food and nutrition security.

- Advising Government on the strategic direction in food and nutrition security.

- Undertaking a "watchdog role" and facilitating action to ensure sector commitments in food and nutrition are kept on track through a number of core functions such as:

  - Undertaking food and nutrition assessments, analysis and research;

  - Promoting multi-sectoral and innovative approaches for addressing food and nutrition insecurity, and;

  - Supporting and building national capacity for food and nutrition security including at sub-national levels.

Assessment Rationale

The assessment results will be used to guide the following:

- Evidence based planning and programming for targeted interventions.

- Development of interventions that address immediate to long term needs as well as building resilient livelihoods.

- Early warning for early action.

- Monitoring and reporting progress towards commitments within the guiding frameworks of existing national and international food and nutrition policies and strategies such as the National Development Strategy 1, the Food and Nutrition Security Policy, Sustainable Development Goals and the Zero Hunger strategy.

Purpose

The overall purpose of the assessment was to provide an annual update on livelihoods in Zimbabwe's rural areas to inform policy formulation and programming appropriate interventions.

Objectives

The specific objectives of the assessment were:

1. To estimate the rural population that is likely to be food insecure in the 2024/2025 consumption year, their geographic distribution and the severity of their food insecurity.

2. To assess the nutrition status of the rural population.

3. To describe the socio-economic profiles of rural households in terms of such characteristics as their demographics, access to basic services (education, health services, water, sanitation and hygiene services), assets, income sources, agriculture, incomes and expenditure patterns, food consumption patterns and consumption coping strategies.

4. To determine the coverage of humanitarian and developmental interventions.

5. To determine the effects of shocks experienced by communities on food and nutrition security.

6. To identify development priorities for communities

Contextual Analysis - Background

- The 2023/2024 El Niño event caused widespread drought conditions across southern Africa, characterized by a late onset of rains, extended mid-season dry spells and extreme high temperatures. The El Nino phenomenon significantly and adversely impacted seasonal rainfall's spatial and temporal distribution.

- The extended dry conditions have had a widespread, severe impact on crops, as it occurred at a time when cereal crops were generally most susceptible to water deficits, resulting in widespread crop failure.

- Reduced precipitation exacerbates water scarcity, impacting agriculture, hydroelectric power generation, and water supply for communities (drinking and sanitation).

- Zimbabwe, like most Sub-Saharan countries was in the grip of the 2023/24 El Nino-induced drought which resulted in massive crop failure, depletion of water resources and pastures.

- According to the Ministry of Lands, Agriculture, Fisheries, Water and Rural Development's 2024 2nd Round Crop, Livestock and Fisheries Assessment Report, both agricultural production and productivity for the 2023/ 2024 agricultural season were severely and negatively impacted by, arguably, the worst drought-induced El Nino in 40 years. Statistically, the season had the latest and driest start to a summer season in 40 years.

Contextual Analysis - Background

- The majority of rural households in Zimbabwe rely on rain-fed agriculture which is susceptible to climate change and variability. The dry conditions had an adverse effect on the commencement of planting nationwide, resulting in a substantial decrease in the area planted and crop yields. In addition, the dry conditions resulted in low livestock productivity and poor pastures which ultimately affects food security and livelihood options.

- The delayed onset of the rainfall season resulted in late planting as most farmers started planting in late December following some significant rainfall across the country which also resulted in a trail of destruction to infrastructure and livelihoods. More than 80% of the country received below normal rainfall average by end of February 2024. Prolonged dry weather conditions were again experienced in November and the first half of December 2023. The country further experienced the driest month of February 2024 on record.

- Crop failure was also exacerbated by the outbreak of fall armyworm (FAW) caterpillars with the highest infestation occurring in Mashonaland Central, Mashonaland East, Midlands, and Matabeleland South provinces. Outbreaks of African Armyworm, quelea birds and armoured crickets were also reported. Control measures were put in place and minimized the damage.

- Livestock was impacted by the El Niño induced dry conditions, which resulted in considerable shortages in pasture and reduced water availability for livestock. In Zimbabwe, over 9,000 drought-related cattle deaths were reported and over 1.4 million cattle were reported as being at high risk of drought conditions and death due to lack of pasture and water.

- The Zimbabwean economy being agro-based has been largely affected notwithstanding mitigatory measures vigorously pursued by Government and partners.

Economic Stabilisation Measures

- Government, through the Ministry responsible for Finance put in place a number of measures which resulted in the following:

- Government delivered the 2024 Monetary Policy Statement which was expected to ensure lasting stability, certainty, and predictability in the exchange rate and inflation.

- The Reserve Bank introduced a structured currency which was expected to result in the dissipation of inflationary pressures in the short to medium term.

- Against this background, the Monetary Policy Statement primarily focused on immediate measures necessary to boost the demand for local currency in the multicurrency economy, fostering a stable and sustainable exchange rate, rebuilding market confidence and policy credibility and supporting a stable and sustainable economy as enshrined in Vision 2030 and (National Development Strategy 1) NDS1.

- The foreign currency receipts for January and February 2024 amounted to US$2.2 billion compared to US$1.8 billion received during the same period in 2023, representing a 23% increase.

- Month-on-month inflation also declined from a peak of 12.10% in June 2023 to -1.3% in August 2023. Driven by the exchange rate volatility, the month-on-month inflation rebounded to 4.7% in December 2023 and 5.4% in February 2024.

- However, the EL-Nino-induced drought, which turned out to be more severe than initially anticipated was expected to impact negatively on the domestic economy's growth trajectory.

Government Mitigatory Measures

- In terms of Section 27(1) of the Civil Protection Act [*Chapter 10:06*], His Excellency, the President of the Republic of Zimbabwe, Cde Dr E.D Mnangagwa declared a nationwide State of Disaster due to the El Nino induced drought on the 3rd of April 2024. In order to facilitate a coordinated response to the climate-induced drought and allow for resource mobilization and response planning in the short and medium term, Government developed the robust *2024 EL NINO INDUCED DROUGHT DISASTER: DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL APPEAL FOR ASSISTANCE*. In the Appeal, Government focuses on search and rescue, mitigation and resilience building in the following critical areas:

  - Agriculture

  - Food and nutrition security

  - Protection

  - Health

  - Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)

  - Education

  - Environment and Natural Resources

  - Energy

  - Macro, Small and Medium Enterprises

- The impact of the current El Nino induced drought was expected to last until March 2025 for most communities hence it was critical that requisite resources be mobilized urgently to assure communities of sustenance. The Appeal seeks to raise a total of USD 3.9 Billion.

Contextual Analysis – Government Mitigatory Measures

Government remained committed to ensuring that every Zimbabwean is free from hunger and all forms of malnutrition and led the implementation of the following measures to ensure food security for all people:

- **Food Mitigation:** Government is targeting **7.7 million** people in both rural and urban areas who were projected to be food insecure. Of these, 6 million are in the rural areas. Government is embarking on a blitz three-month phased distribution plan prioritising the worst affected areas and the hard to reach. The blitz is targeting the most vulnerable groups who include the elderly, persons with disabilities, orphaned and child-headed households and chronically ill, among others. Each beneficiary will receive a three-month allocation of grain at once which has been pegged at **7.5kg per** person per month translating to **22.5kg per person** for three months and **138,171MT** countrywide. In urban areas, each beneficiary will be given cash equivalent to procure a **10kg bag** of mealie meal via mobile money transfers on a monthly basis.

- Government has also adopted the *Build-Back Better* Strategy to cushion communities and assist them to recover from the El Niño induced drought.

- **Presidential Borehole Drilling Scheme:** In order to alleviate the prevailing water scarcity challenges and climate change, Government is implementing the Presidential Borehole Drilling Scheme. The scheme aims to facilitate the provision of clean water to households and will help to avert the potential threats of waterborne diseases. The solar powered boreholes will also avail the much needed water for consumption and hygiene.

- **Strengthening of Multi-Sectoral Structures** in order to operationalise a cohesive response to the food and nutrition challenges.

Contextual Analysis – Government Mitigatory Measures

On the 12th of March 2024, Cabinet approved the following:

- The Food Security Outlook Report to March 2025 to facilitate winter cereals production planning.

- The consumption of 7,5kg per person per month be used immediately for social welfare and be adjusted after October to 8,5kg per person per month.

- The purchase of local grain at import parity price of USD390 per tonne to mop up excess local grain.

- Duty waiver on the importation of rice and potato seed.

- Importation of Genetically Modified stock feed, under strict supervised milling and distribution.

- Duty free importation of maize, rice and cooking oil by households with effect from July 2024.

- Re-activation of the Grain Mobilisation Committee to monitor private sector imports as well household imports.

Assessment Methodology
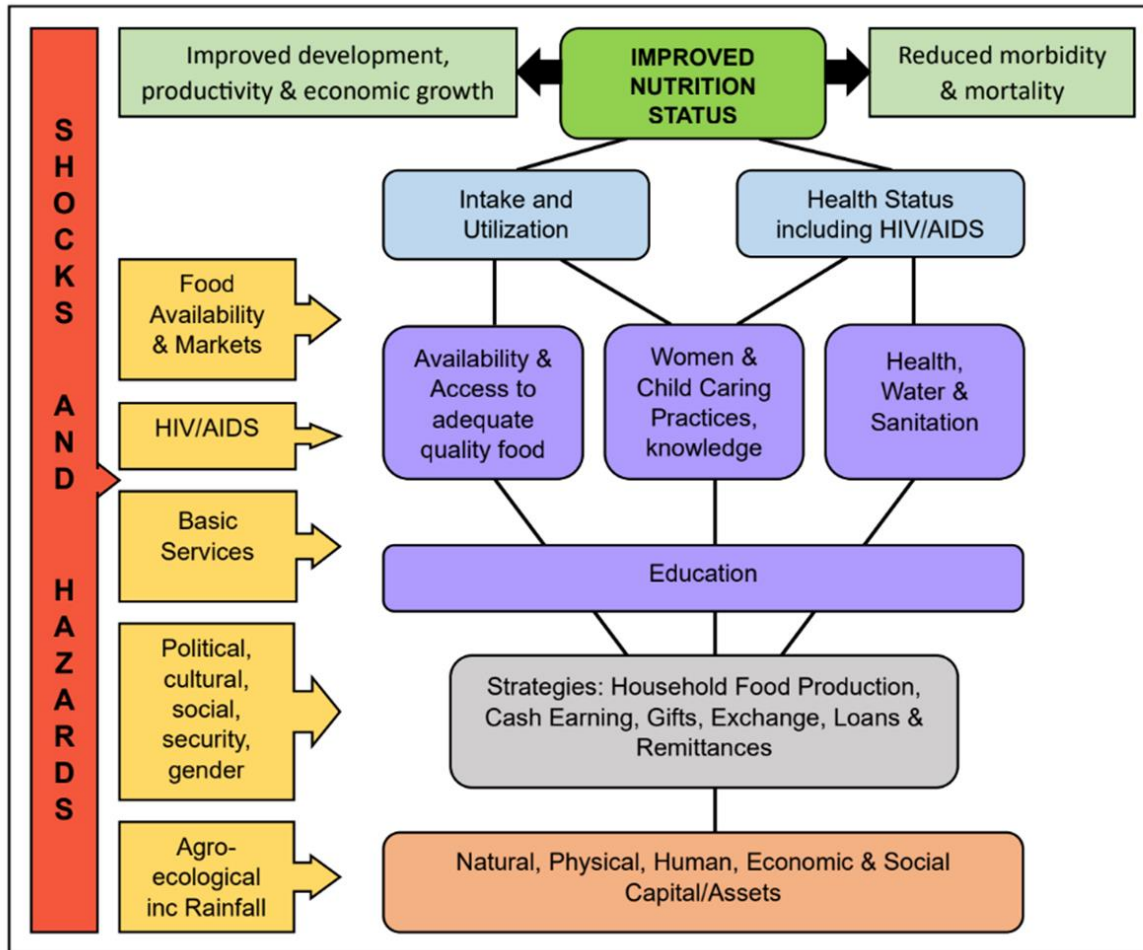
Methodology – Assessment Design

Figure 1: Food and Nutrition Conceptual Framework

- The assessment was a cross-sectional study whose design was guided and informed by the Food and Nutrition Security Conceptual Framework (Figure 1), which Zimbabwe adopted in the FNSP (GoZ, 2012), and the conceptual framework on food security dimensions propounded by Jones et al. (2013).

- The assessment was also guided and informed by the resilience framework (Figure 2) so as to influence the early recovery of households affected by various shocks.

- The assessment looked at food availability and access as pillars that have confounding effects on food security as defined in the FNSP (GoZ, 2012).

- Accordingly, the assessment measured the amount of energy available to a household from all its potential sources hence the **primary sampling unit** for the assessment was the household.
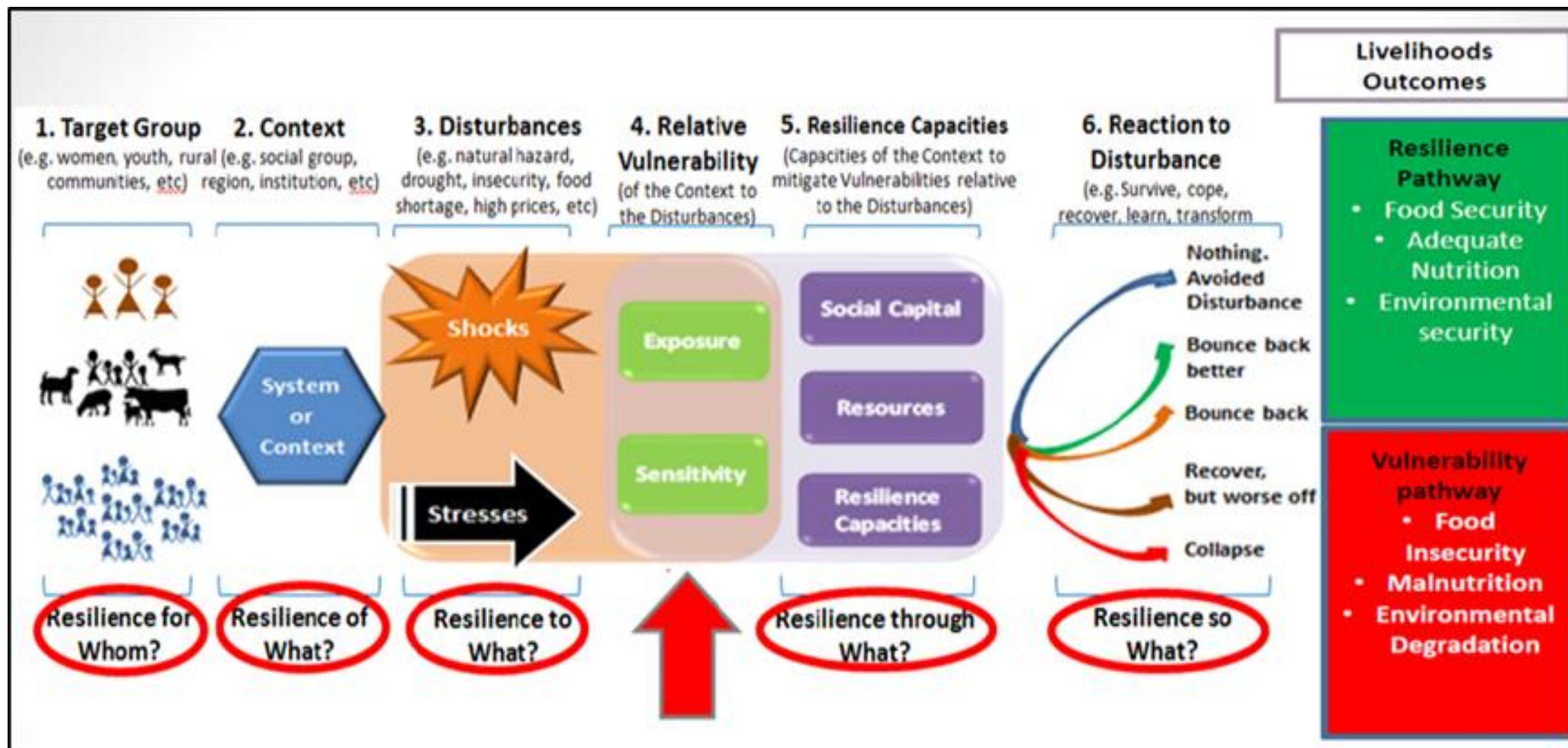
Figure 2: Zimbabwe Resilience Framework (UNDP Zimbabwe, 2015)
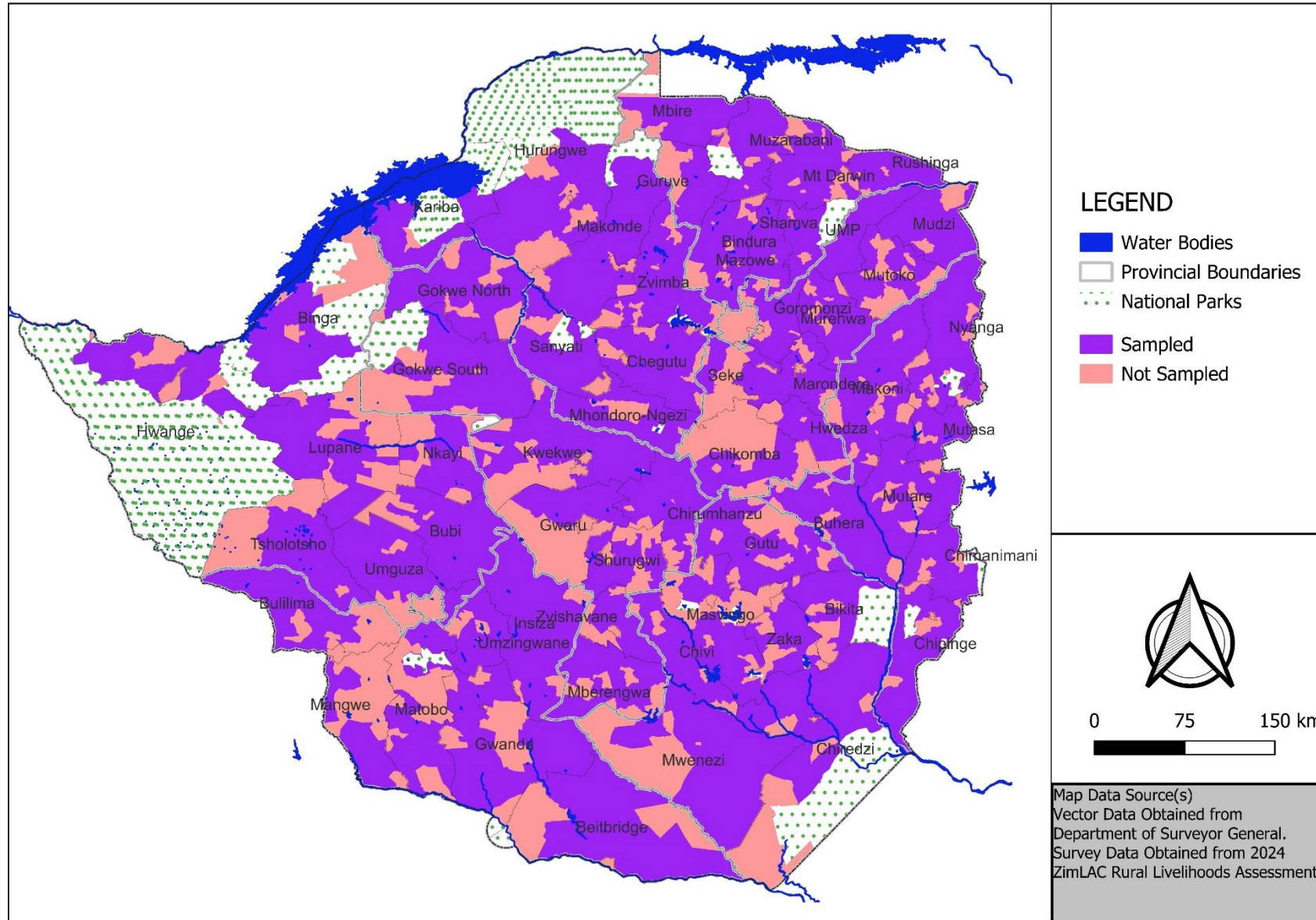
Methodology – Assessment Process

- ZimLAC, through multi-stakeholder consultations, developed an appropriate assessment design concept note and data collection tools informed by the assessment objectives.

- The primary data collection tools used in the assessment were the android–based structured household questionnaire, the community Focus Group Discussion (FGD) guide, Irrigation Key Informant Interview and the Chiefs' FGD guide.

- ZimLAC national supervisors (including Provincial Agritex Extension Officers and Provincial Nutritionists) and enumerators were recruited from Government, United Nations, Technical partners and Non-Governmental Organisations. These underwent training in all aspects of the assessment. Training for enumerators was done at district level.

- The Ministry of Local Government coordinated the recruitment of district level enumerators and mobilisation of provincial supervision and district enumeration vehicles. Three enumerators were selected from each district for data collection and one anthropometrist was responsible for taking anthropometric measurements.

- Enumerator training was held 3 May 2024. Primary data collection took place from 4 to 18 May 2024. Data analysis and report writing ran from 27 May to **7** June 2024. Various secondary data sources and field observations were used to contextualise the analysis and reporting.

Methodology - Sampling and Sample Size

- Household food insecurity prevalence was used as the key indicator to determine the sample to ensure 95% confidence level of statistical representativeness at district, provincial and national level.
- The survey collected data from 270 randomly selected Enumerated Areas (EAs).
- A two staged cluster sampling was used and comprised of:
  - Sampling of 30 clusters per each of the 9 rural districts, denoted as EAs in this assessment, from the Zimbabwe Statistics Agency (ZIMSTAT) 2022 master sampling frame using the PPS methodology.
  - The second stage involved the systematic random sampling of 10 households per EA (village).
- At least 300 households were sampled per district. A total of 2 705 households were interviewed.
- 90 FGDs and 9 Chief's Focus Group Discussions were held across all the districts.

District	Number of Interviewed Households
Chikomba	304
Goromonzi	300
Hwedza	300
Marondera	300
Mudzi	300
Murewa	301
Mutoko	300
Seke	300
UMP	300
Mashonaland East	2705

Methodology – Sampled Wards

LEGEND
- Water Bodies
- Provincial Boundaries
- National Parks
- Sampled
- Not Sampled

Map Data Source(s)
Vector Data Obtained from
Department of Surveyor General.
Survey Data Obtained from 2024
ZimLAC Rural Livelihoods Assessment.

Data Preparation and Analysis

- Primary data was transcribed using CSEntry on android gadgets and using CSPro. It was consolidated and converted into SPSS, STATA and DBF datasets for:
  - Household structured interviews
  - Community Focus Group Discussions
  - Chief's Focus Group Discussions

- Data cleaning and analysis were done using SPSS, STATA, ENA, Microsoft Excel and GIS packages.

- Analyses of the different thematic areas covered by the assessment were informed and guided by relevant local and international frameworks, where they exist.

- Gender, as a cross cutting issue, was recognised throughout the analysis.
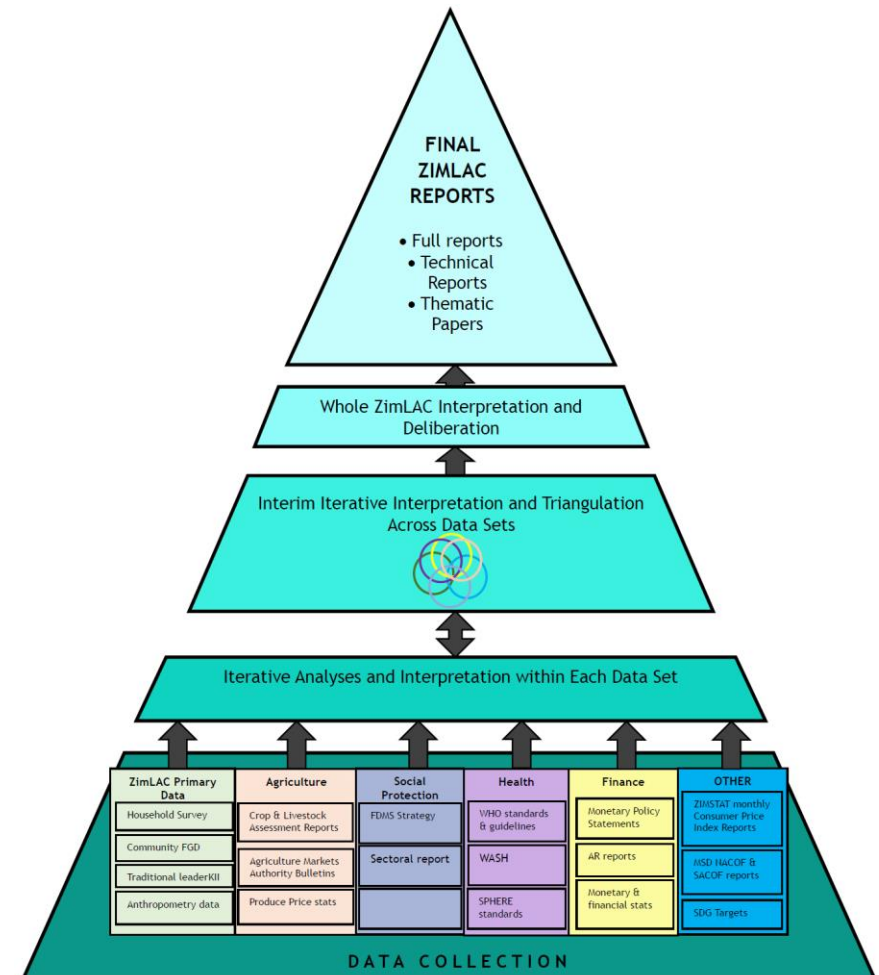
Technical Scope

The 2024 RLA collected and analysed information on the following thematic areas:

- Health

- WASH

- Nutrition

- Agriculture and other rural livelihoods activities

- Food security

- Shocks and stressors

- Social protection

- Youth

- Linkages amongst the key sectoral and thematic areas

- Cross-cutting issues such as gender

Demographic Description of the Sample

Household Members Characteristics

District	Sex		Average Household Size	Household Members (%)						
	Male	Female		0 to 9 Years	10 to 17 years	18 to 29 years	30 to 39 years	40 to 49 years	50 to 64 years	65+ years
Chikomba	42	58	3	24.7	16.5	14.2	7.6	9.9	11.7	15.3
Goromonzi	47	53	4.4	24.4	20.3	16.6	11	9.4	9.9	8.4
Hwedza	48	52	4	25.5	17.1	16	10.2	9	10.9	11.3
Marondera	49	51	3.8	25.5	17.8	16.7	10.9	8.8	10.4	9.6
Mudzi	48	52	4.6	26.6	20.9	15.2	10.7	7.9	9.7	9
Murehwa	47	53	3.6	27.2	17.2	13.5	11.2	10.7	10.4	9.7
Mutoko	49	51	4.6	25.9	22.1	16.1	9.3	9	9.7	7.9
Seke	50	50	3.4	21.2	17	21.2	13.9	10.1	8	8.6
UMP	46	54	4	27.5	20.4	14.3	9.9	9.2	8.4	10.1
Mash East	48	52	3.9	25.5	19	16	10.5	9.3	9.9	9.8

- The average household size was 3.9.

- Females (52%) constituted the majority of the household members.

- Those within the 65+ years category constituted 9.8% of the household members.

Characteristics of Household Head

District	Household Head Average Age (years)	Sex of Household Head (%)		Household Head by Category (%)	
		Male	Female	Elderly headed	Child headed
Chikomba	58.0	46.7	53.3	33.9	0.0
Goromonzi	55.1	70.0	30.0	25.7	0.0
Hwedza	51.7	67.0	33.0	32.3	0.7
Marondera	56.4	65.7	34.3	27.3	0.0
Mudzi	50.6	67.0	33.0	30.0	0.0
Murehwa	57.3	61.1	38.9	25.9	0.7
Mutoko	52.5	66.3	33.7	26.3	0.3
Seke	43.9	59.3	40.7	21.7	0.0
UMP	57.4	55.3	44.7	29.7	0.0
Mash East	**54.2**	**62.0**	**38.0**	**28.1**	**0.2**

- The average age of the household heads was 54.2 years.

- About 38% of the households were female-headed and the highest proportion was recorded in Chikomba (53.3%).

- Elderly headed households constituted 28.1% whilst child-headed were 0.2%.

Characteristics of Household Head: Marital Status
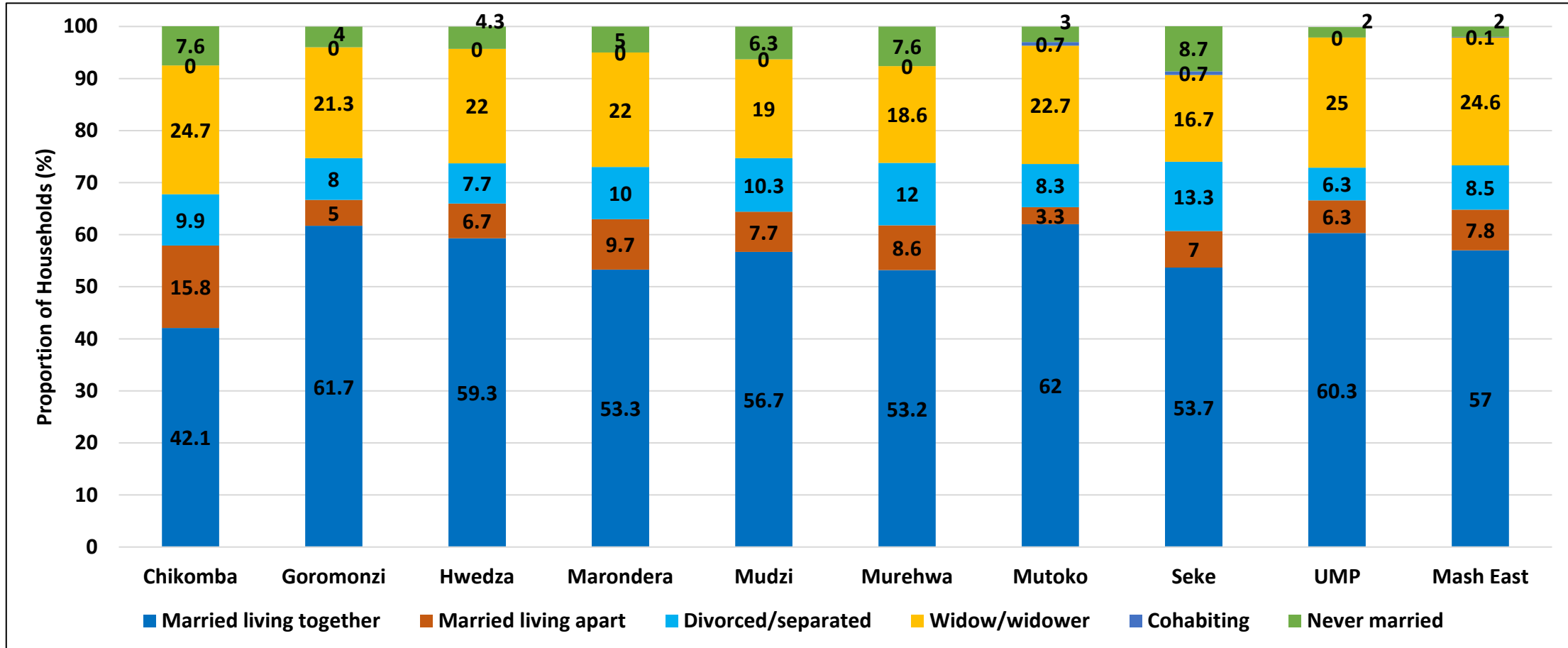
- The majority of household heads were married and living together (57%).

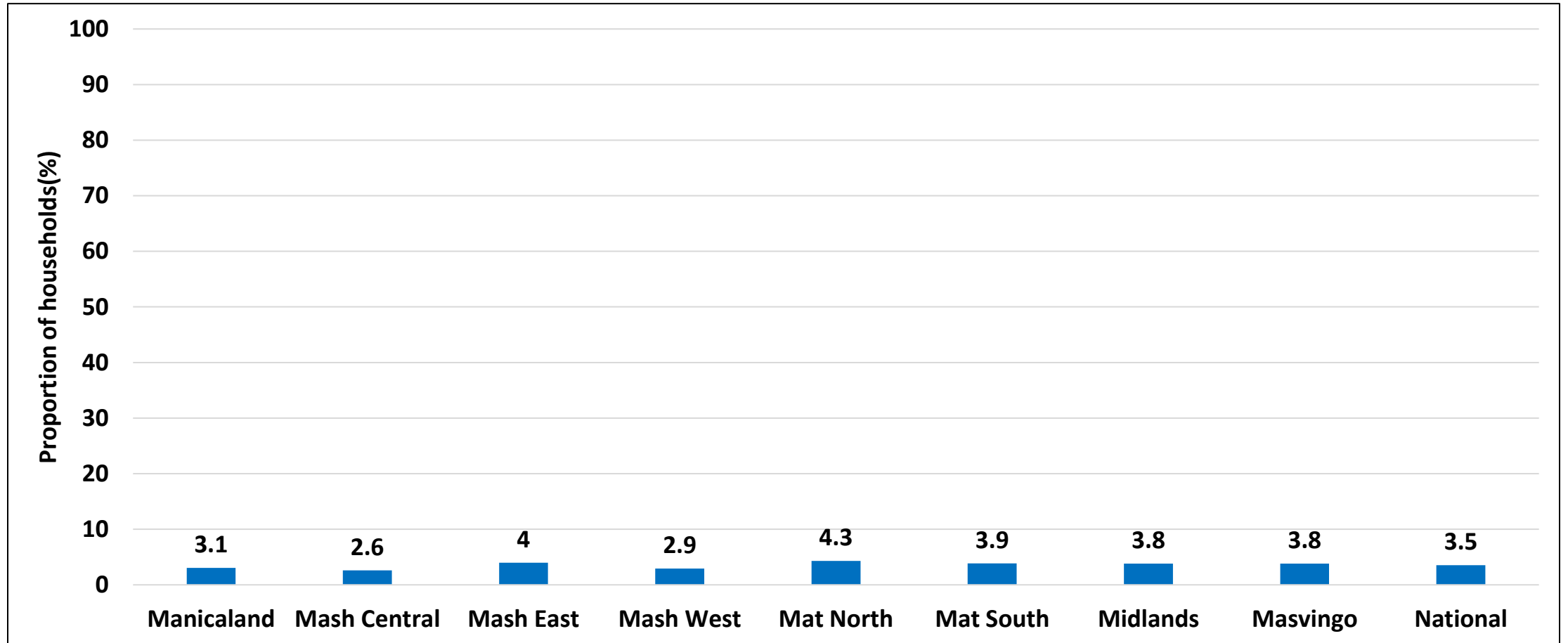# Characteristics of Household Head: Education Level Attained
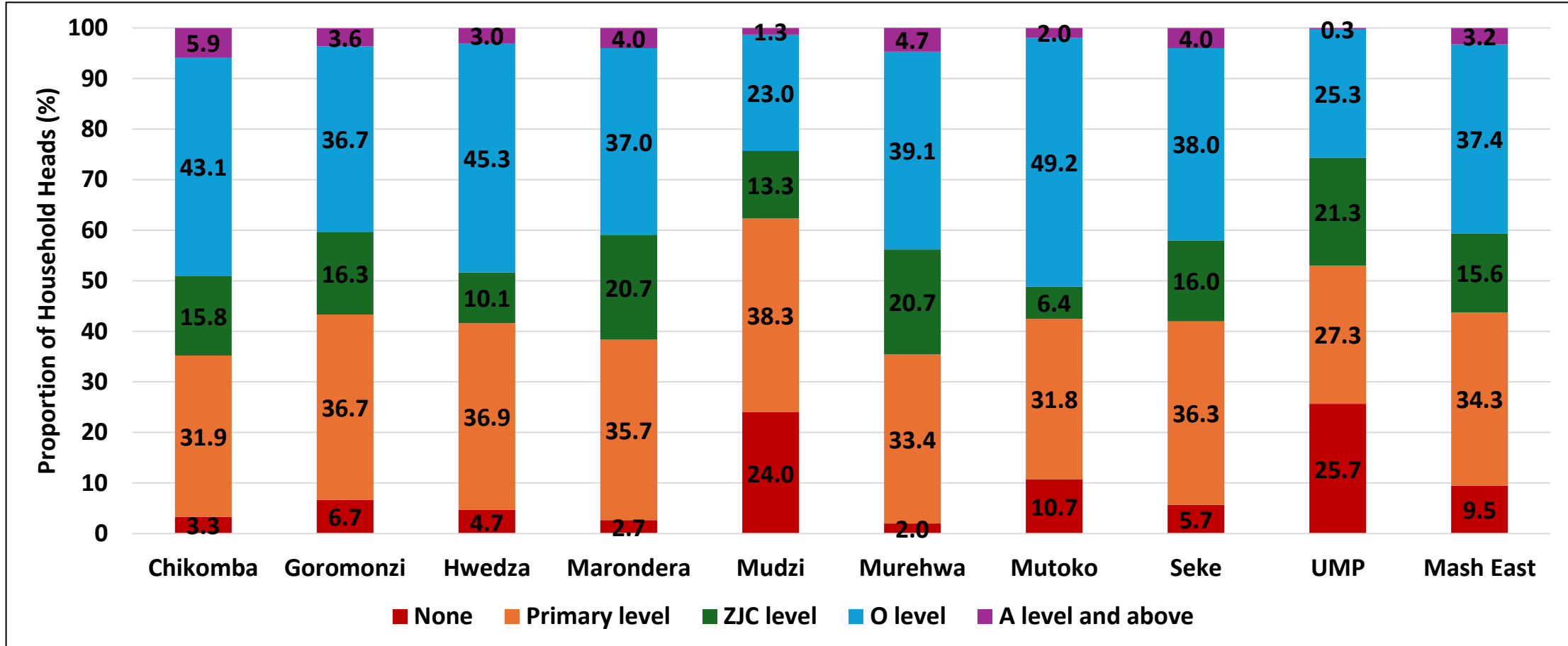
The majority of household heads (37.4%) had attained O Level.

Disability

Disability Conditions

Chart: Proportion of households (%) by province

Manicaland	Mash Central	Mash East	Mash West	Mat North	Mat South	Midlands	Masvingo	National
3.1	2.6	4	2.9	4.3	3.9	3.8	3.8	3.5

Y-axis: Proportion of households(%)

- The proportion of households with a member who had some disability was 4%.

Chronic Conditions

Chronic Conditions
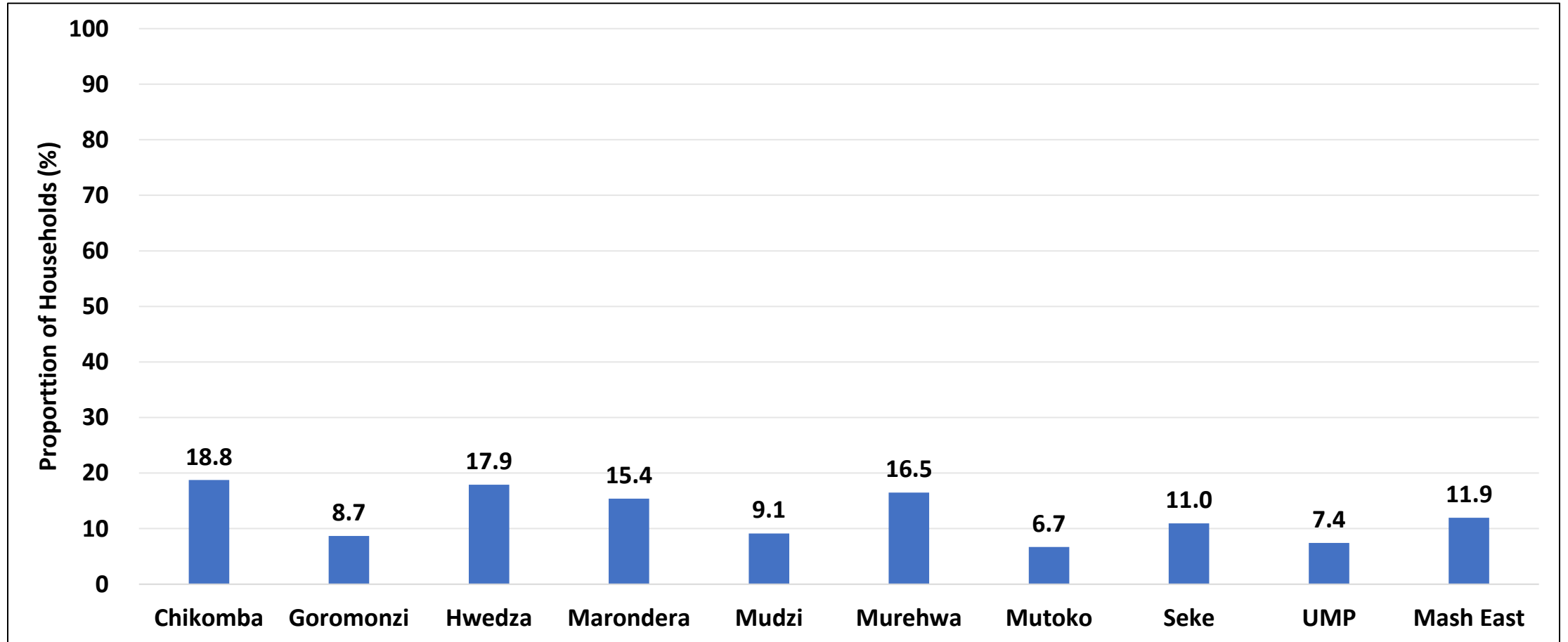
- The proportion of households with a member who had a chronic condition was 11.9%.

Education

School Attendance
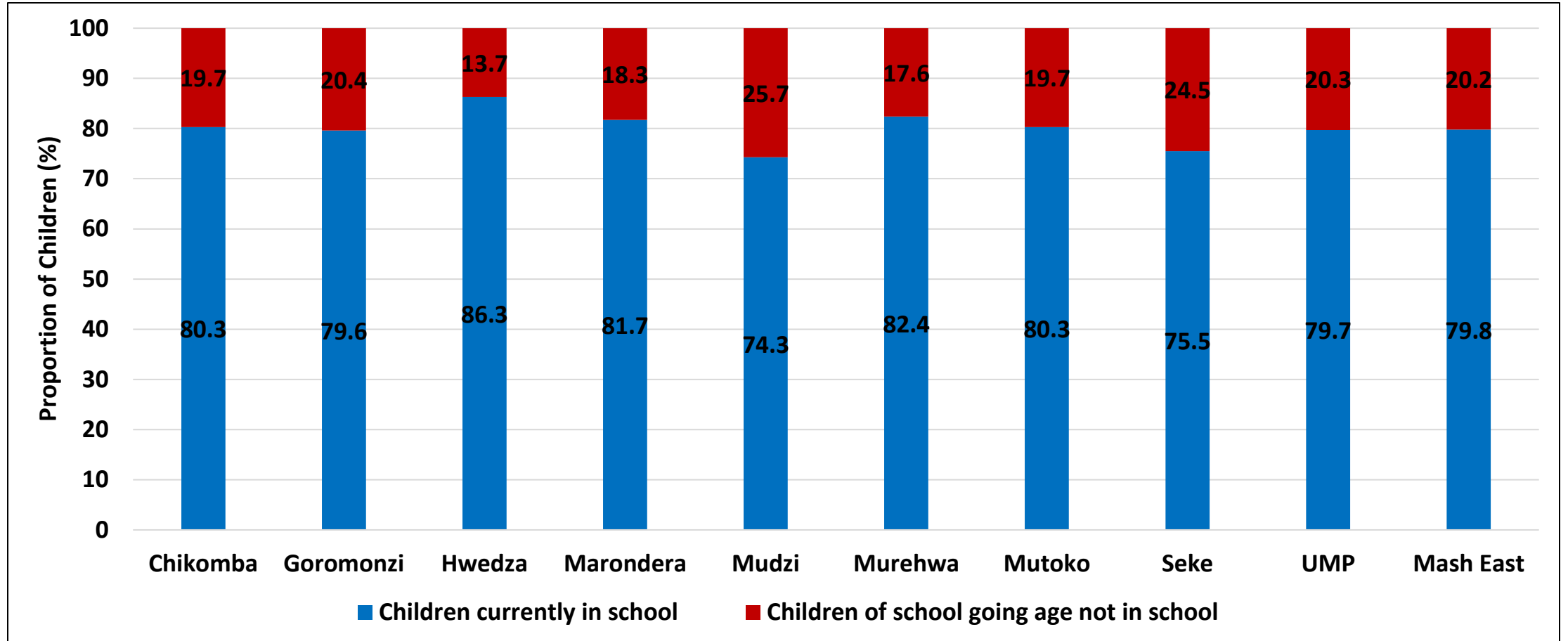
- At the time of the assessment, 20.2% children of school going age were not going to school.

Reasons for Being out of School (20.2%)

District	Financial challenges (%)	Child considered too young (%)	Pregnancy/marriage (%)	Completed O/A level (%)
Chikomba	5.8	4.2	2.9	3.6
Goromonzi	12.7	0	2	2.6
Hwedza	4.3	0.5	2.4	2.2
Marondera	4.7	3.3	1.2	5
Mudzi	11.5	2.7	2.9	3.2
Murehwa	5.8	3.2	2.1	3.2
Mutoko	9.0	3	1.4	4.5
Seke	7.7	1.8	1.8	7.1
UMP	6.7	2.8	2.5	5.7
Mash East	**8**	**2.3**	**2.1**	**4.1**

- Of the 20.2% children out of school, financial challenges (9.8%) was reported to be the main reason why children were not going to school.

- Goromonzi (12.7%) had the highest proportion of children who were not in school due to financial challenges.

Children Receiving Hot Meals at School
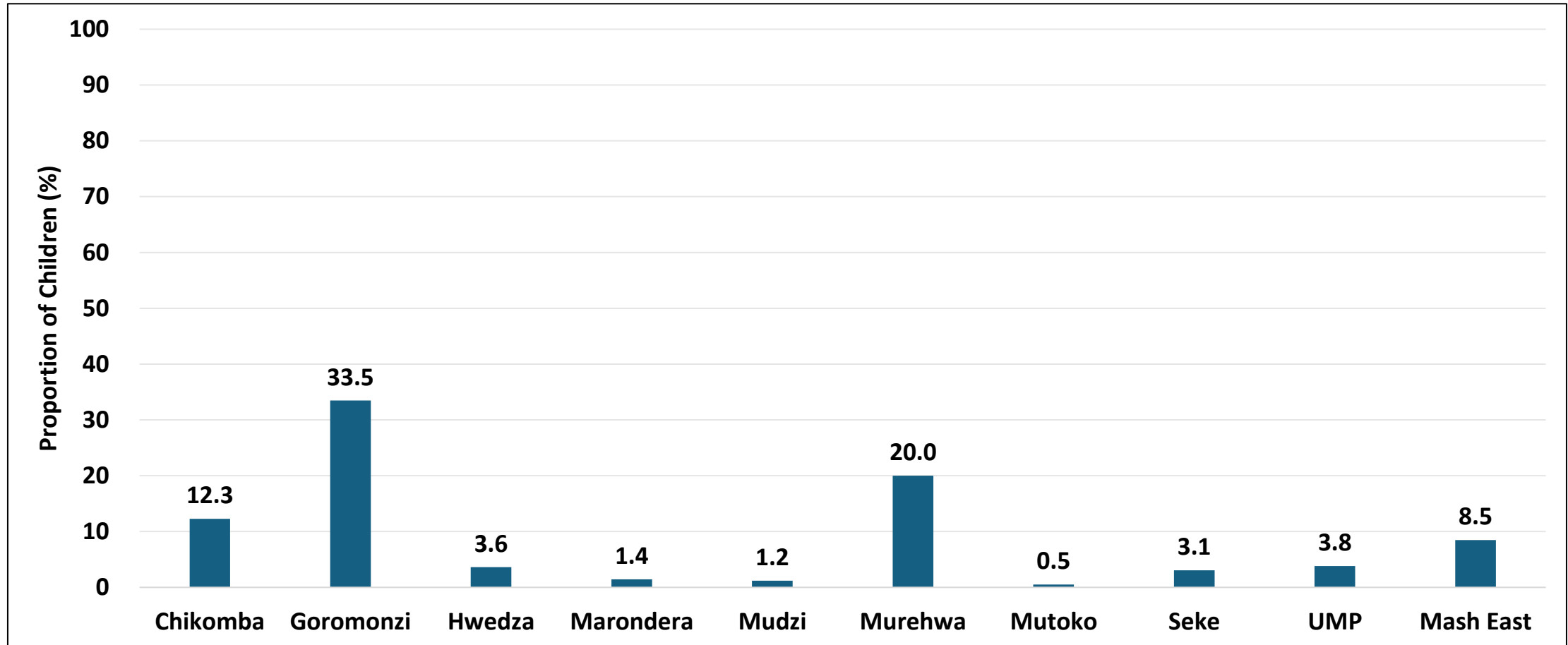
- The proportion of children who received a hot meal at school was at 8.5%.

- The highest proportion of children who received a hot meal was reported in Goromonzi district (33.5%).

Social Protection

Households which Received Any Form of Support
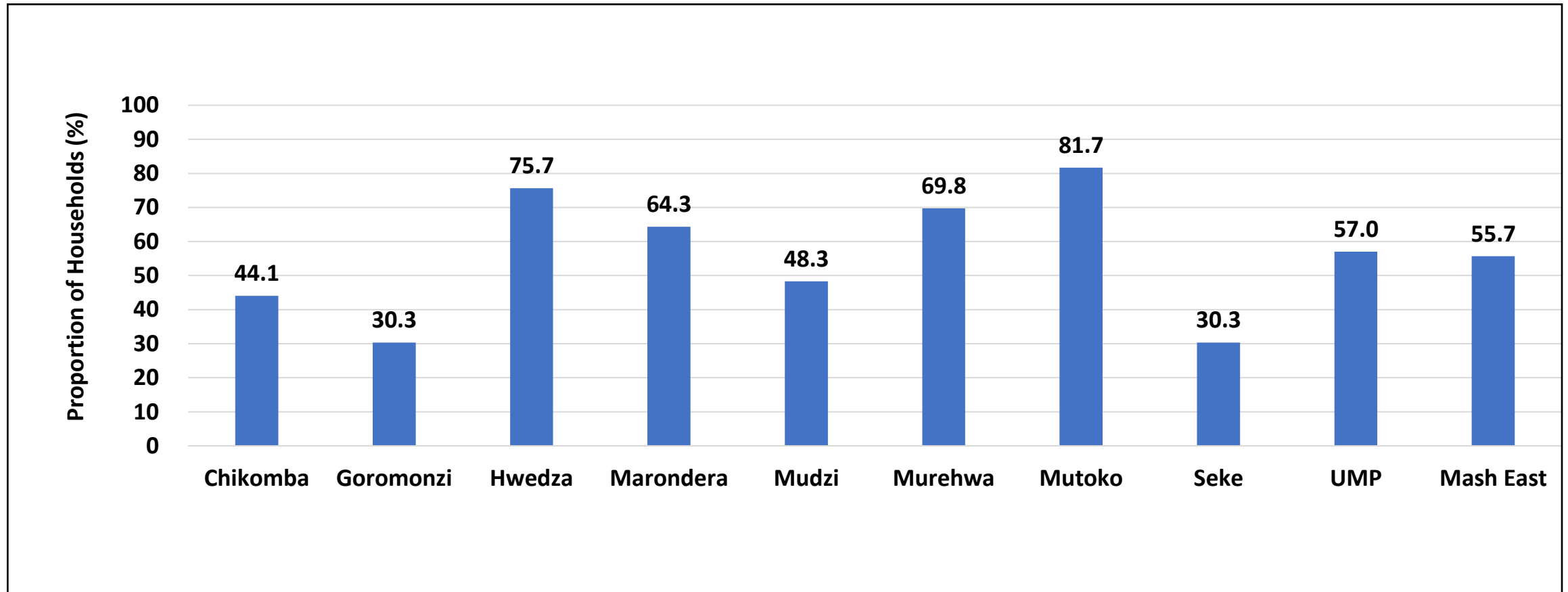
- Mutoko (81.7%) had the highest proportion of households which received any form support while Goromonzi (30.3%) and Seke (30.3%) had the least proportion.

Sources of Support

District	Government (%)	UN/NGO (%)	UN/NGO (%)	Urban relatives (%)	Rural relatives (%)	Diaspora relatives (%)	Mutual Groups (%)
Chikomba	40.5	3.0	3.0	1.3	1.3	0.7	0.7
Goromonzi	28.0	0.7	0.7	1.0	0.7	0.3	1.0
Hwedza	71.7	7.3	7.3	7.7	2.7	1.3	0.3
Marondera	63.7	1.0	1.0	5.0	8.3	1.3	0.3
Mudzi	35.0	13.7	13.7	9.7	17.7	0.7	0.0
Murehwa	61.8	3.7	3.7	12.6	3.7	2.0	4.7
Mutoko	80.0	1.7	1.7	10.0	7.0	3.0	0.0
Seke	23.7	2.3	2.3	2.3	0.7	0.3	1.3
UMP	55.7	0.0	0.0	2.0	4.0	0.0	0.0
Mash East	**51.1**	**3.7**	**3.7**	**5.7**	**5.1**	**1.1**	**0.9**

- The majority of households (51.1%) reported to have received support from Government.

- Mutoko (80.0%) had the highest proportion of households which received support from Government.

Forms of Support from Government

District	Food (%)	Cash transfers (%)	Vouchers (%)	Crop inputs (%)	Livestock (cattle, goats, chicken, fish, etc (%)	Other livestock support (Tick grease, acaricides, etc) (%)	WASH hardware (inputs) (%)	WASH software (trainings/ messaging) (%)	Education assistance (%)	Health Assistance (%)	Other (%)
Chikomba	20.4	0.0	0.0	25.3	0.7	0.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.3
Goromonzi	2.7	0.0	0.0	22.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	6.0	0.0	0.0
Hwedza	15.0	0.7	0.0	69.0	0.7	1.3	0.0	0.0	3.7	0.7	0.7
Marondera	12.0	0.7	0.3	62.3	1.0	10.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Mudzi	14.0	4.0	1.0	25.7	0.0	5.3	0.0	6.0	1.3	0.3	0.0
Murehwa	3.7	0.0	0.0	56.8	0.3	0.7	0.0	0.0	2.7	2.3	1.7
Mutoko	**27.7**	0.3	0.3	**74.0**	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.0	0.3	0.0
Seke	2.7	0.3	0.0	20.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.0	0.3	0.3
UMP	13.0	0.0	0.0	55.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	3.0	0.0	0.0
Mash East	**12.3**	**0.7**	**0.2**	**45.7**	**0.3**	**2.1**	**0.0**	**0.7**	**2.3**	**0.4**	**0.1**

- Crop inputs (54.7%) was the most received form of support from Government.

Food Consumption Patterns

Food Consumption Score

Food Consumption Score

Food Consumption Score Groups	Score	Description
POOR	0-21	An expected consumption of staple 7 days, vegetables 5-6 days, sugar 3-4 days, oil/fat 1 day a week, while animal proteins are totally absent
BORDERLINE	21.5-35	An expected consumption of staple 7 days, vegetables 6-7 days, sugar 3-4 days, oil/fat 3 days, meat/fish/egg/pulses 1-2 days a week, while dairy products are totally absent
ACCEPTABLE	>35	As defined for the borderline group with more number of days a week eating meat, fish, egg, oil, and complemented by other foods such as pulses, fruits, milk

Food Consumption Patterns Trend

2023
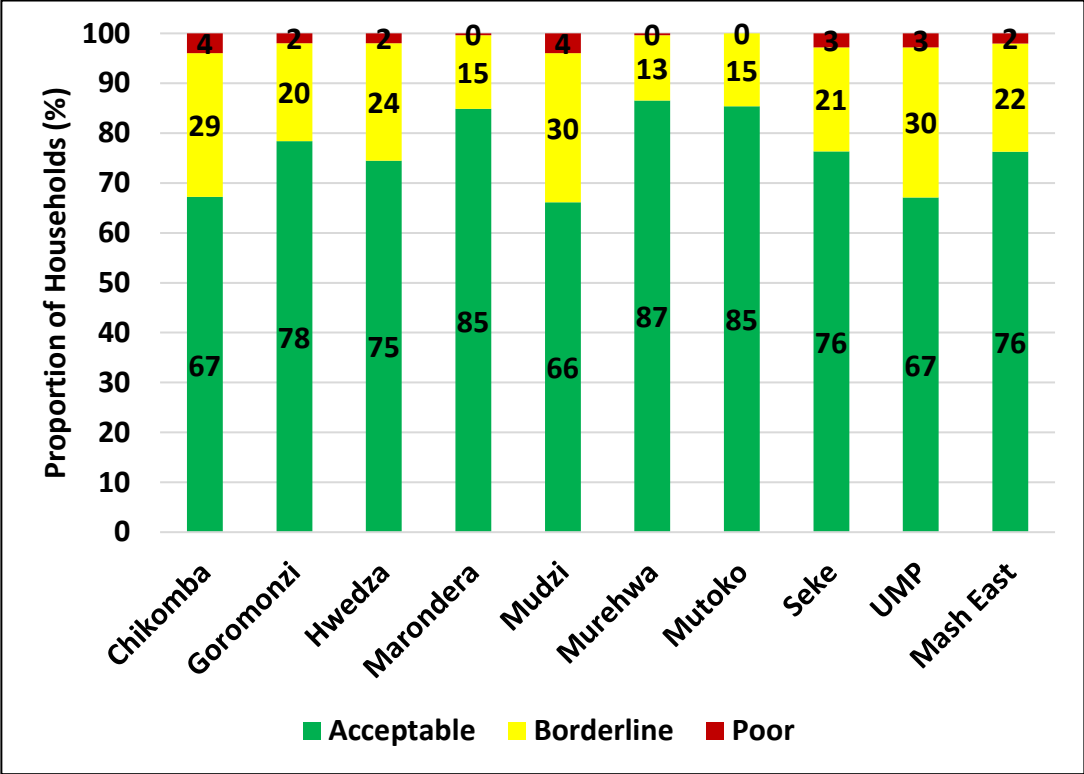
2024
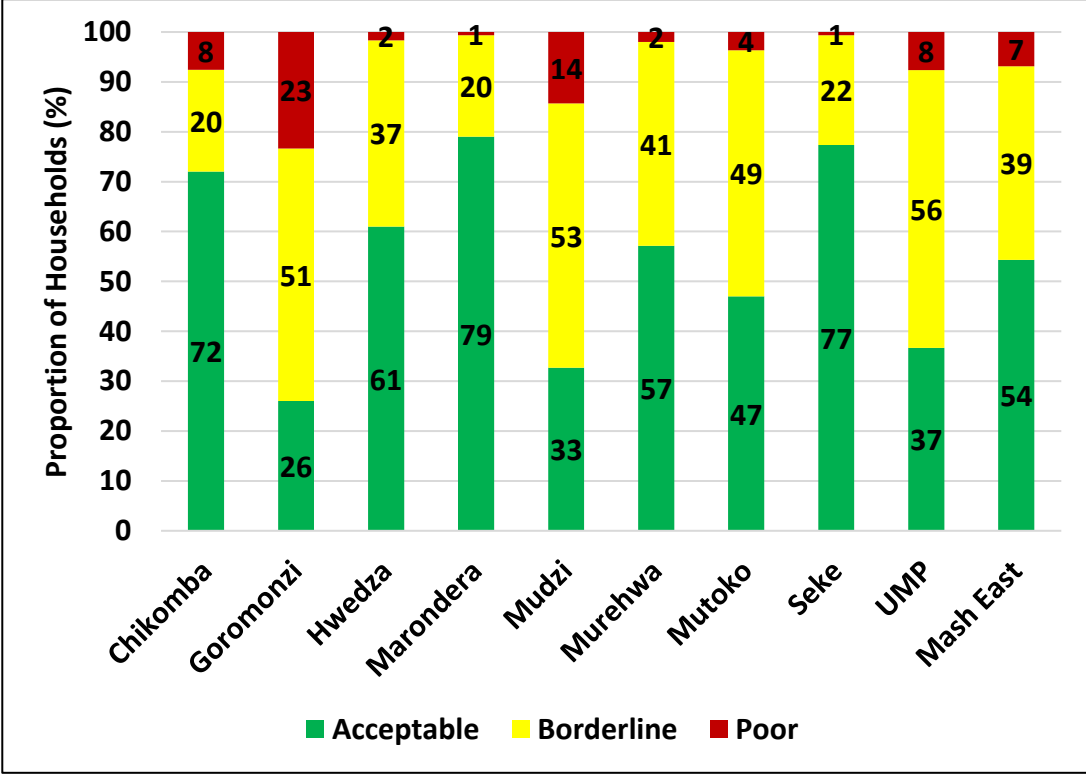
- There was a decrease in acceptable food consumption from 76% in 2023 to 54% in 2024.

- Goromonzi (23%) had the highest proportion of households which consumed poor diets.

Poor Food Consumption Patterns
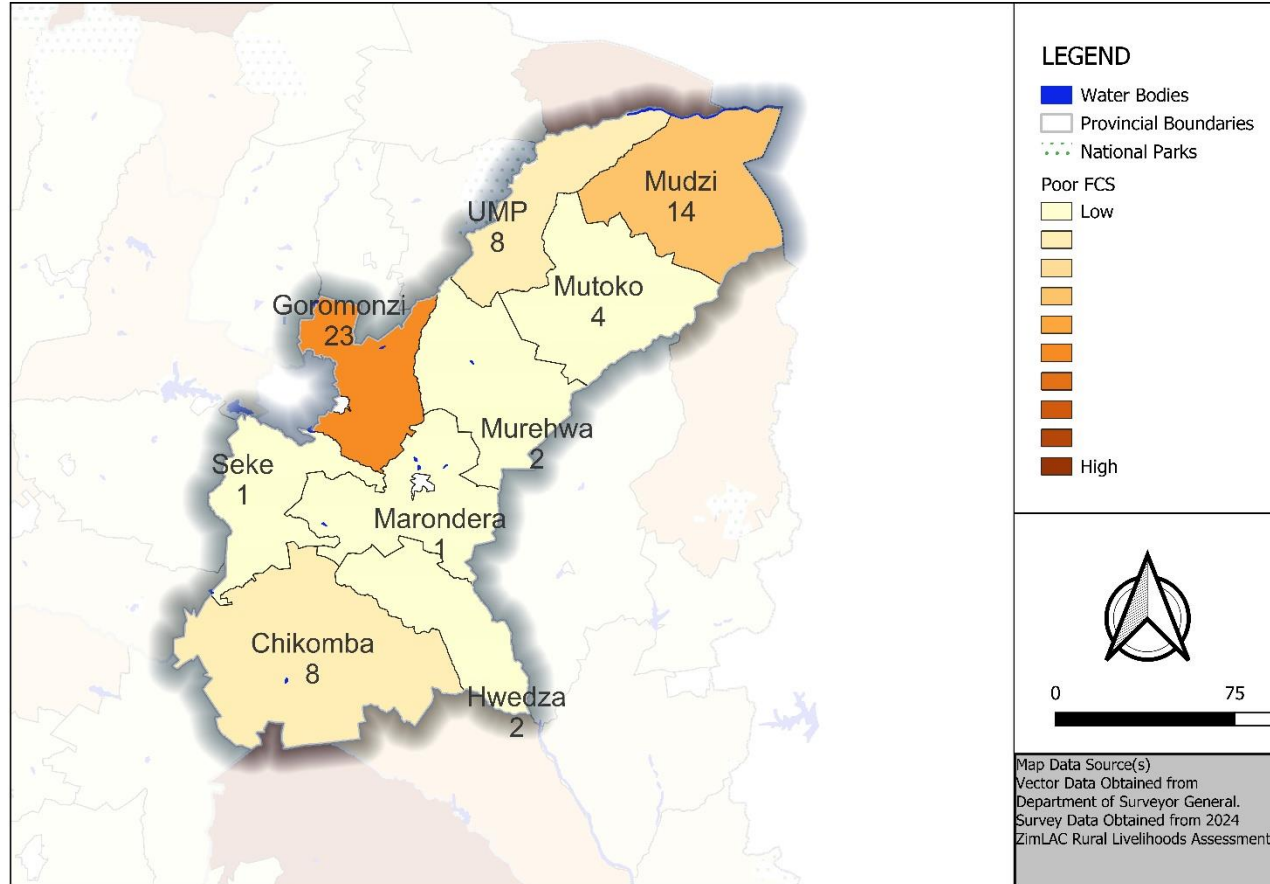
- Goromonzi (23%) had the highest proportion of households which had poor consumption patterns.
- Seke (1%) and Marondera (1%) had the lowest proportion of households which had poor consumption patterns.

Consumption of Protein Rich Foods by District
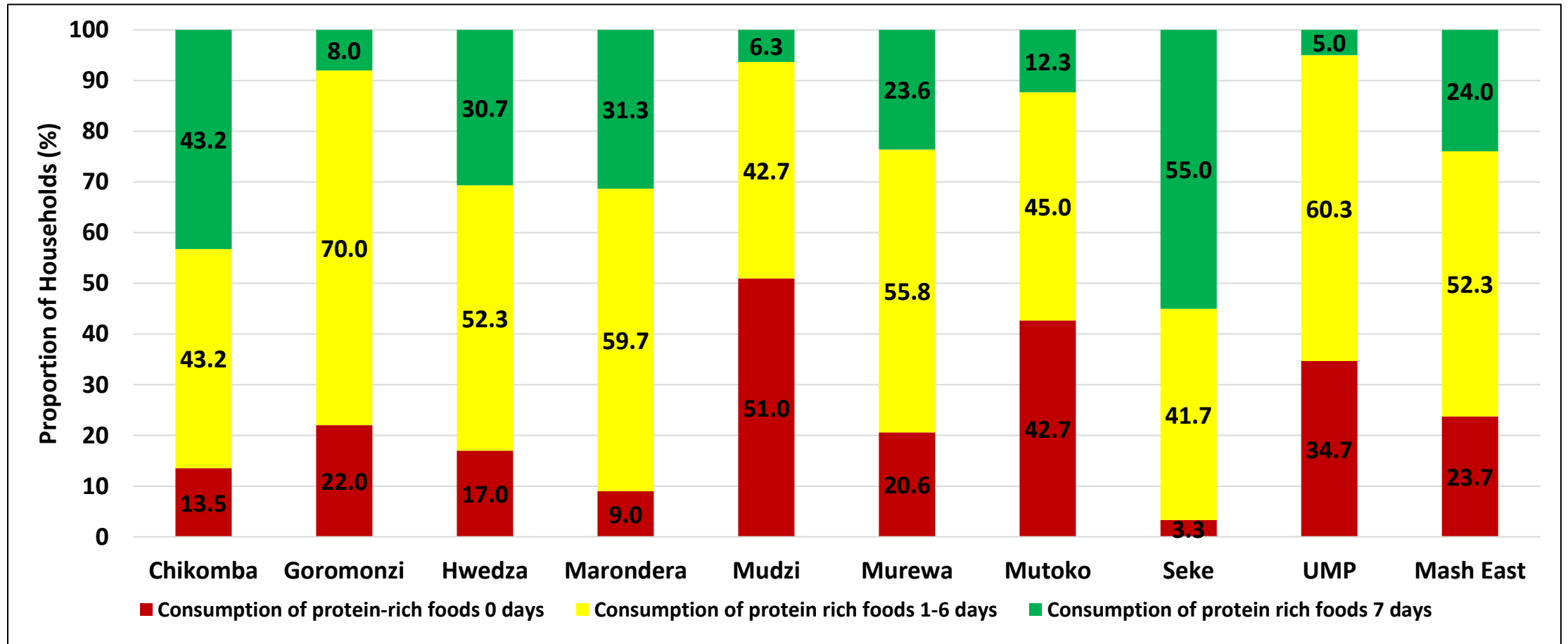
- The proportion of households which consumed protein rich foods between 1 to 7 days preceding the assessment were 76.3%.

- Mudzi (51.0%) had the highest proportion of households which did not consume any protein rich foods during the seven days preceding the assessment.

Consumption of Vitamin A Rich Foods by District

Proportion of Households (%)

District	Consumption of vitamin A rich foods 0 days	Consumption of vitamin A rich foods 1-6 days	Consumption of vitamin A rich foods 7 days
Chikomba	23.8	32.7	43.6
Goromonzi	0.0	48.3	51.7
Hwedza	7.7	23.7	68.7
Marondera	11.0	27.3	61.7
Mudzi	14.7	44.0	41.3
Murehwa	17.3	35.9	46.8
Mutoko	4.3	11.7	84.0
Seke	7.3	43.7	49.0
UMP	19.0	36.3	44.7
Mash East	11.7	33.7	54.6

■ Consumption of vitamin A rich foods 0 days ■ Consumption of vitamin A rich foods 1-6 days ■ Consumption of vitamin A rich foods 7 days

- In the province, 54.6% of the households consumed vitamin A rich foods daily during the seven days preceding the assessment.

Consumption of Iron Rich Foods by District
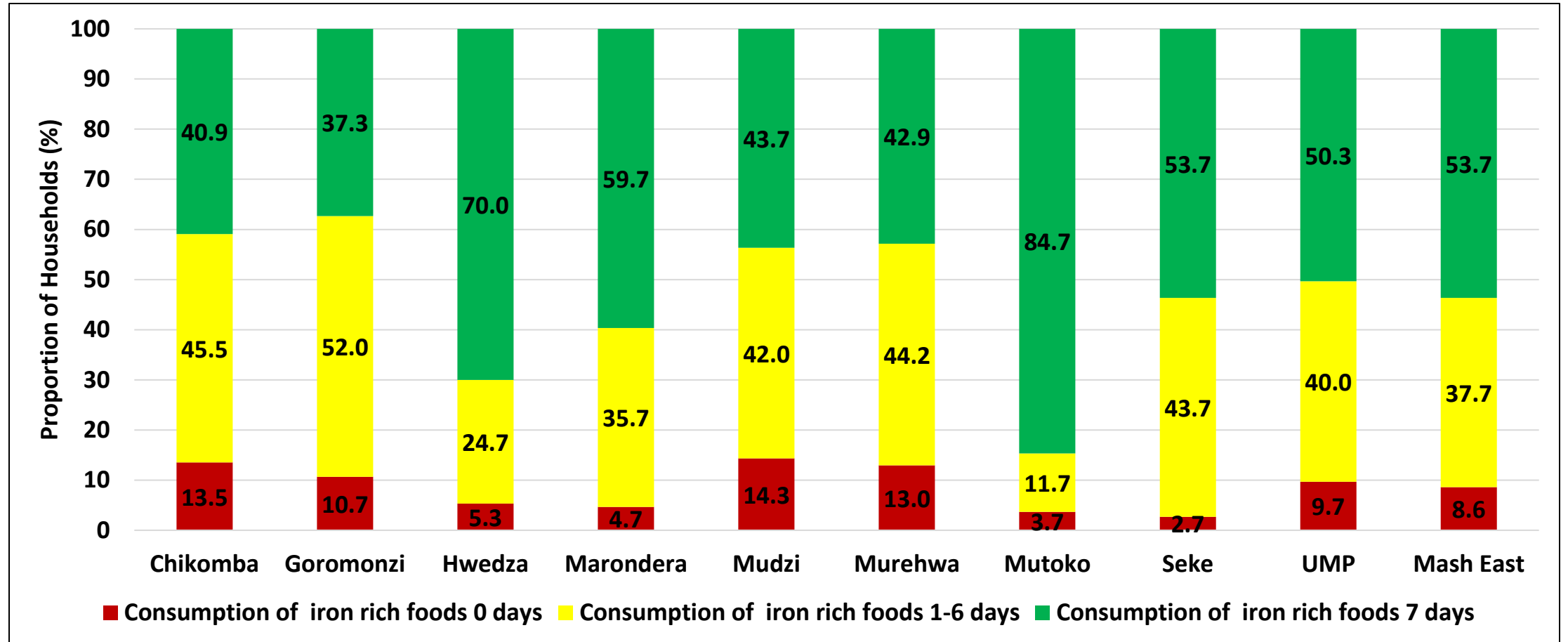
- The proportion of households which consumed iron rich foods daily during the seven days proceeding the assessment was 53.7%.

- Mudzi (14.3%) had the highest proportion of households which did not consume any iron rich foods in the seven days preceding the assessment.

Household Dietary Diversity

Average Number of Days Households Consumed Food from the Various Food Groups

Number of Days
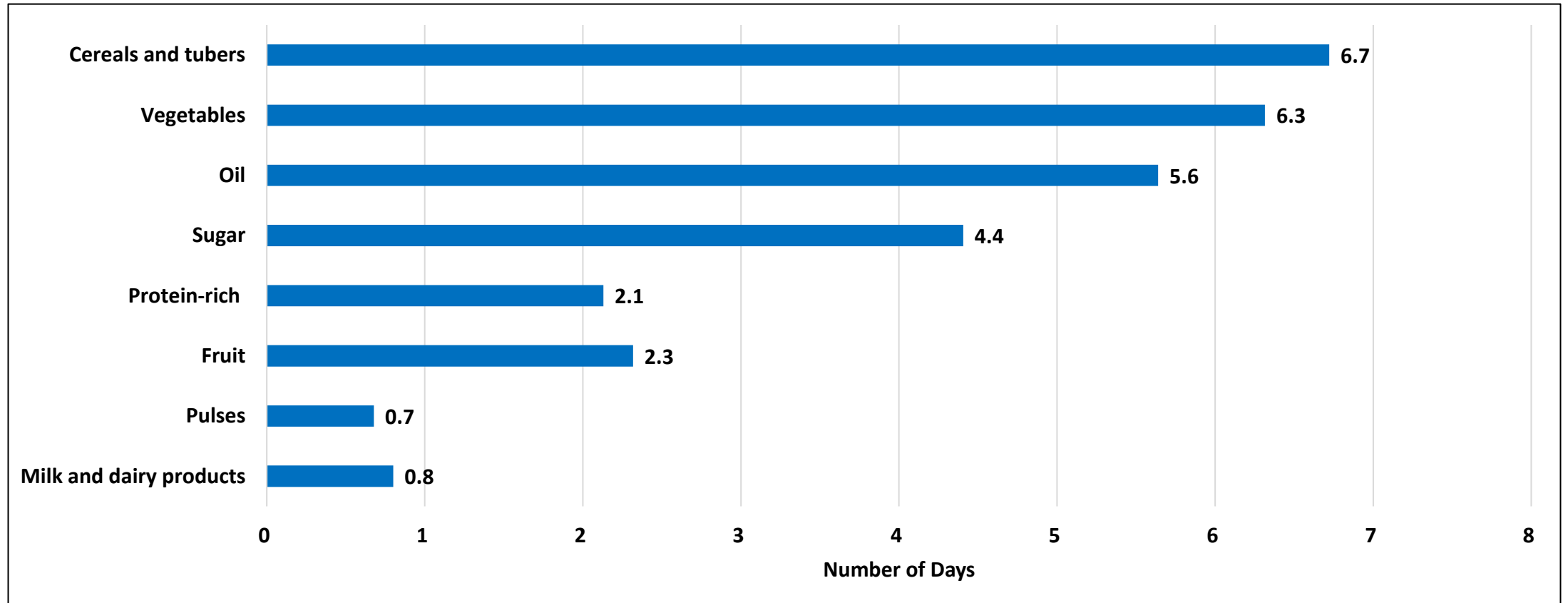
- The most frequently consumed foods were cereals and tubers (6.7 days), vegetables (6.3 days) and oil (5.6 days).
- Milk and dairy products (0,8 days) and pulses (0.7 days) were the least consumed foods.

Average Household Dietary Diversity Score
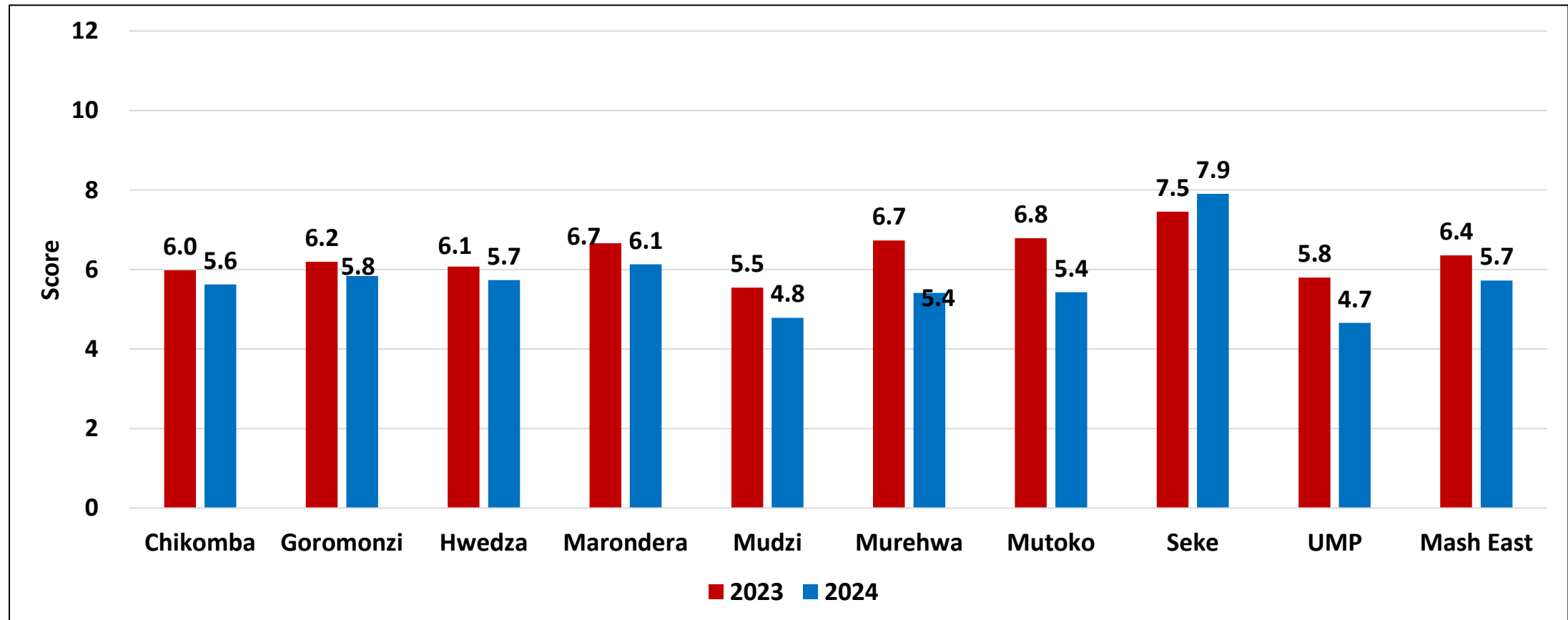
- There was a decrease in the dietary diversity score from 6.4 in 2023 to 5.7 in 2024.

- Seke had an increase from 7.5 in 2023 to 7.9 in 2024.

Household Coping

Reduced Consumption Coping Strategy Index (rCSI)

Reduced Consumption Coping Strategy Index
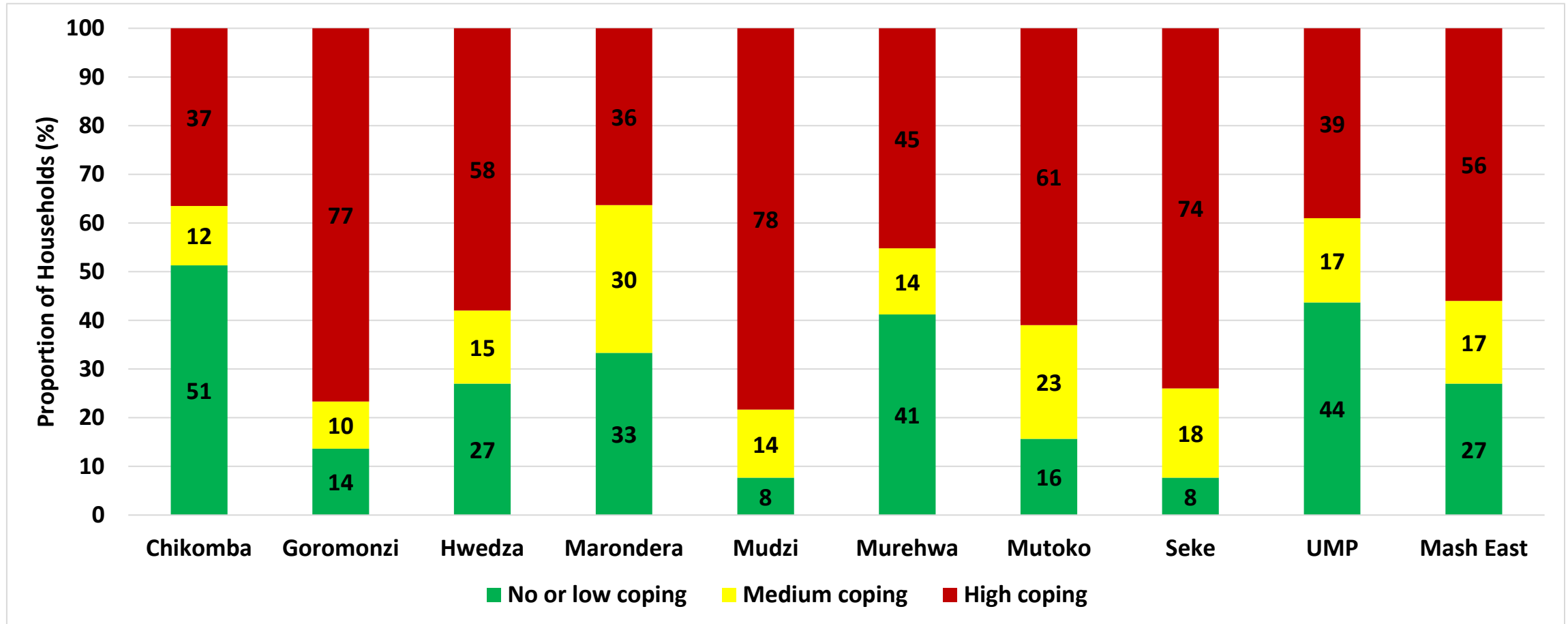
- The proportion of households with high food consumption coping was 56%.

- Mudzi (78%) had the highest proportion of households with high food consumption coping.

Household Hunger Scale
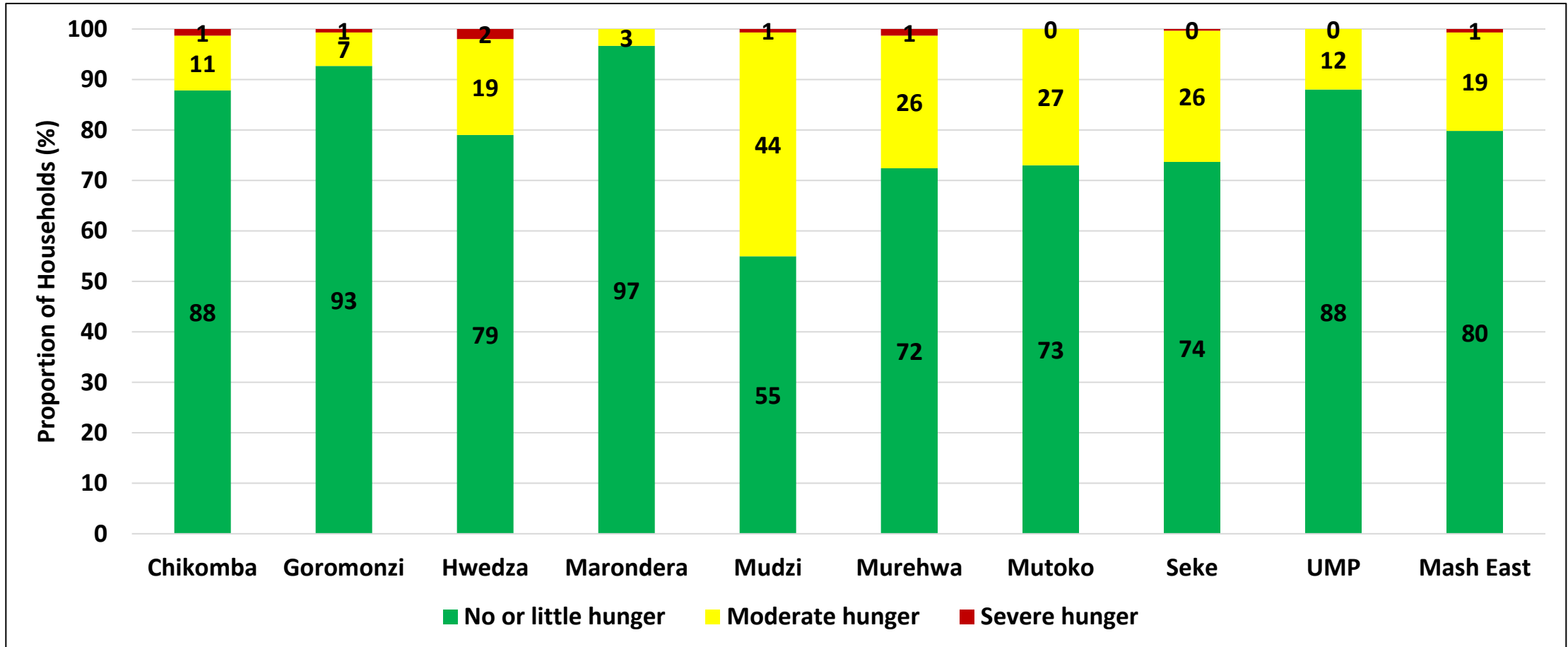
- The proportion of households which experienced little or no hunger was 80%.

- Mudzi (44%) had the highest proportion of households with moderate hunger.

Livelihoods Based Coping Strategies

Livelihoods Coping Strategies

- Livelihood Coping Strategies are behaviors employed by households when faced with a crisis.

- The livelihood scoping strategies have been classified into three categories namely stress, crisis and emergency as indicated in the table.

Category	Coping Strategy
Stress	• **Selling productive assets, directly reduces future productivity, including human capital formation.** • **Withdrawing children from school** • **Reducing non-food expenditure.**
Crisis	• Selling productive assets, directly reduces future productivity, including human capital formation. • Withdrawing children from school • Reducing nonfood expenditure.
Emergency	• **Selling one's land affects future productivity, strategies are more difficult to reverse or more dramatic in nature.** • **Begging for food.** • **Selling the last breeding stock to buy food**

Households Engaging in any Form of Livelihoods Coping Strategies
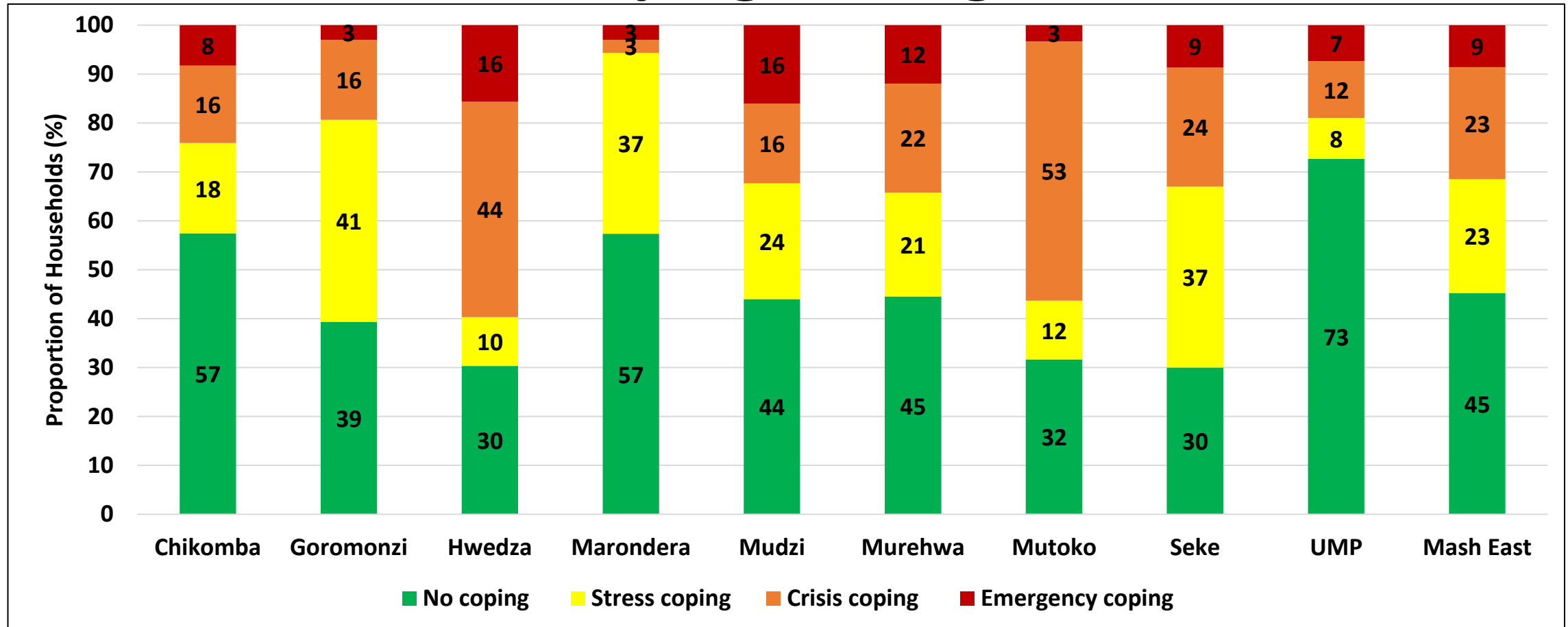
- The proportion of households engaging in emergency coping strategies was 9%.

- Goromonzi (41%) had the highest proportion of households which engaged in stress coping strategies.
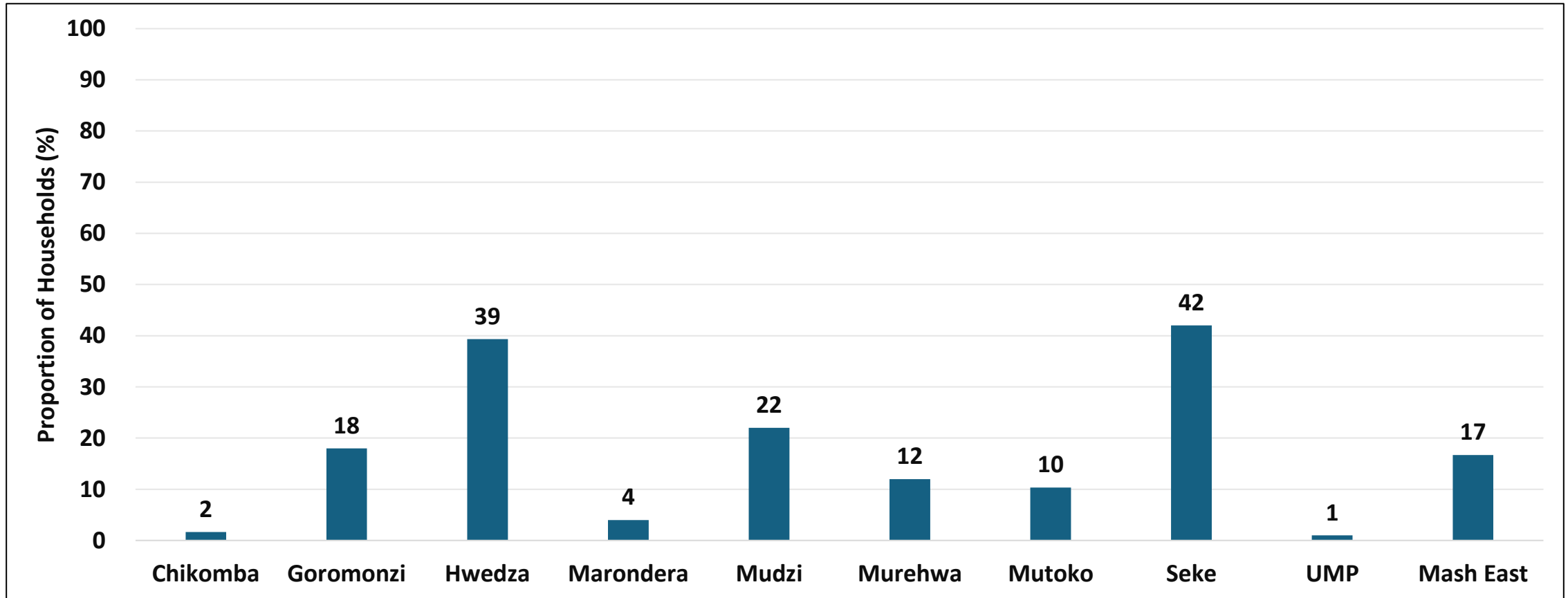
Food Safety

WHO Five Keys to Safer Food

Ensuring food safety is key to preventing food borne illnesses which are contracted through consumption of unsafe foods:

| Five Keys	Key Steps
Keep clean	• **Wash hands before handling food** and often during food preparation • **Wash hands after going to the toilet** • Wash and sanitize all surfaces and equipment used for food preparation • Protect kitchen areas and food from insects, pests and other animals
Use safe water and raw materials	• **Use safe water** *households improved water source*) **or treat it to make it safe** *households treat water)* • Select fresh and wholesome foods • Choose foods processed for safety, such as pasteurized milk Wash fruits and vegetables, especially if eaten raw • Do not use food beyond its expiry date
Separate raw and cooked	• Separate raw meat, poultry and seafood from other foods • Use separate equipment and utensils such as knives and cutting boards for handling raw foods • Store food in containers to avoid contact between raw and prepared foods
Cook thoroughly	• Cook food thoroughly, especially meat, poultry, eggs and fish • Bring foods like soups and stews to boiling to make sure that they have reached 70°C • Reheat cooked food thoroughly
Keep food at safe temperatures	• Do not leave cooked food at room temperature for more than 2 hours • Refrigerate promptly all cooked and perishable food (preferably below 5°C) • Keep cooked food piping hot (more than 60°C) prior to serving • Do not store food too long even in the refrigerator • Do not thaw frozen food at room temperature

Households Which Received Information on Food Safety

- The proportion of households which received information on food safety was 17%.
- UMP (1%) had the least proportion.

Ways to Keep Food Safe
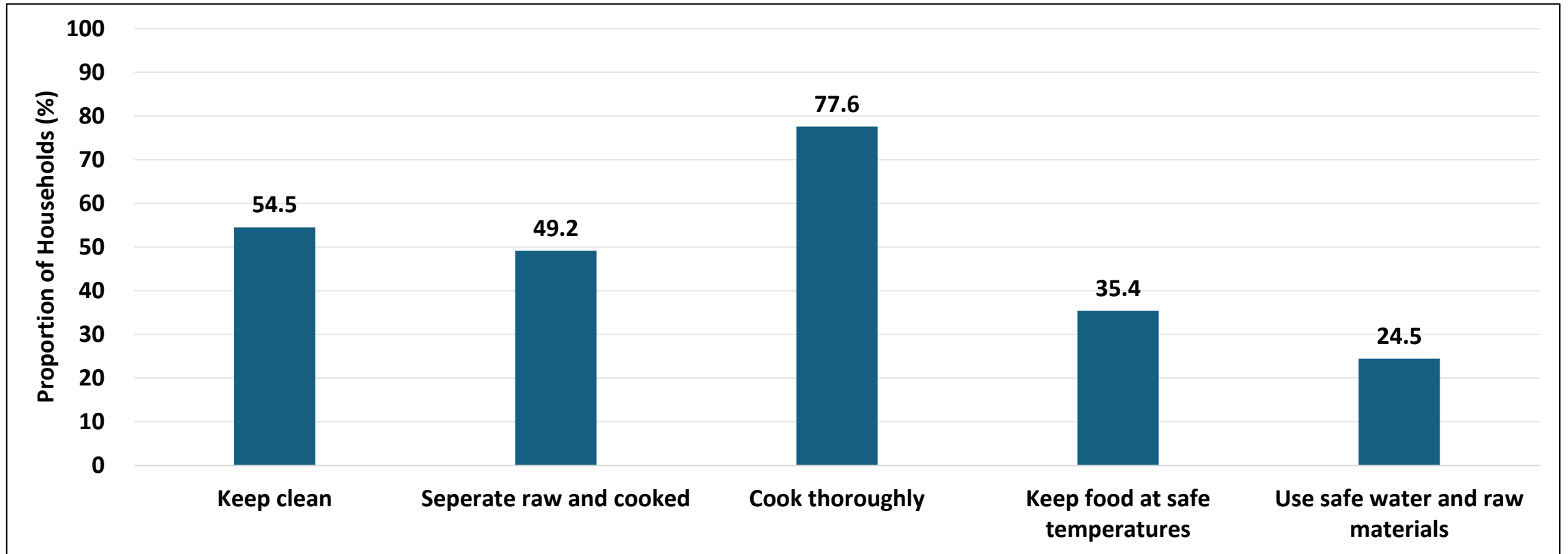
- Most households (77.6%) reported cooking thoroughly as a method they used to keep food safe.

Factors that Households Consider When Purchasing Food Items

District	Brand/source (%)	Expiry /Best Before Date (%)	Nutritional Content (%)	Allergens (%)	Other (%)
Chikomba	25.3	33.6	17.4	2.3	41.4
Goromonzi	54.0	60.3	19.3	0.3	11.0
Hwedza	64.7	70.0	35.7	3.0	7.3
Marondera	19.0	90.7	10.7	3.0	2.0
Mudzi	51.0	55.0	1.7	0.0	11.7
Murehwa	54.8	75.4	39.5	11.3	3.3
Mutoko	38.3	74.7	9.7	0.0	2.3
Seke	34.0	78.3	50.0	21.7	3.3
UMP	64.3	94.0	18.7	0.0	0.0
Mash East	45	70	23	5	9

- Holding price constant, households reported that they considered expiry/best before date (70%), brand/source (45%) and nutritional content (23%) when purchasing food items.

Households which Purchased Meat Items from Vendors
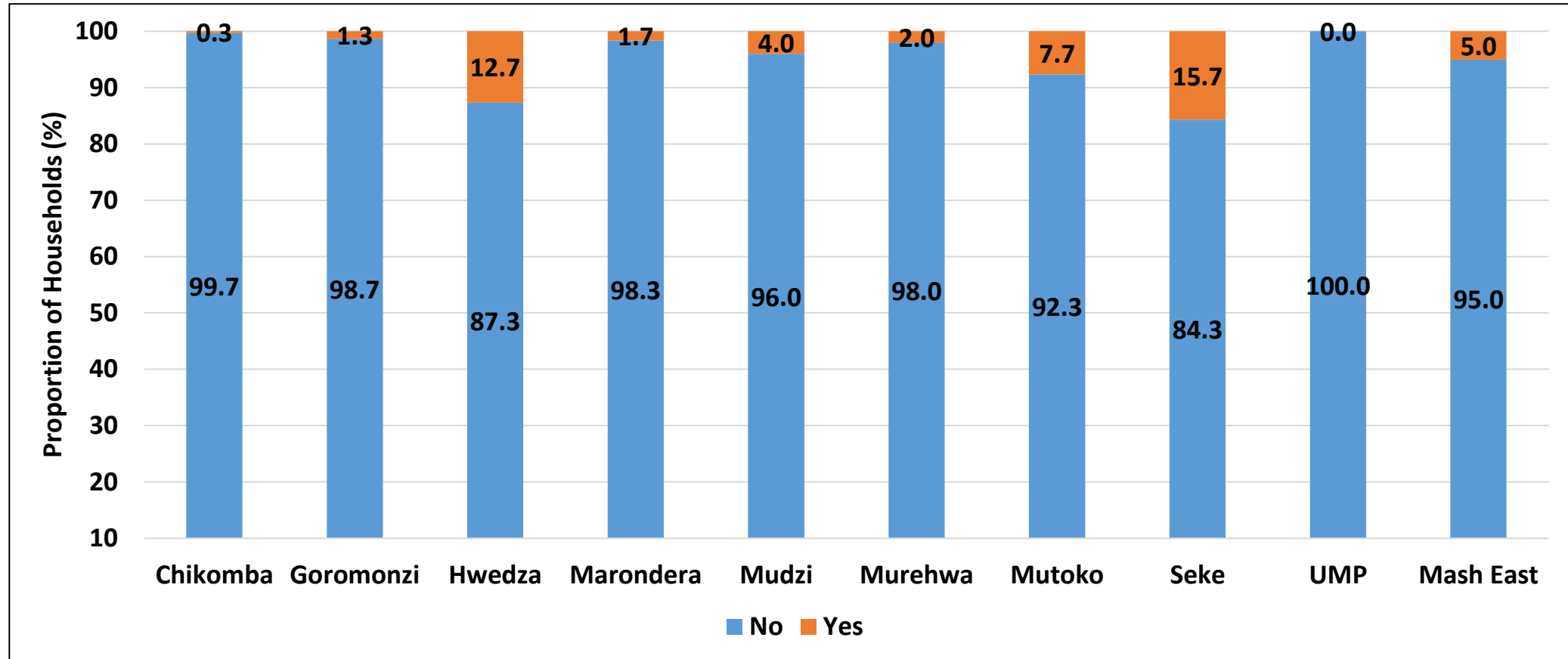
- Most households did not purchase meat items from vendors.
- Seke (15.7%) had the highest proportion of households which purchased meat items from vendors.

Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

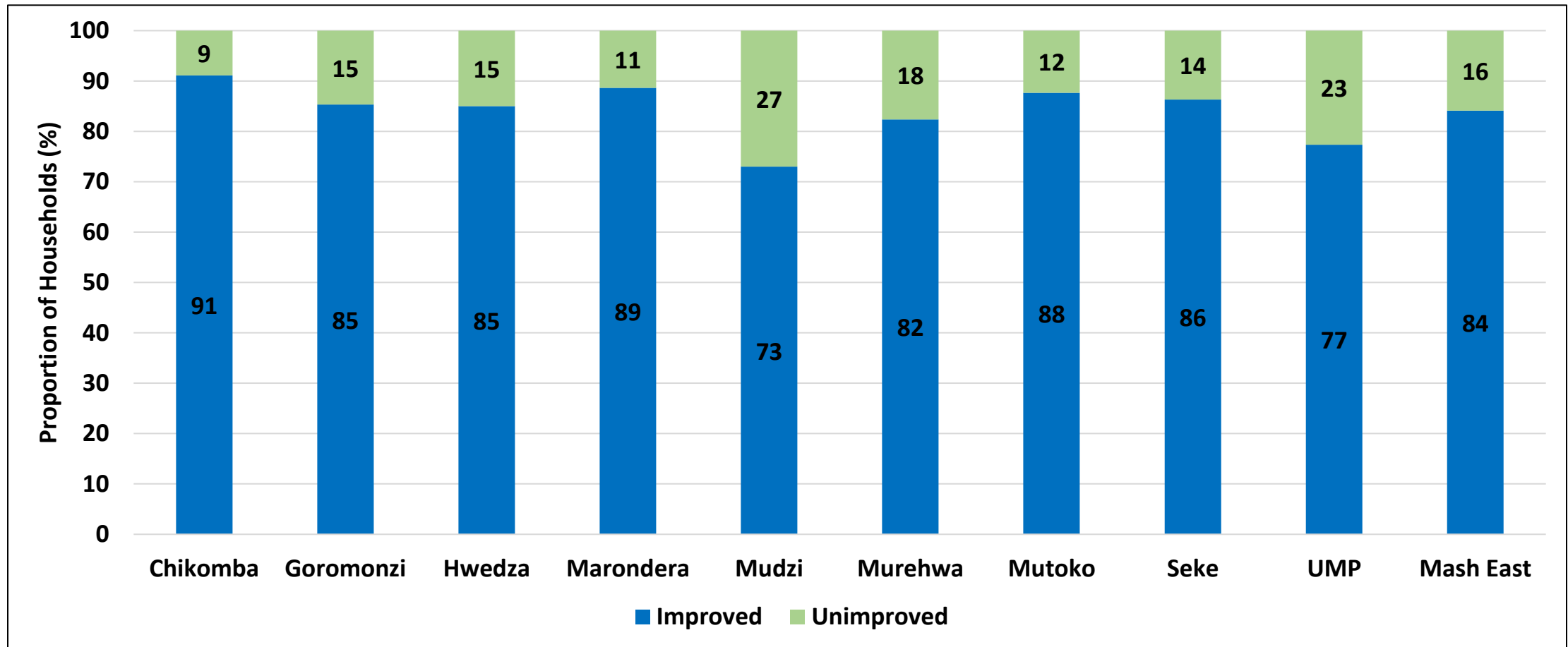# Ladder for Drinking Water Services

Service Level	Definition
Safely Managed	Drinking water from an improved water source that is located on premises, available when needed and free from faecal and priority chemical contamination.
Basic Drinking Water	Basic drinking water services are defined as drinking water from an improved source, provided collection time is not more than 30 minutes for a roundtrip including queuing.
Limited Drinking Water Services	Limited water services are defined as drinking water from an improved source, where collection time exceeds 30 minutes for a roundtrip including queuing.
Unimproved Water Sources	Drinking water from an unprotected dug well or unprotected spring.
Surface Water Sources	Drinking water directly from a river, dam, lake, pond, stream, canal or irrigation channel.

Note :
"Improved" drinking water sources are further defined by the quality of the water they produce, and are protected from faecal contamination by the nature of their construction or through an intervention to protect from outside contamination. Such sources include: piped water into dwelling, plot, or yard; public tap/standpipe; tube well/borehole; protected dug well; protected spring; or rainwater collection. This category now includes packaged and delivered water, considering that both can potentially deliver safe water.
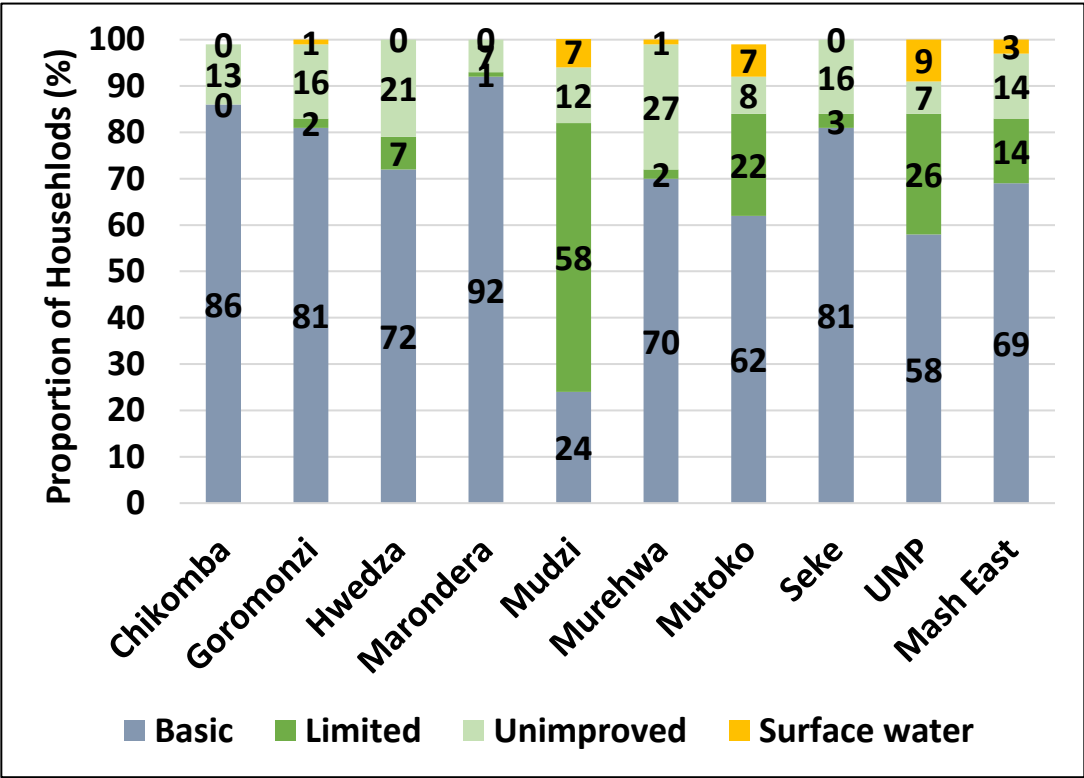
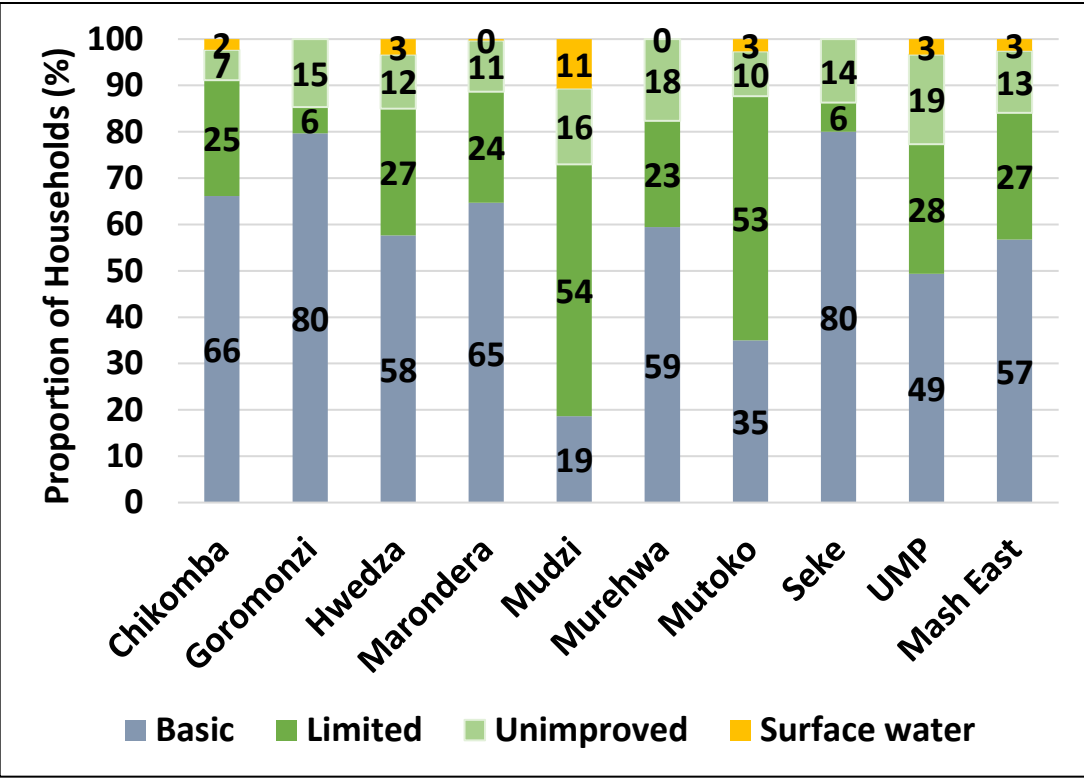# Access to Improved Water Source

- About 84% of households in the province had access to improved water sources.

- Mudzi (73%) had the least proportion of households with access to improved water sources.

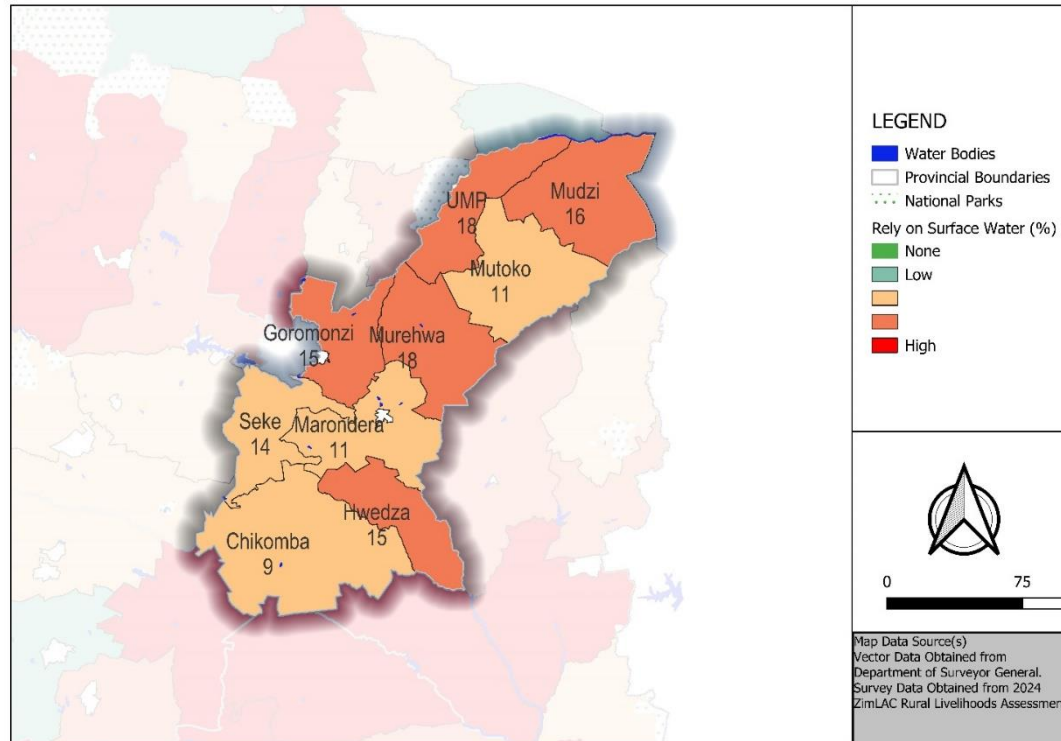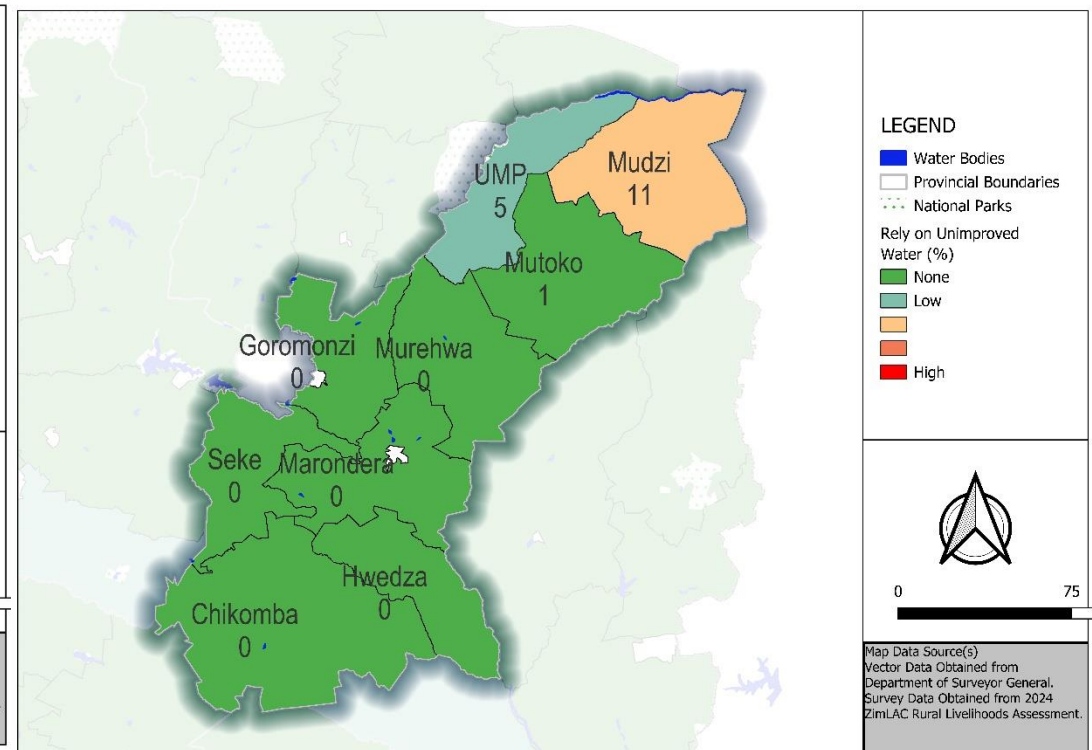# Main Drinking Water Services

2022

2024

- There was a decrease in the proportion of households which drank water from basic water services from 69% in 2022 to 57% in 2024.

- UMP (19%) had a greatest proportion of households drinking water from unimproved sources.

71

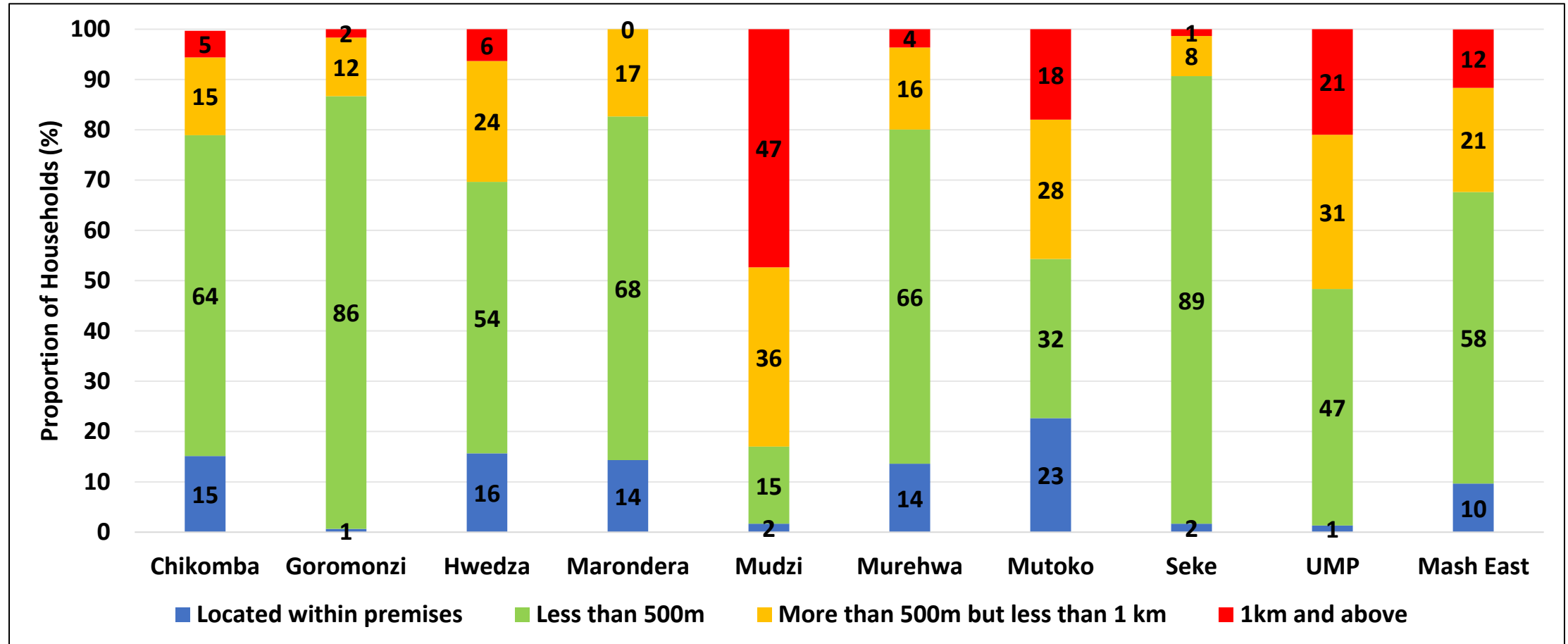# Households Drinking Surface and Unimproved Water by District

Surface Water

Unimproved Water

- Mudzi (11%) had the highest proportion of households which used unimproved water sources for drinking, while Murehwa (18%) and UMP (18%) had the highest proportion of households which used surface water.
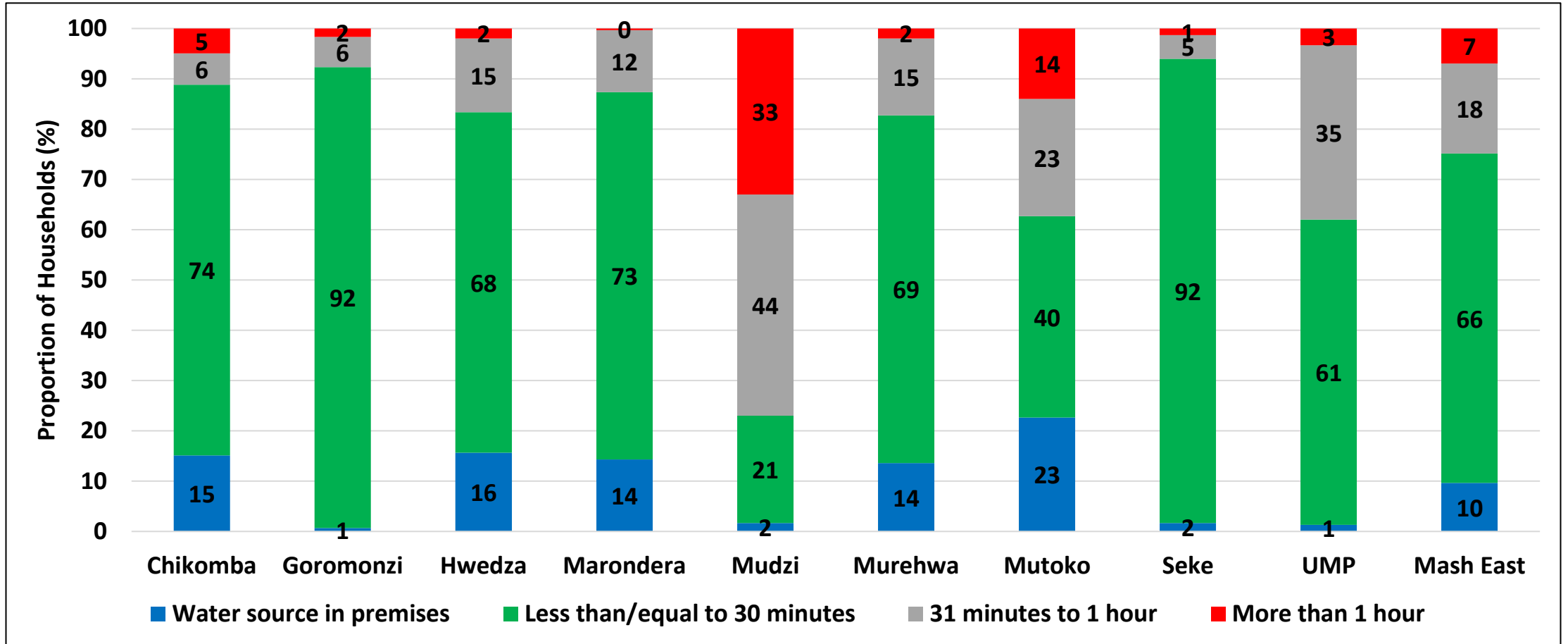
Distance Travelled to Main Drinking Water Source

- The proportion of households which travelled a kilometre and above to and from their main drinking water source was 12%.

- About 10% of the households had their main drinking water source located within their premises.

# Time Taken to and from Main Drinking Water Source

- In the province, 66% of households took less than or equal to thirty minutes travelling to and from their main drinking water source.

Ladder for Sanitation

Service level	Definition
Safely Managed	Use of improved facilities that are not shared with other households and where excreta are safely disposed of in situ or transported and treated offsite.
Basic Sanitation Facilities	Use of improved facilities which are not shared with other households.
Limited Sanitation Facilities	Use of improved facilities shared between two or more households.
Unimproved Sanitation Facilities	Facilities that do not ensure hygienic separation of human excreta from human contact. Unimproved facilities include pit latrines without a slab or platform, hanging latrines and bucket latrines.
Open Defecation	Disposal of human faeces in fields, forest, bushes, open bodies of water, beaches or other open spaces or with solid waste.

Note: Improved sanitation facilities: Facilities that ensure hygienic separation of human excreta from human contact. They include flush or pour flush toilet/latrine, Blair ventilated improved pit (BVIP), pit latrine with slab and upgradeable Blair latrine.
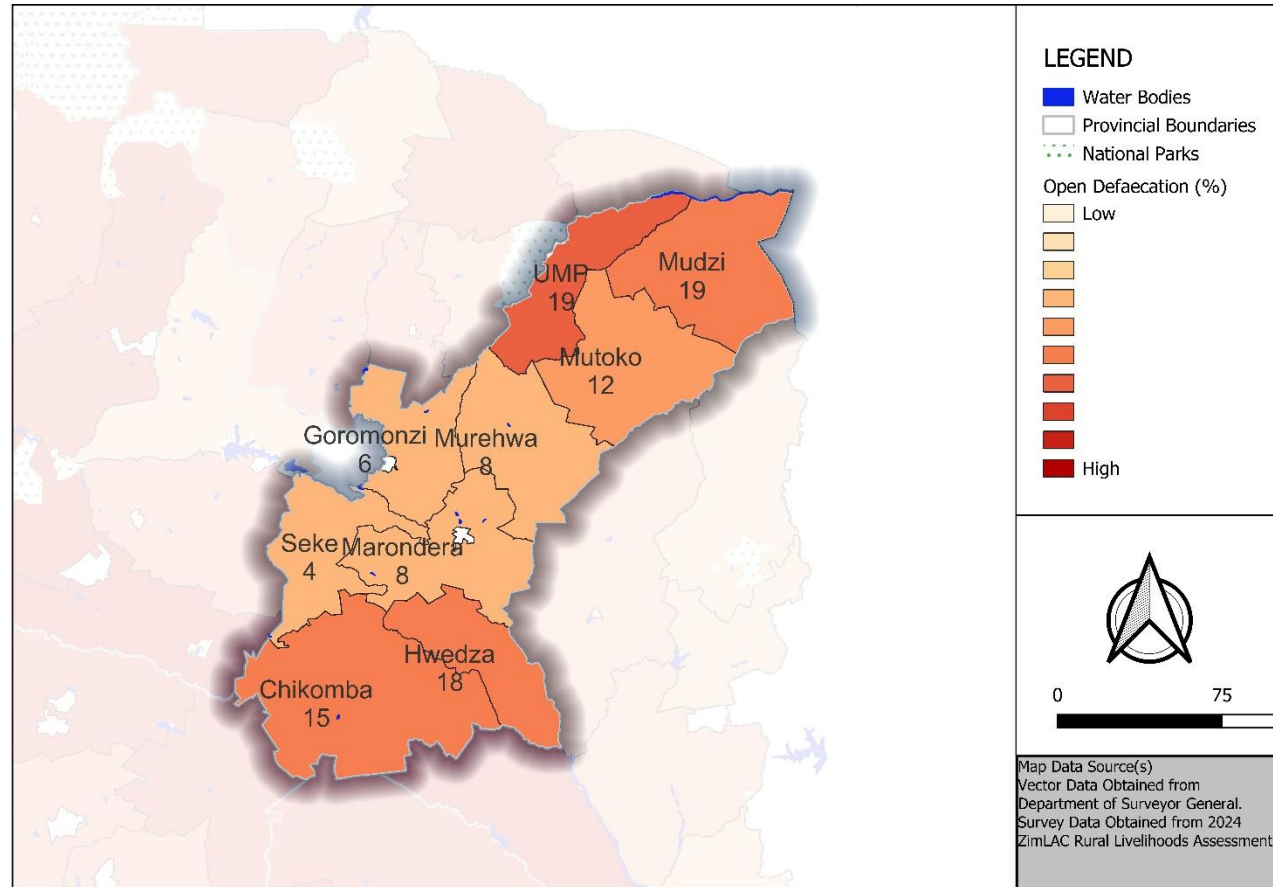
Household Sanitation Services
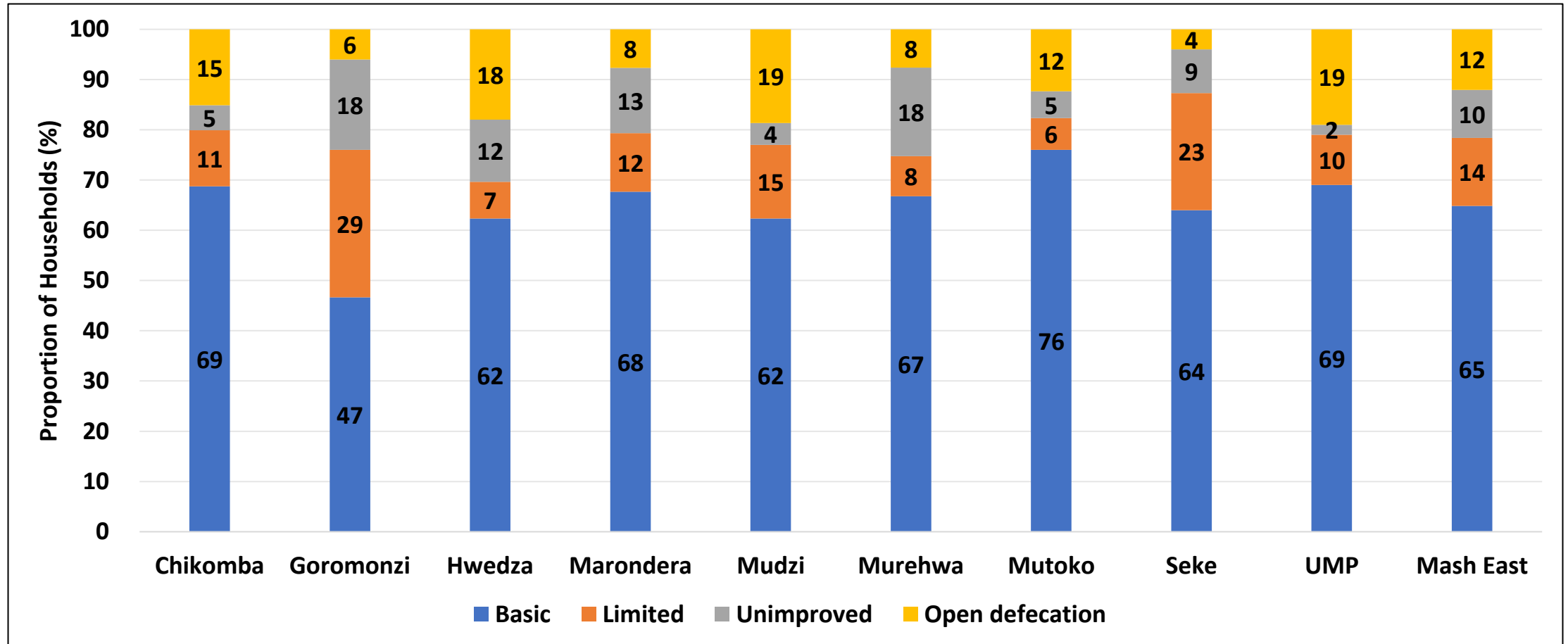
- The proportion of households which accessed basic sanitation services was 65%.

Access to Improved Sanitation
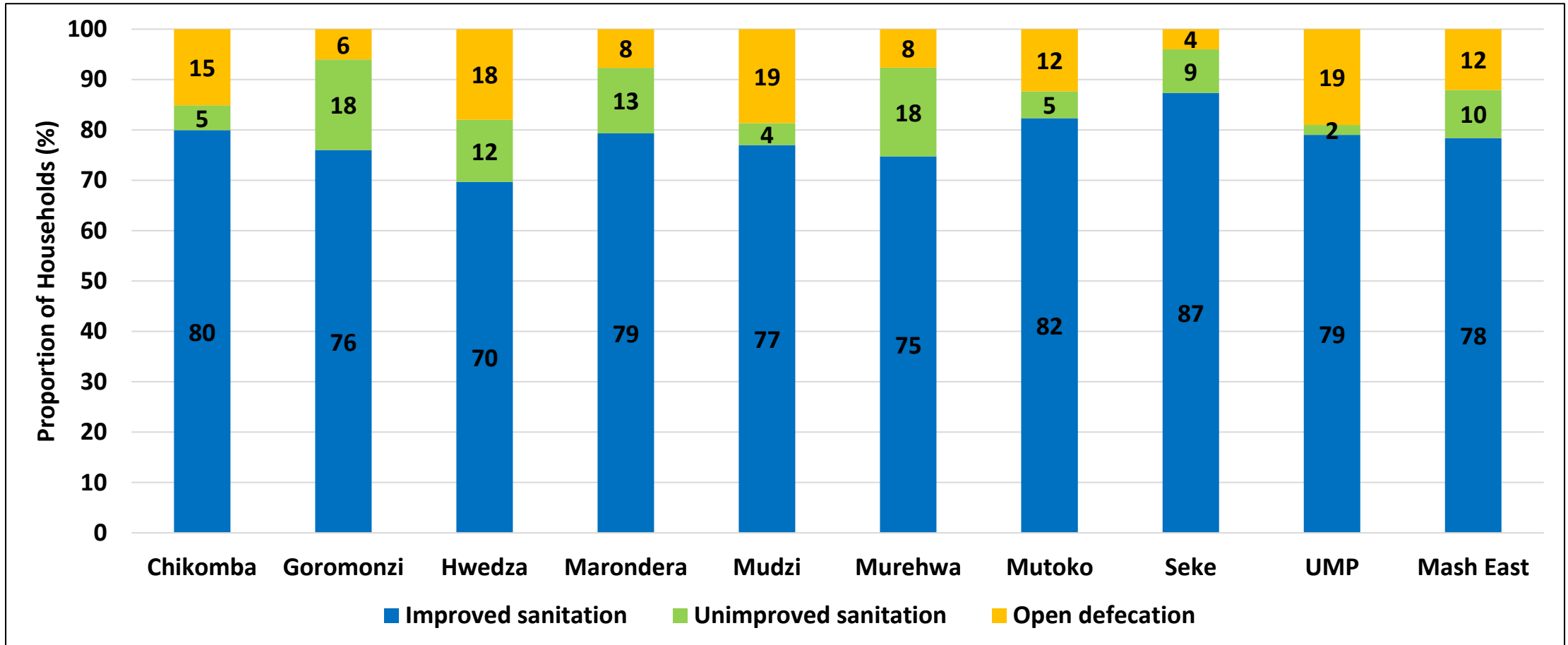
- The proportion of households which accessed improved sanitation was 78%.

- Hwedza (70%) had the lowest proportion of households which accessed improved sanitation.

Open Defecation by District

- UMP (19%) and Mudzi (19%) had the highest proportion of households which practised open defecation.

Ladder for Hygiene

Service level	Definition
Basic	Availability of a handwashing facility on premises with soap and water.
Limited	Availability of a handwashing facility on premises without soap and water. Access to Handwashing Services
No Facility	No hand washing facility on premises.

Note: Handwashing facilities may be fixed or mobile and include a sink with tap water, buckets with taps, tippy taps, and jugs or basins designated for hand washing. Soap includes bar soap, liquid soap, powdered detergents and soapy water but does not include sand, soil, ash and other handwashing agents.
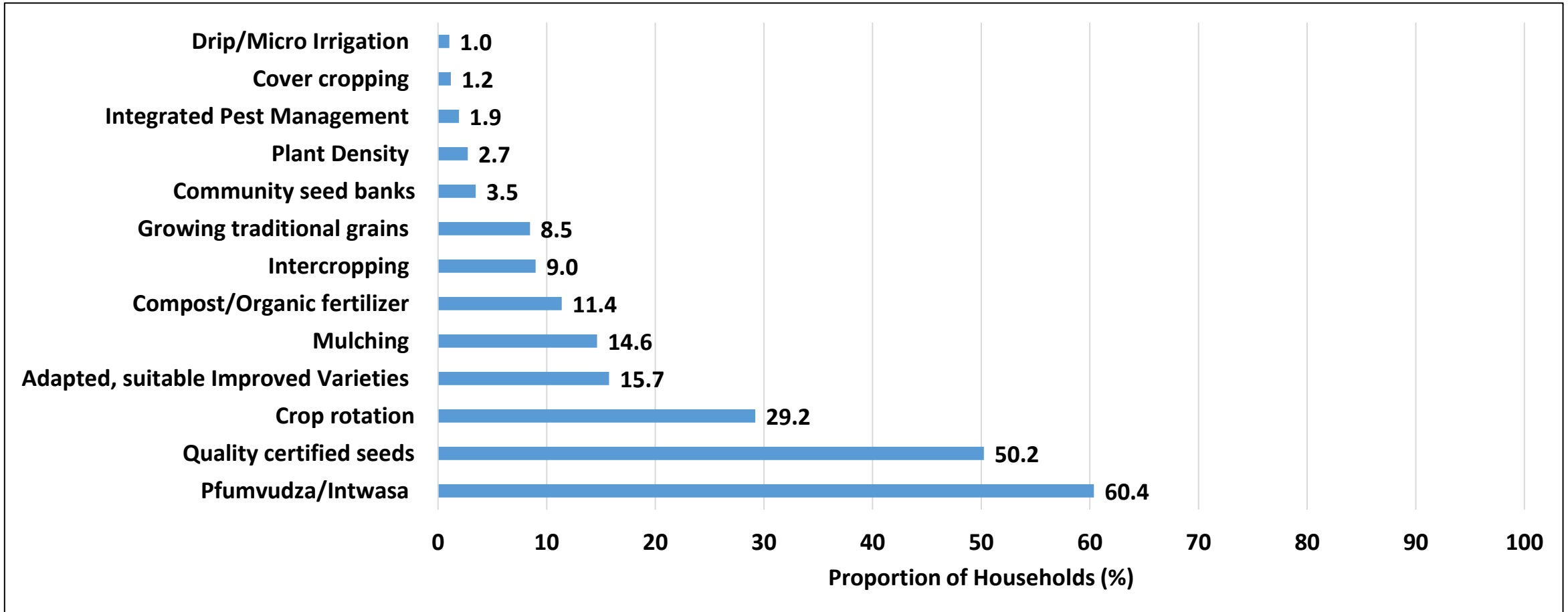
Handwashing Facilities
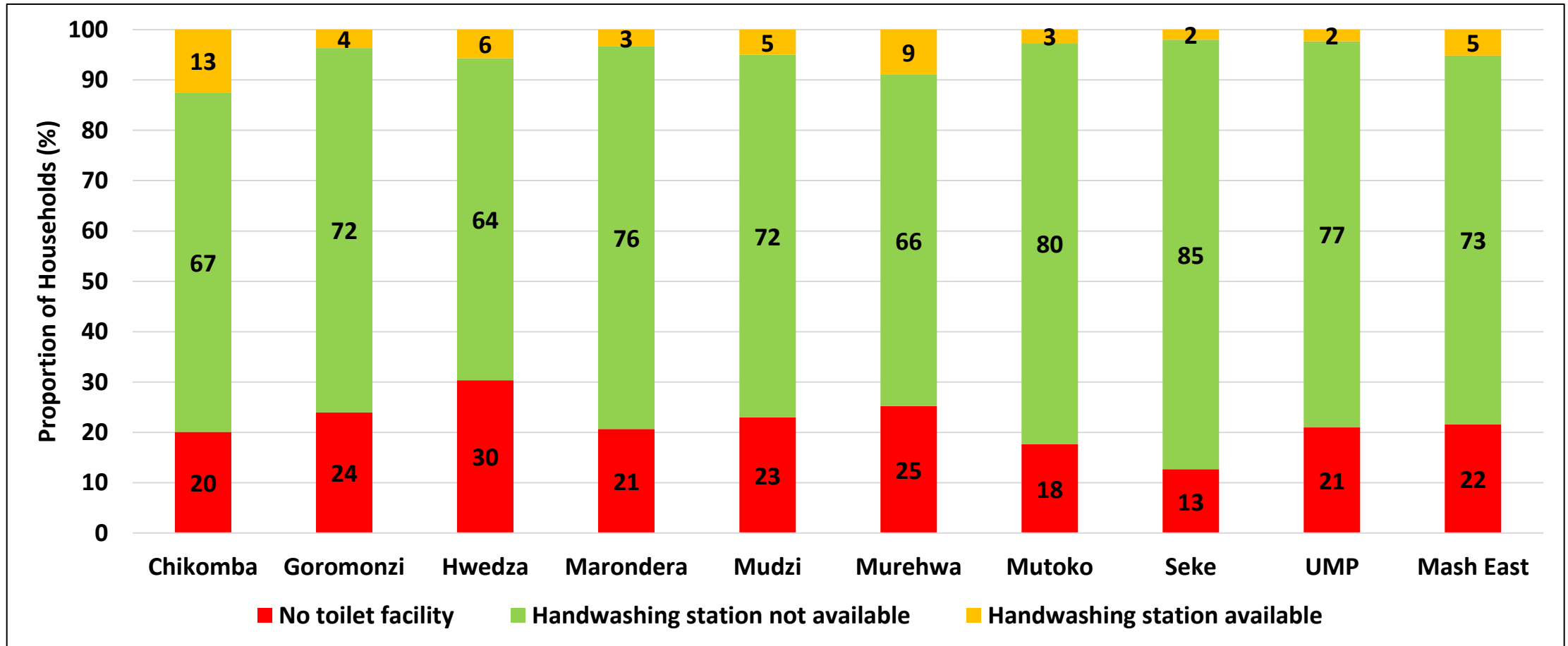
- About 5% of households had handwashing stations at their toilet facilities.

- The majority of households had no handwashing facilities at their toilets (73%).

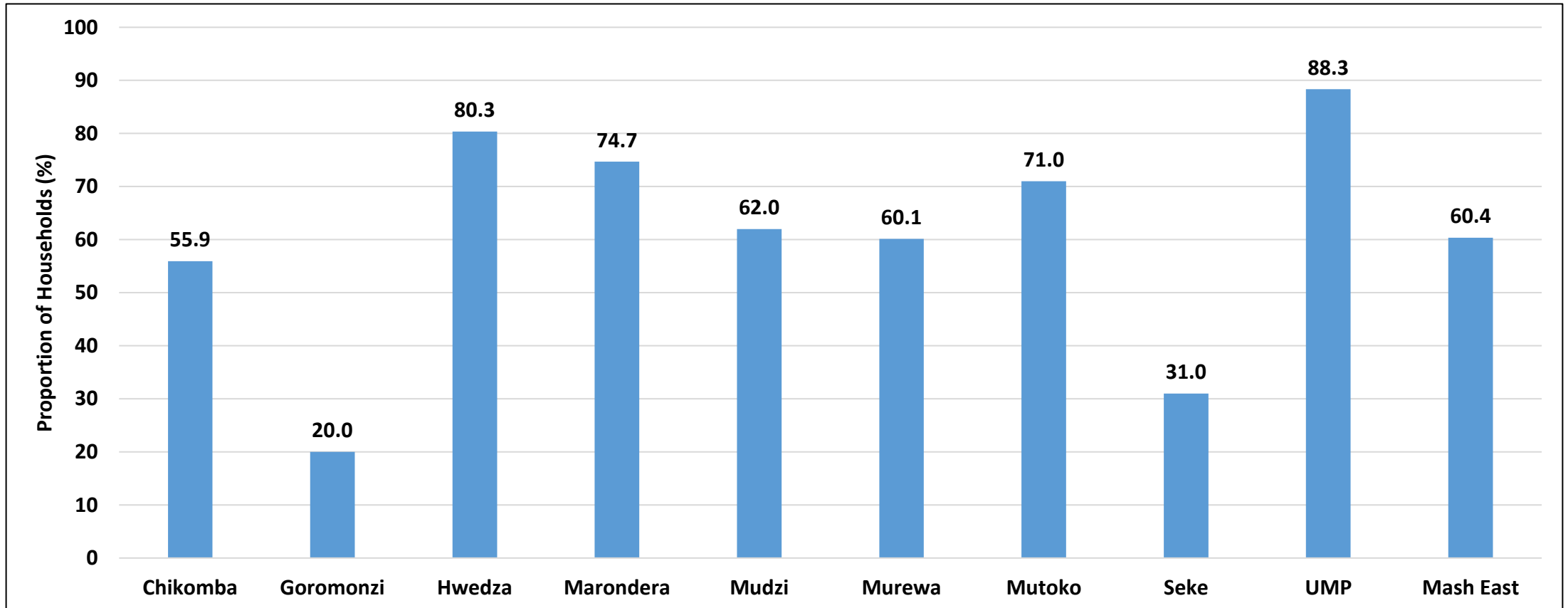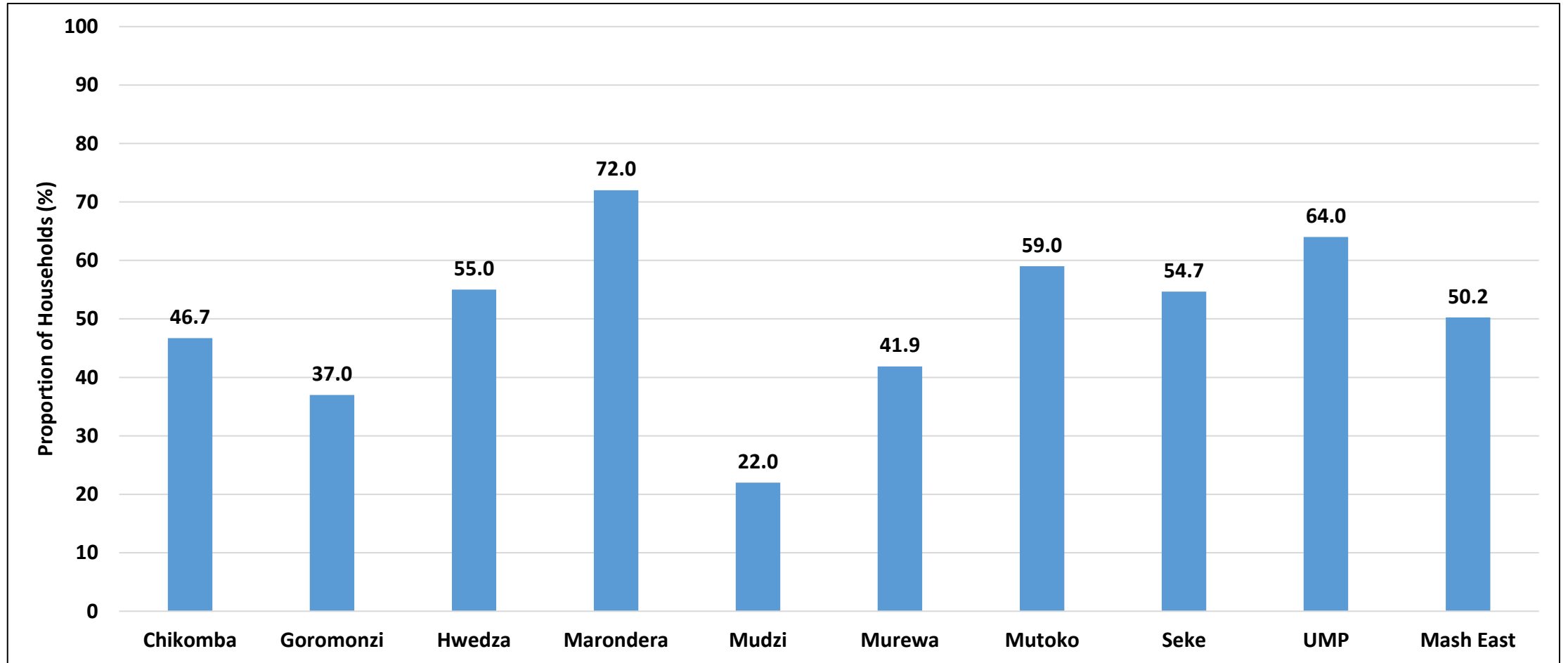# Agricultural Production Technologies

Climate Smart Technologies

- About 60.4% of households practised Pfumvudza/Intwasa.

- The least practised climate smart technology was drip/micro irrigation.

Use of Pfumvudza/Intwasa

- In the province, 60.4% of the households practised Pfumvudza/Intwasa

Use of Quality Certified Seeds

- About 50.2% of households in the province used quality certified seeds.

Improved Livestock Practices

Chart: Proportion of Households (%)

- Pen fattening — 0.2
- Fodder preservation — 0.6
- Feed supplied by companies — 0.7
- Use of services — 0.8
- Destocking — 0.9
- Fodder production — 1.1
- Paddocking — 1.2
- Survival feeding — 1.8
- Routine vaccination — 2.6
- Relief grazing — 3.2
- Spraying at home — 3.7
- Home vaccination — 4.4
- Water infrastructure — 4.7
- Castration — 5.1
- Home made feeds — 6.2
- Deworming — 13.5
- Improved animal shelters — 20.3
- Dipping — 27.5

- Dipping (27.5%), improved animal shelters (20.3%) and deworming (13.5%) were the most reported improved livestock practices.

Improved Agricultural Marketing Practices

Bar chart titled "Proportion of Households (%)" showing:
- Access Agriculture inputs through agro-dealers and/or agriculture cooperatives: 32.8
- Receiving market information on prices, through collection centers, traders,: 9.4
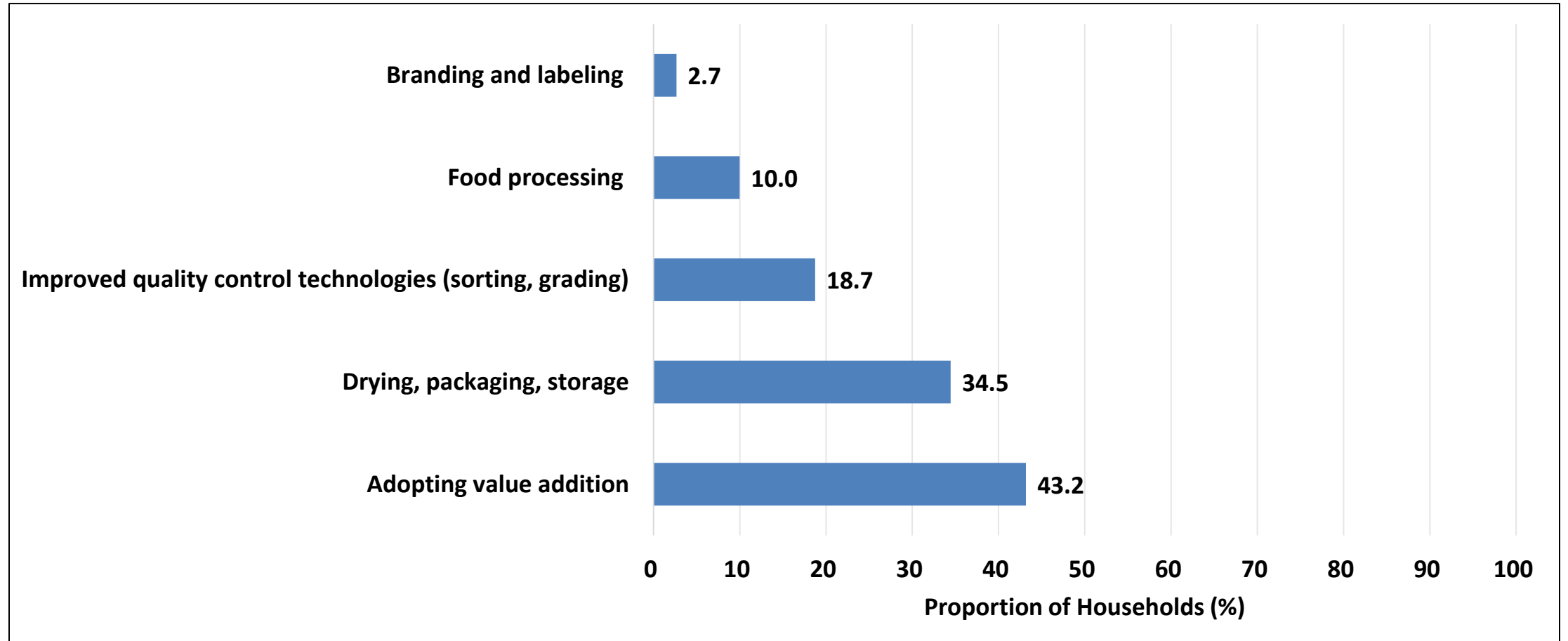- Use of formal organised marketing systems for crops/livestock: 6.2
- Marketing produces through commodity associations/producer groups/ cooperatives/ farmer organisation: 3.0
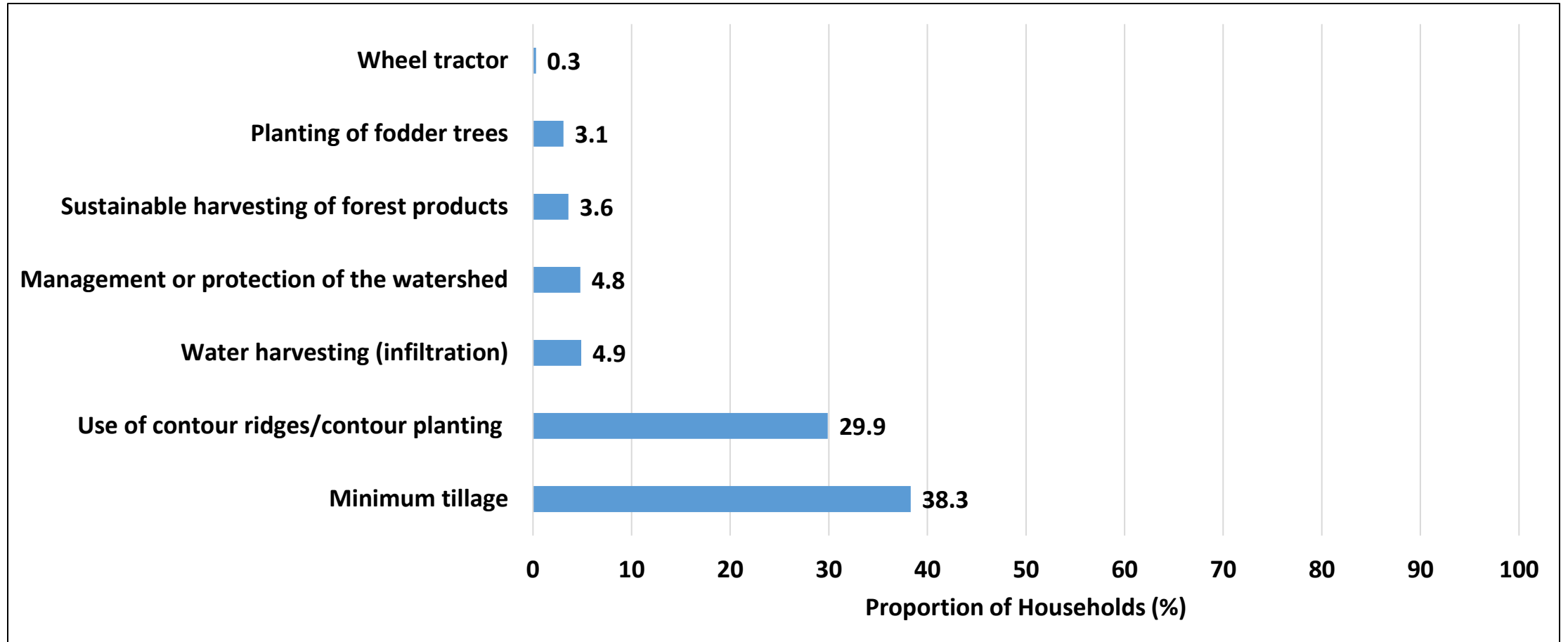
- About 32.8% households accessed agriculture inputs through agro-dealers/agriculture cooperatives.

Value Addition

- About 43.2% of households reported adopting value addition practices.

- Households that reported practising drying, packaging and storage were 34.5%.

Water and Soil Conservation Strategies

- About 38.3% of the households were practicing minimum tillage followed by 29.9% which practiced contour ridging as water and soil conservative strategies.

Agriculture Production

Proportion of Households which Grew Crops

District	Maize (%)	Groundnuts (%)	Sorghum (%)	Tubers (%)	African peas (%)	Roundnuts (%)	Sugar beans (%)	Tobacco (%)	Finger millet (%)	Sunflower (%)	Pearl millet (%)
Chikomba	88.8	37.2	3.0	21.7	19.7	17.8	17.4	0.3	2.3	3.9	1.3
Goromonzi	67.3	6.0	0.7	6.7	1.3	3.0	2.3	0.0	0.3	0.0	0.0
Hwedza	90.0	35.7	1.0	24.3	19.3	26.3	24.0	12.0	2.7	3.0	1.0
Marondera	90.0	29.7	3.0	21.0	16.3	12.7	17.0	11.0	2.3	1.7	0.0
Mudzi	80.7	62.3	64.0	0.0	9.0	3.3	0.3	0.0	0.7	2.0	4.3
Murewa	88.7	33.2	5.0	16.9	7.0	8.6	7.0	9.0	3.3	1.0	0.0
Mutoko	97.3	73.3	15.7	14.0	27.0	10.7	6.3	6.7	5.7	4.0	2.7
Seke	64.3	3.0	0.7	3.7	2.0	1.7	2.3	1.0	0.3	0.0	0.7
UMP	98.0	61.3	13.3	7.3	14.3	5.0	0.7	0.7	6.7	2.7	3.3
Mash East	85.0	38.0	11.8	12.9	12.9	9.9	8.6	4.5	2.7	2.0	1.0

- About 85.0% of the households grew maize, 38.% grew groundnut, and 12.9% grew cowpeas.

Cereal from Remittances and Casual Labour

District	Maize from casual labour (in kgs)	Maize from remittances (in kgs)
Chikomba	5.9	0.0
Goromonzi	2.7	0.0
Hwedza	17.5	1.3
Marondera	7.8	0.0
Mudzi	13.9	1.1
Murehwa	5.1	0.0
Mutoko	7.9	0.0
Seke	0.8	0.0
UMP	5.3	0.0
Mash East	6.7	0.0

- The average cereal accessed from casual labour was 6.7kgs per household.

Household Stocks: 1 April 2024

| District	Maize stocks (kgs)	Mealie meal (kgs)	Sorghum (kgs)
Chikomba	59.6	11.1	0.0
Goromonzi	6.8	10.5	0.0
Hwedza	43.7	12.4	0.0
Marondera	28.2	5.9	0.0
Mudzi	1.2	1.2	0.0
Murehwa	10.1	4.2	0.0
Mutoko	11.8	10.4	0.0
Seke	17.1	6.6	0.0
UMP	11.0	8.0	0.0
Mash East	18.4	7.6	0.0

- The average stocks were 18.4kgs of maize and 7.6kgs of maize meal.

- There were no sorghum stocks.

Season Harvest

District	Maize harvest		Sorghum	
	Expected (kgs)	Actual (kgs)	Expected (kgs)	Actual (kgs)
Chikomba	1153	395	21	2
Goromonzi	544	45	1	0
Hwedza	1295	108	12	1
Marondera	957	81	6	1
Mudzi	449	2	271	4
Murehwa	1037	72	21	1
Mutoko	683	30	38	7
Seke	413	42	3	1
UMP	741	14	40	2
Mash East	809	88	46	2

- The expected harvest for maize was 809kgs.
- The actual household harvest for maize was 88.1kgs and sorghum 2kg.
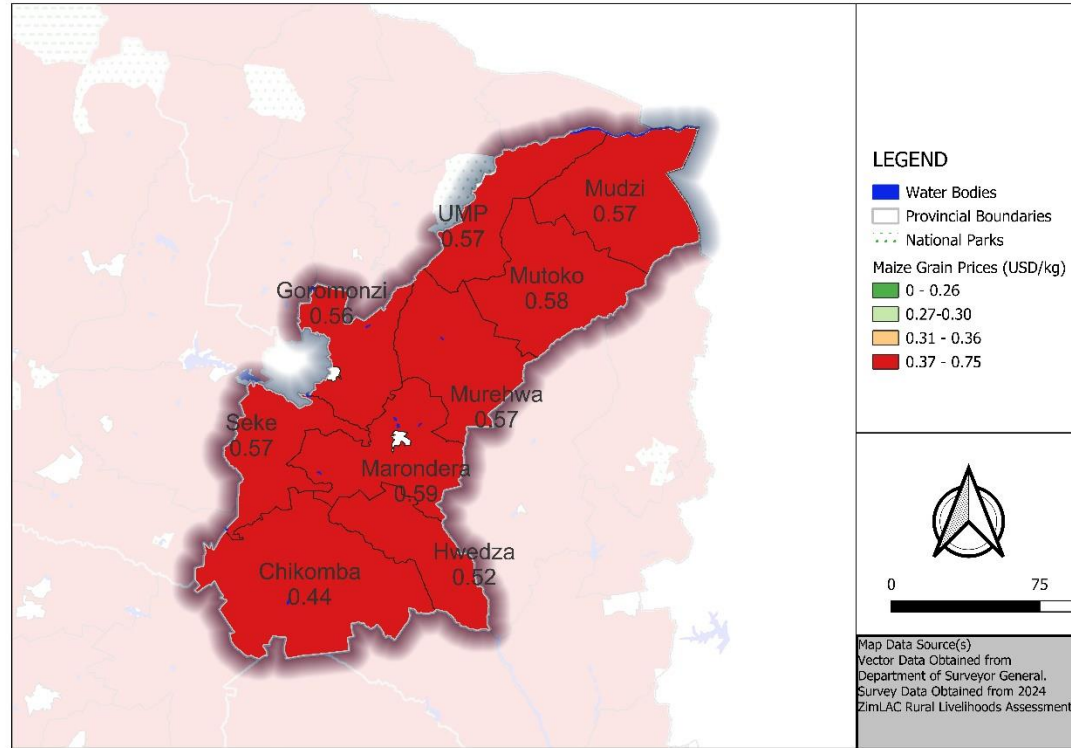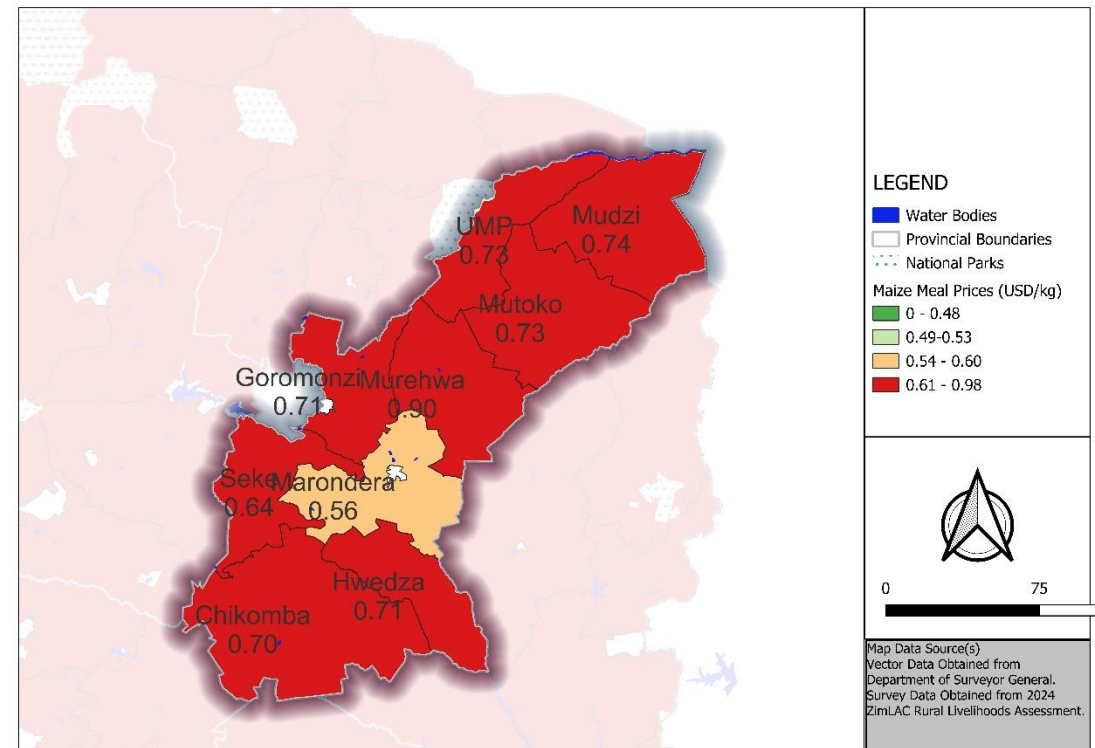
Measures to Close Cereal Deficit
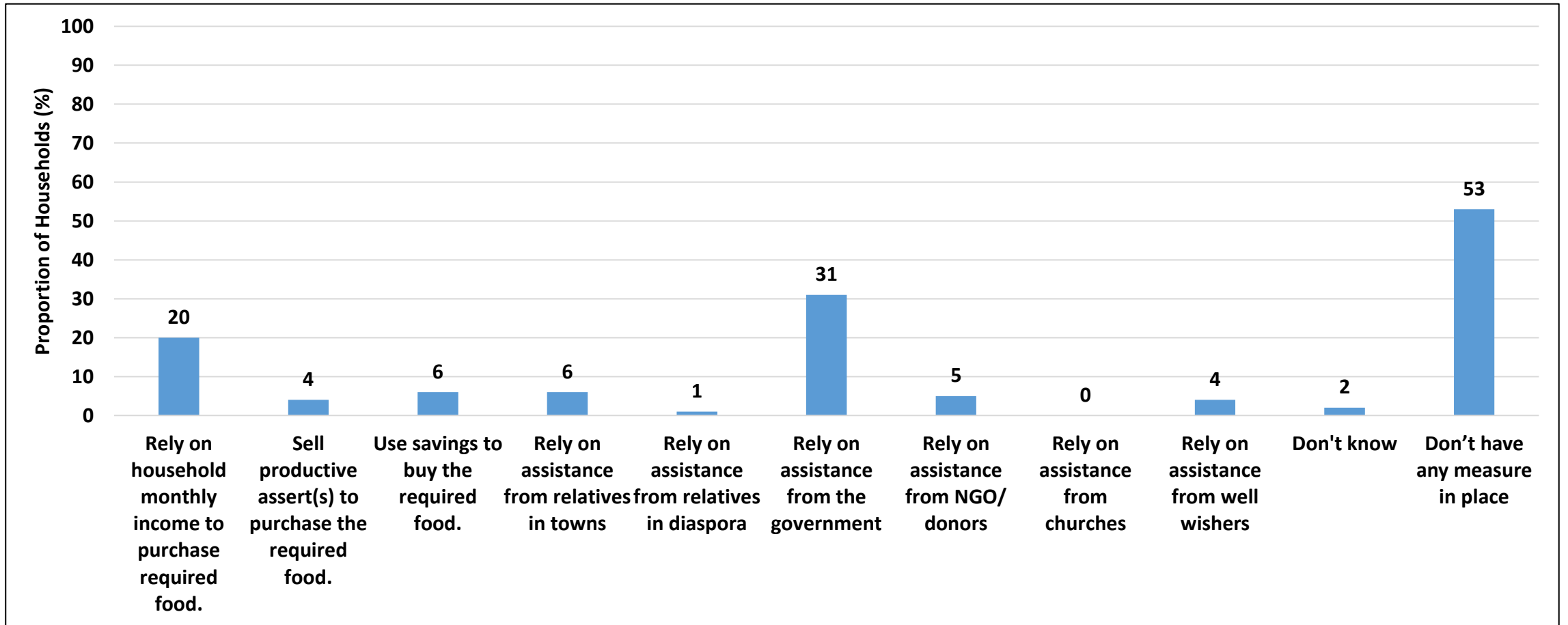
- The majority of the households (53%) did not have any measures in place to close the cereal gap.
- About 30% of the households were relying on Government to cover the cereal gap.

Maize Grain and Maize Meal Prices

Maize Grain Prices/ kg

Maize Meal Prices/ kg

- Maize grain prices ranged from USD 0.44/kg in Chikomba to USD 0.59/kg in Marondera.

- Maize meal prices were highest in Murehwa (USD 0.90/kg) and lowest in Marondera (USD0.55/kg).
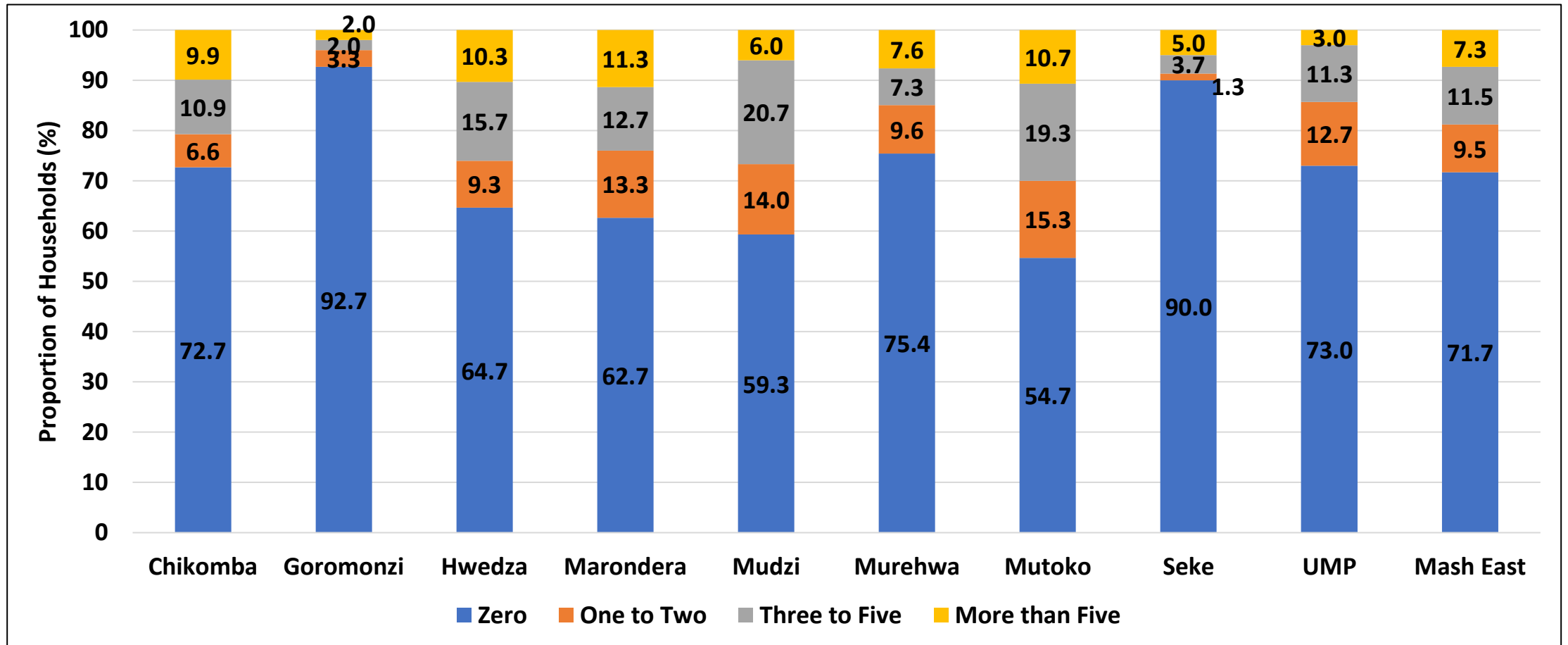
Livestock

Proportion of Households which Owned Livestock

| District	Cattle (%)	Donkeys (%)	Sheep (%)	Goats (%)	Pigs (%)	Poultry (%)	Rabbits (%)
Chikomba	32.2	1.3	2.0	53.9	1.3	74.0	3.0
Goromonzi	9.3	0.3	0.0	11.3	1.0	49.0	3.3
Hwedza	41.3	1.3	0.7	49.7	2.0	79.3	3.3
Marondera	40.0	0.0	0.0	36.0	0.7	75.3	2.3
Mudzi	45.3	1.3	3.0	48.0	4.7	55.3	0.3
Murehwa	32.6	0.7	0.0	31.2	0.3	66.8	3.0
Mutoko	54.0	0.3	4.7	58.0	3.3	90.7	1.0
Seke	13.3	0.3	0.0	12.7	0.3	33.7	1.7
UMP	31.7	2.0	1.7	59.7	1.3	74.3	1.3
Mash East	33.3	0.9	1.3	40.1	1.7	66.5	2.1

- Poultry (66.5%) and goats (40.1%) were the most owned livestock.

- About 33.3% of the households owned cattle.

- Mutoko (54%) had the highest proportion of households which owned cattle.

Cattle Ownership

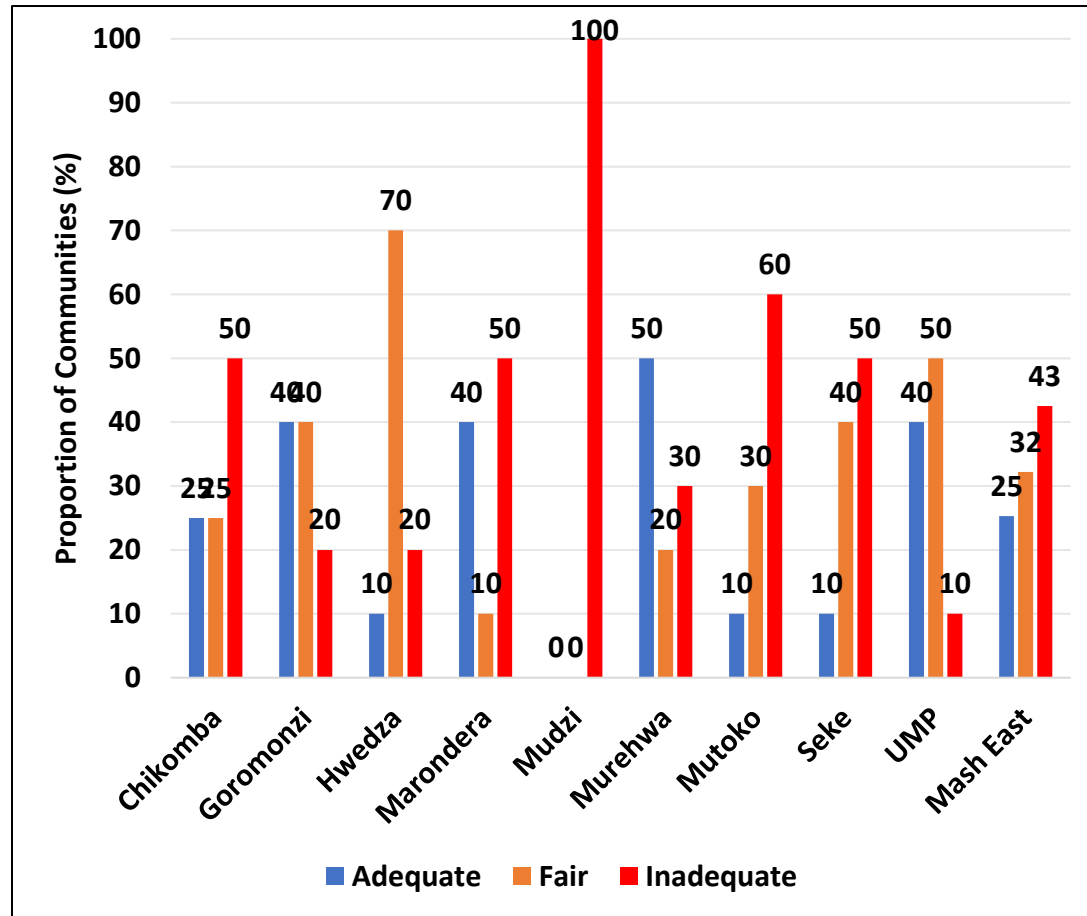- About 7.3% of the households owned more than 5 cattle.
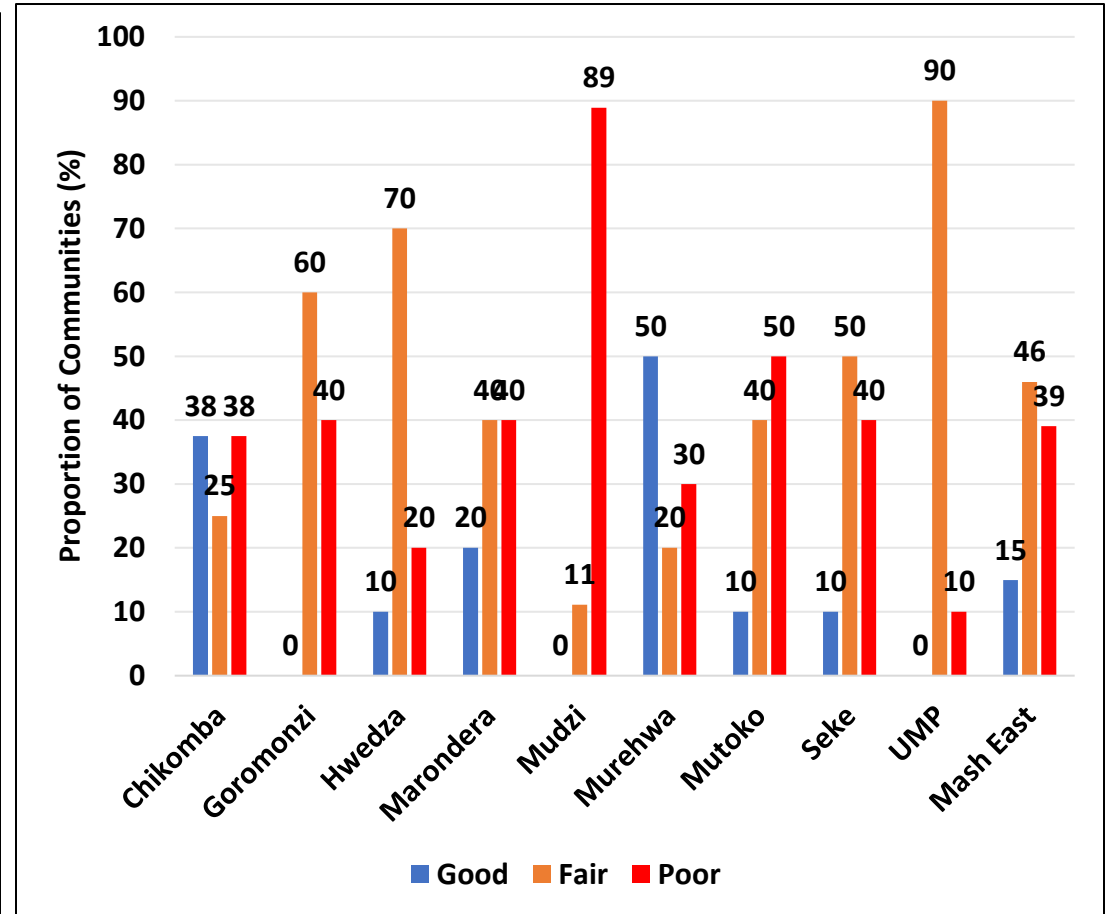
Livestock Condition
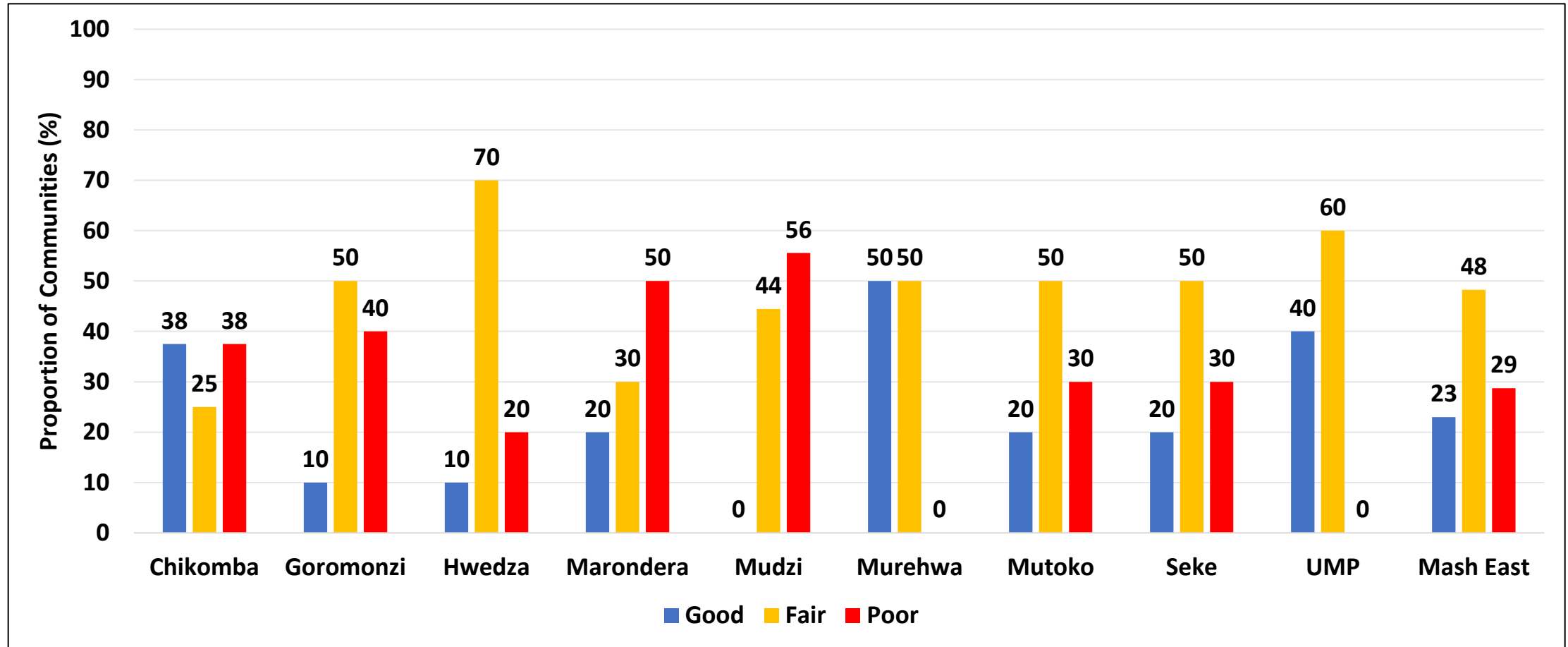
- About 29% of the communities indicated that their livestock were in poor condition.

- Murehwa (50%) had the highest proportion of communities which reported that their livestock were in good condition.

Pastures Availability and Quality
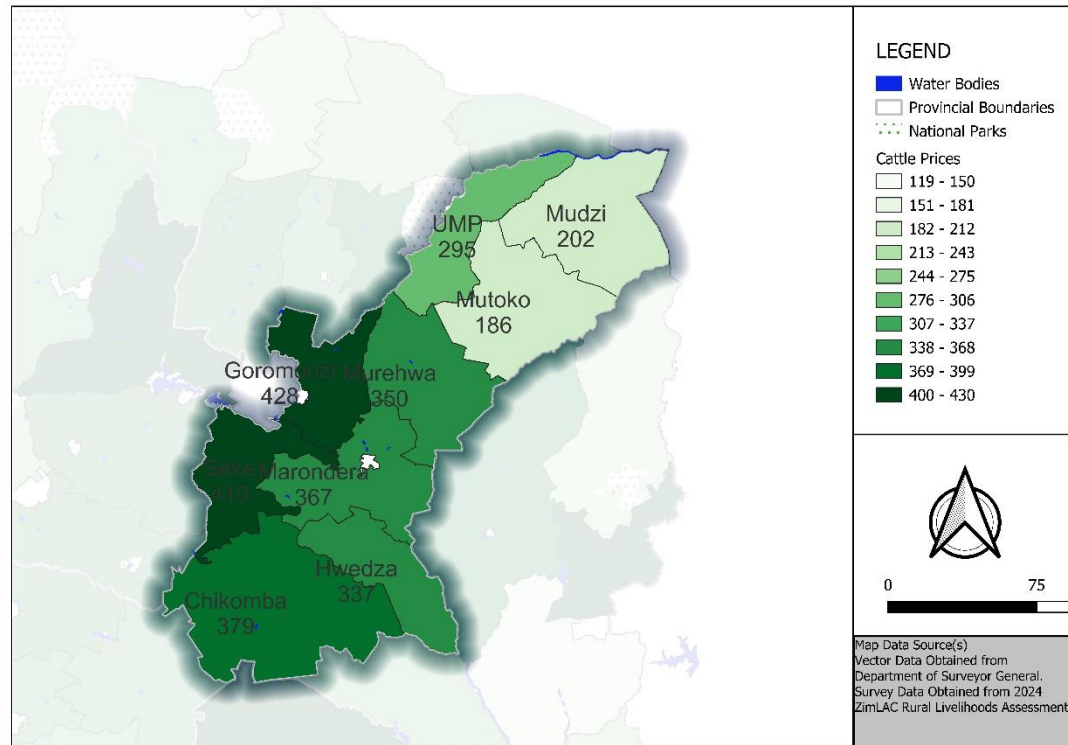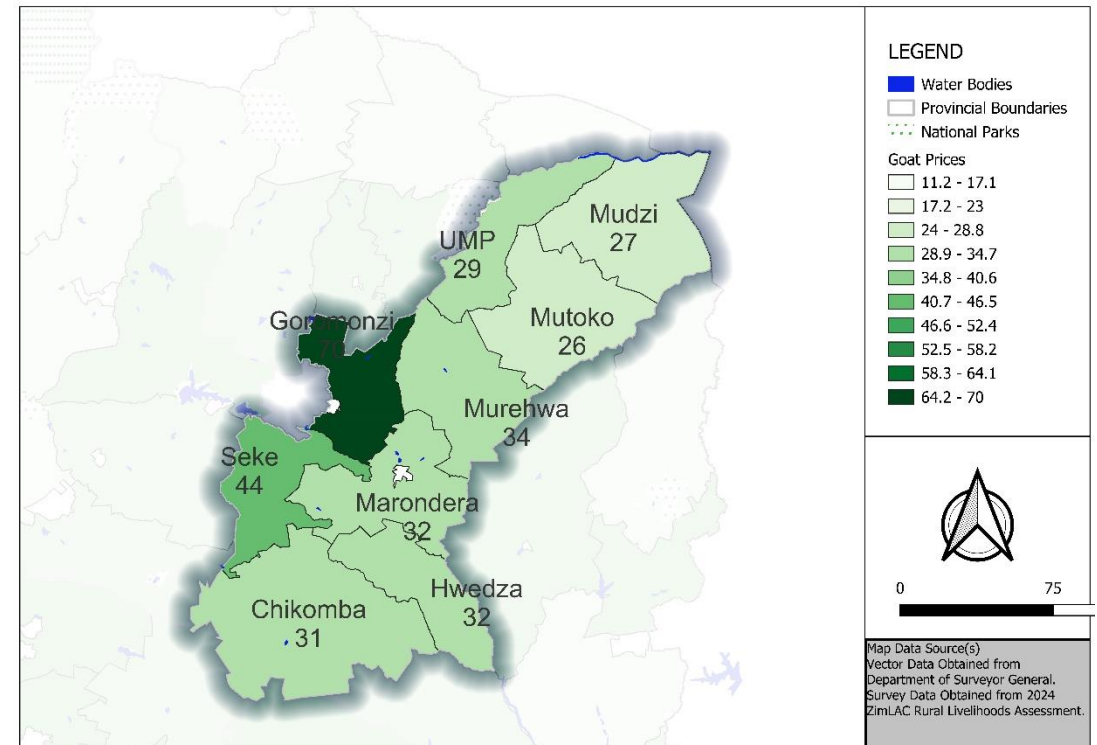

- Most of the communities (43%) indicated that the pastures for livestock were inadequate and 39% indicated the pastures were of poor quality.

Livestock Prices

Cattle Prices

Goat Prices

- The highest average cattle price (USD$428) and goat price (USD$70) were recorded in Goromonzi.

Access to Information and Critical Infrastructure

Access to Agriculture Extension

District	Received extension support (%)	Training-cropping advice (%)	Training - Livestock services (%)	Training-Weather and climate advice (%)	Extension Visit (%)	Other training (%)
Chikomba	21.1	19.4	13.5	3.0	1.0	.3
Goromonzi	48.0	19.3	16.7	3.0	33.3	3.3
Hwedza	77.7	75.3	50.0	47.3	26.0	9.0
Marondera	76.7	67.7	48.7	14.3	33.0	1.7
Mudzi	61.7	57.3	42.0	40.7	25.3	7.3
Murehwa	48.8	41.5	16.9	12.6	26.9	5.3
Mutoko	76.3	69.7	12.7	26.7	30.0	1.0
Seke	41.3	30.3	11.0	6.7	9.3	1.3
UMP	73.7	72.7	38.0	42.3	44.3	.0
Mash East	**58.3**	**50.3**	**27.7**	**21.8**	**25.4**	**3.3**

- About 58.3% of the households received extension support.

- The majority of the households (50.3%) received extension support in form of training in cropping and 27.7% in livestock services.

Access to and Use of Early Warning Information
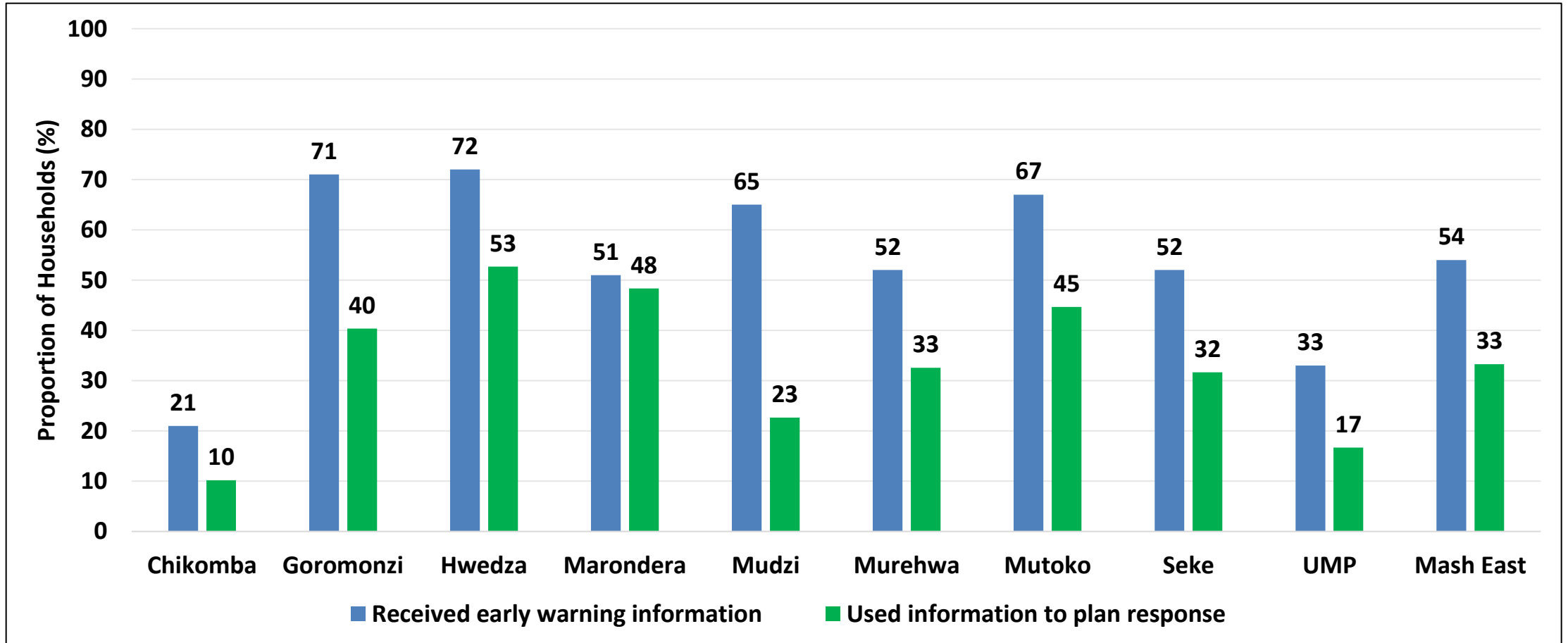
- About 54% of the households received information on early warning and only 33% of these used the information to plan response mechanisms.

Access to Health Services
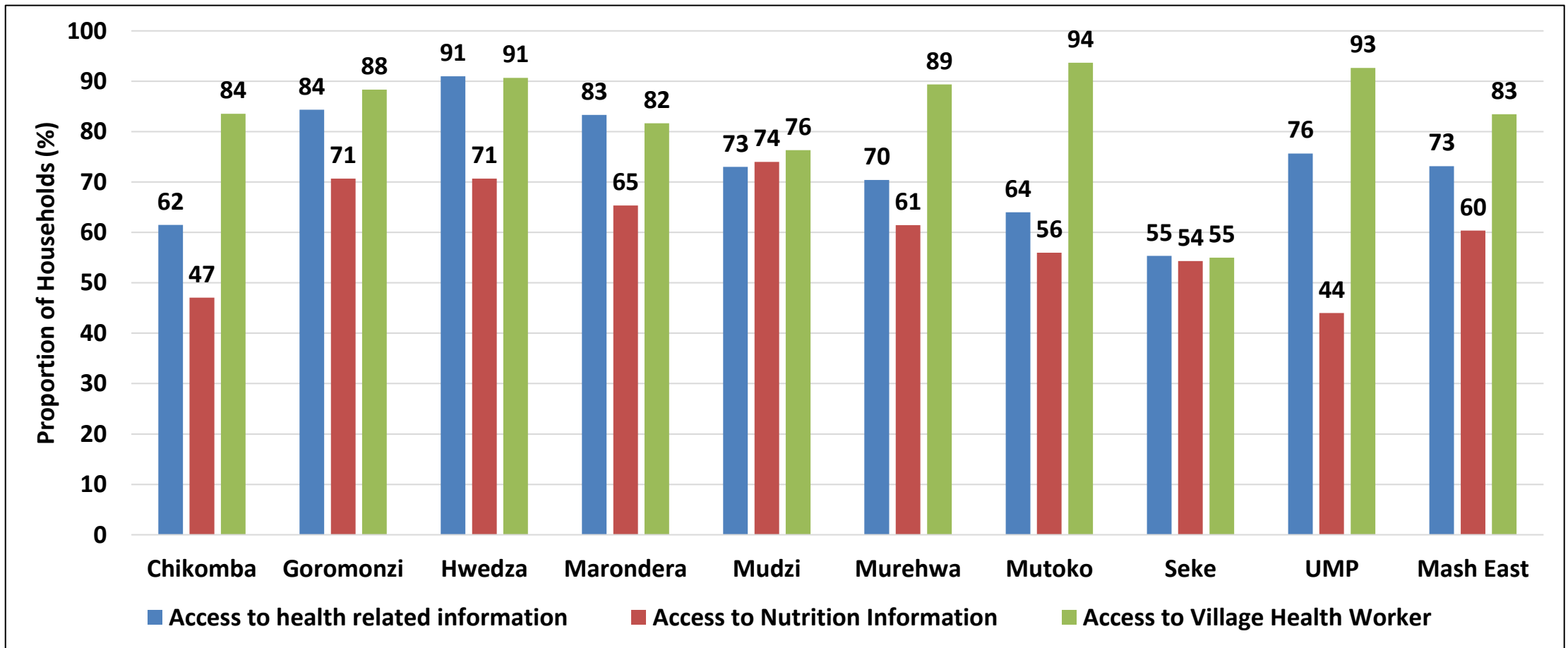
- About 73% of households reported to have accessed health related information and 60% reported to have accessed nutrition information.
- In the province, 83% of the households had accessed a village health worker.

Distance to the Nearest Health Facility/ Clinic
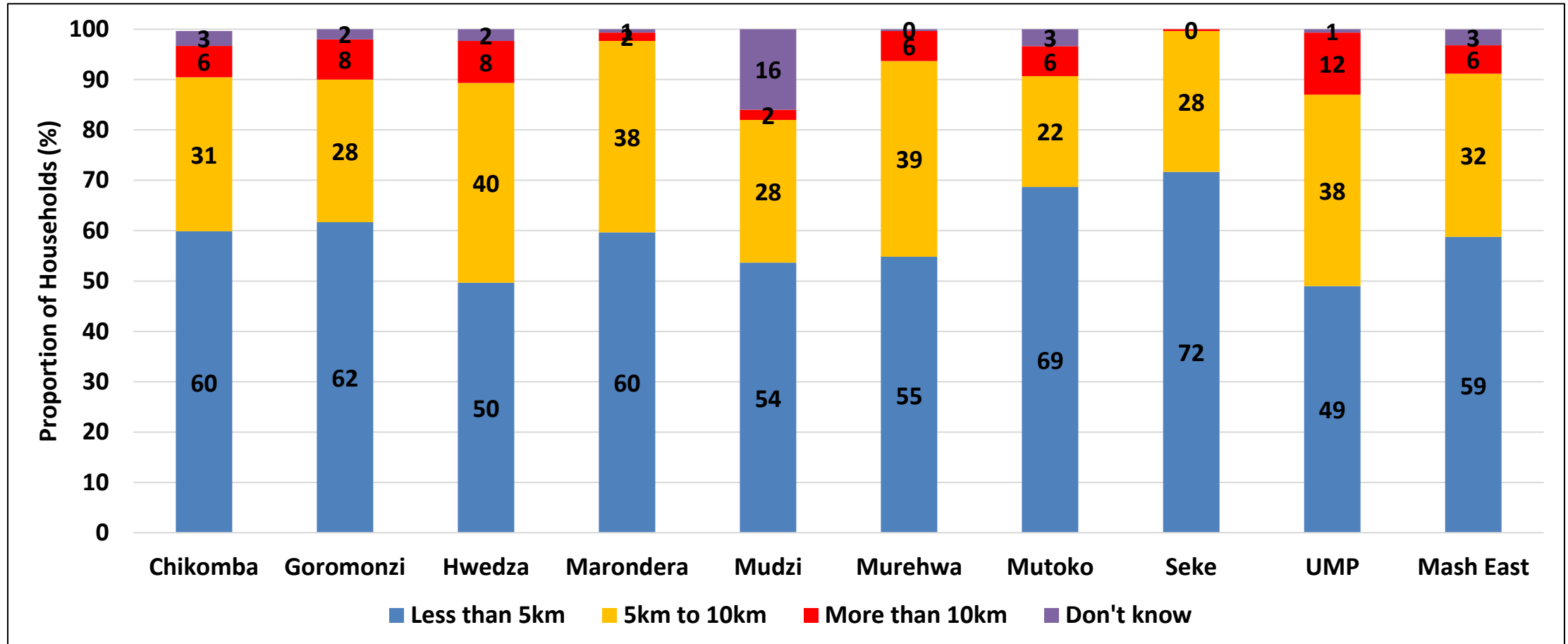
- The majority of the households (59%) had their nearest health facility in the 5 km radius.

- However, there were still about 6% of households which were travelling more than 10km to access a health facility.

Distance to the Nearest Primary School
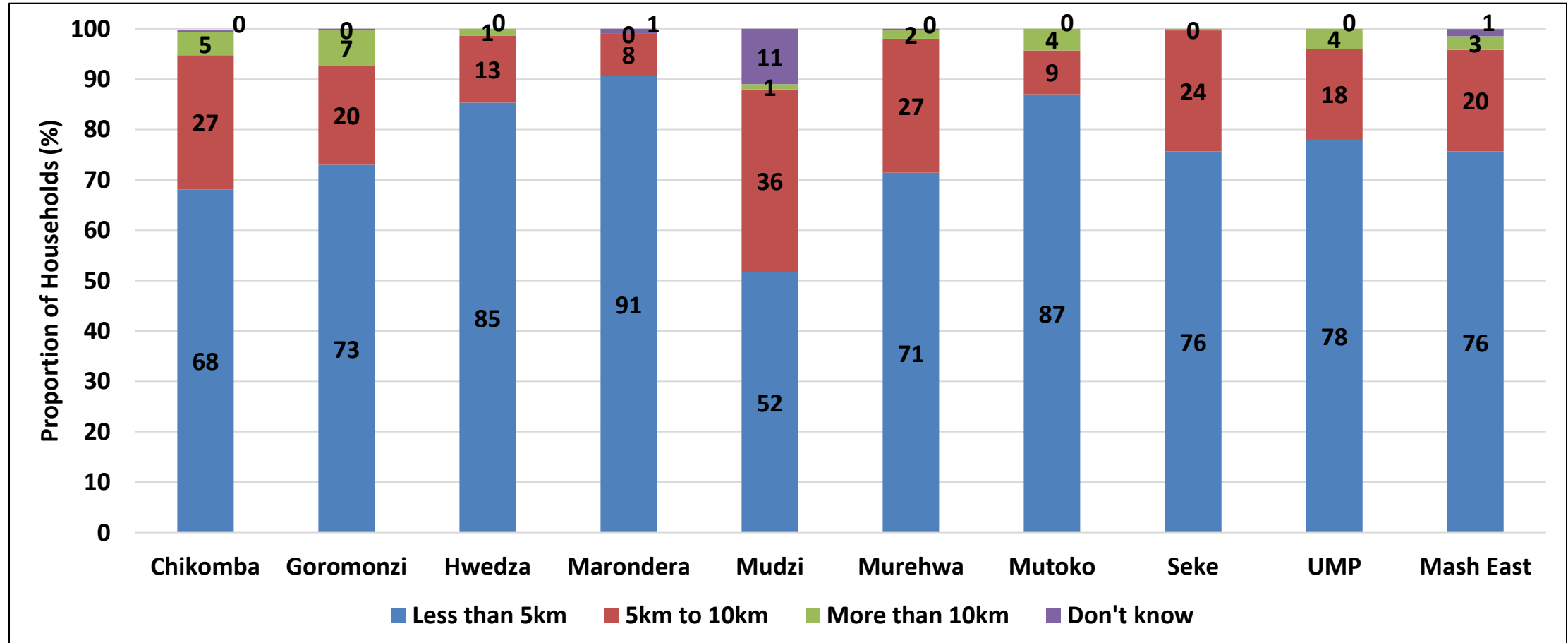
- About 3% of the households had primary schools which were more than 10km away.

Access to Police Services
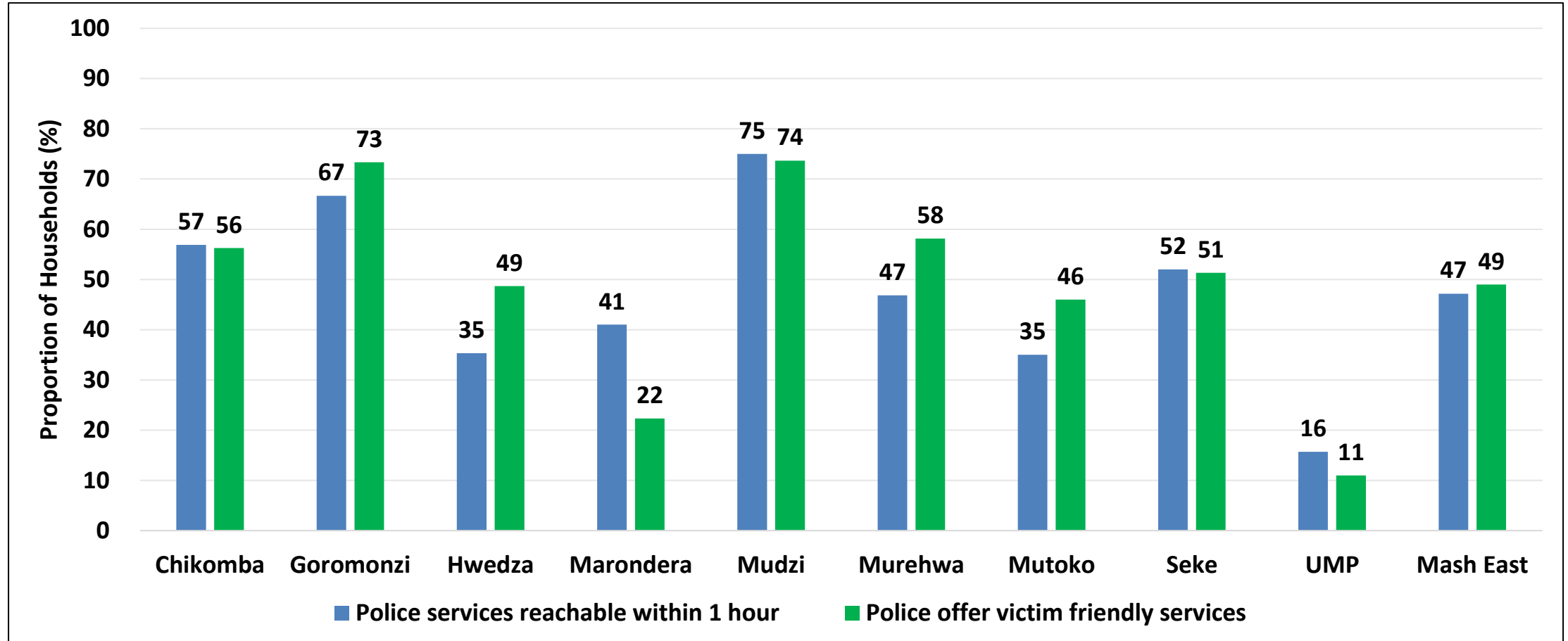
- About 47% of the households had access to police services within one hour.

- About 49% reported having police services offering victim friendly services.

Access to Information on Services for Physical and Sexual Violence
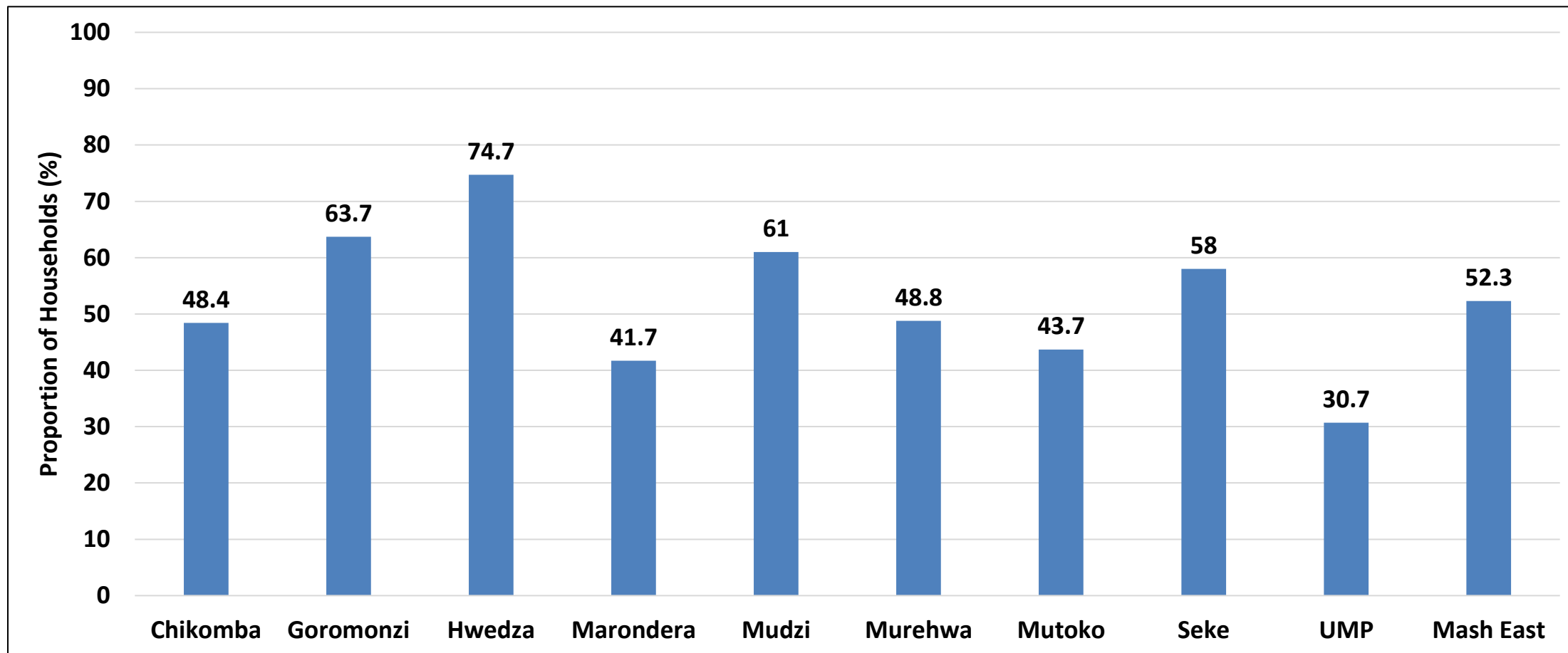
- About 52.3% of the households had access to information on services for victims of physical and sexual violence.

Income and Expenditure

Main Income Sources

Income Source	Proportion of Households (%)
Other	1.3
Food Assistance	1.4
Begging	1.4
Sale of livestock products	1.6
Brick & Durawall moulding	1.9
Own business	2.5
Gathering natural products for sale e.g.…	2.8
Food crop resale	3.1
Skilled trade/artisan	3.1
Remittances/gifts from outside	3.9
Pension	3.9
Deals (Madhiri,Kukiya-kiya, Ukutshaya amadili)	5.3
Small scale mining/ mineral sales	6.8
Cash crop production	7.2
Livestock production/sales	7.2
Vending /petty trade	7.9
Vegetable/fruits sales	10.5
Vegetable/fruits production	13.7
Salary/wages	14.4
Food crop production	14.5
Remittances/gifts from within	23.9
Casual labour	39.0

- The main income sources in the province were casual labour (39%) and remittances and gifts from within the country (23.9%).

Average Household Monthly Income (ZiG) for April 2024

- Average monthly income was ZiG 1,230.5

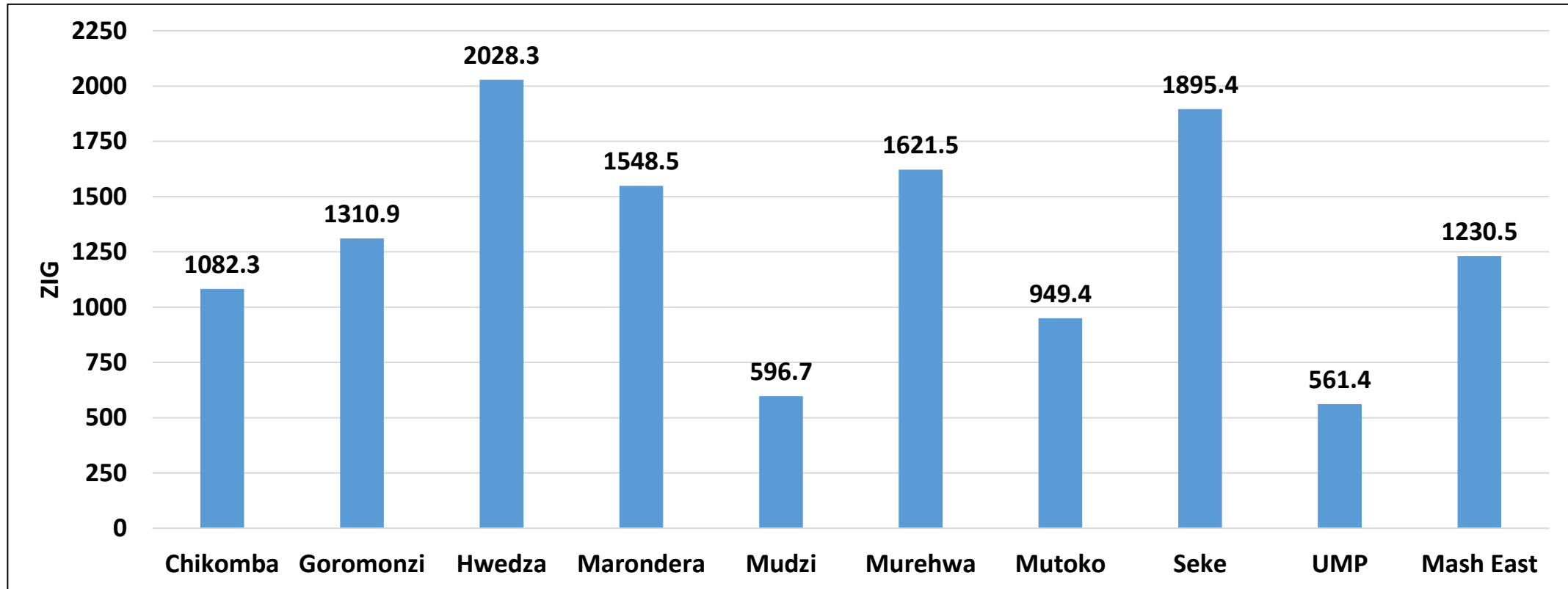- Mudzi (ZiG 596.7) had the lowest average monthly income.

Average Household Monthly Income (USD$) for April 2024
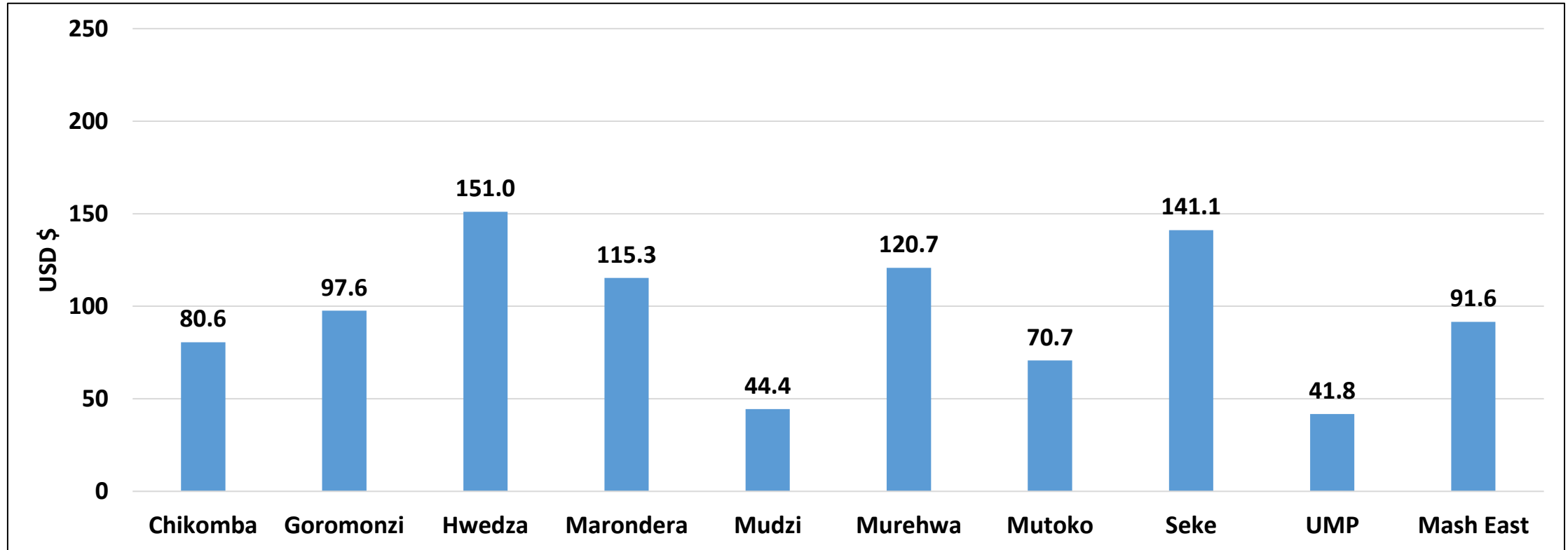
- The household average monthly income was USD$91.6.
- The lowest household average monthly income was reported in UMP (USD$ 41.8) and the highest was reported in Hwedza (USD 151).

Average Household Monthly Expenditure (USD) for April 2024
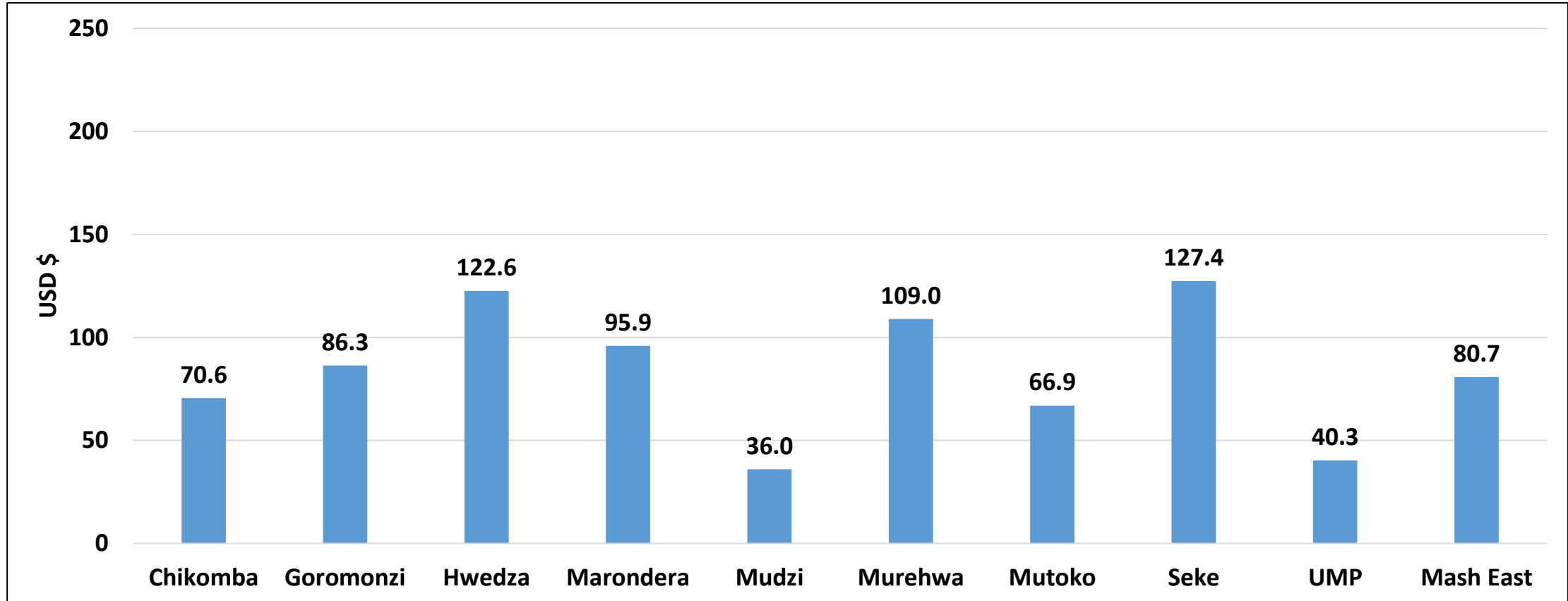
- Average expenditure for the month of April 2024 was USD$ 80.7.
- Mudzi (USD$ 36) reported the lowest expenditure.

Average Household Monthly Expenditure (ZiG) for April 2024
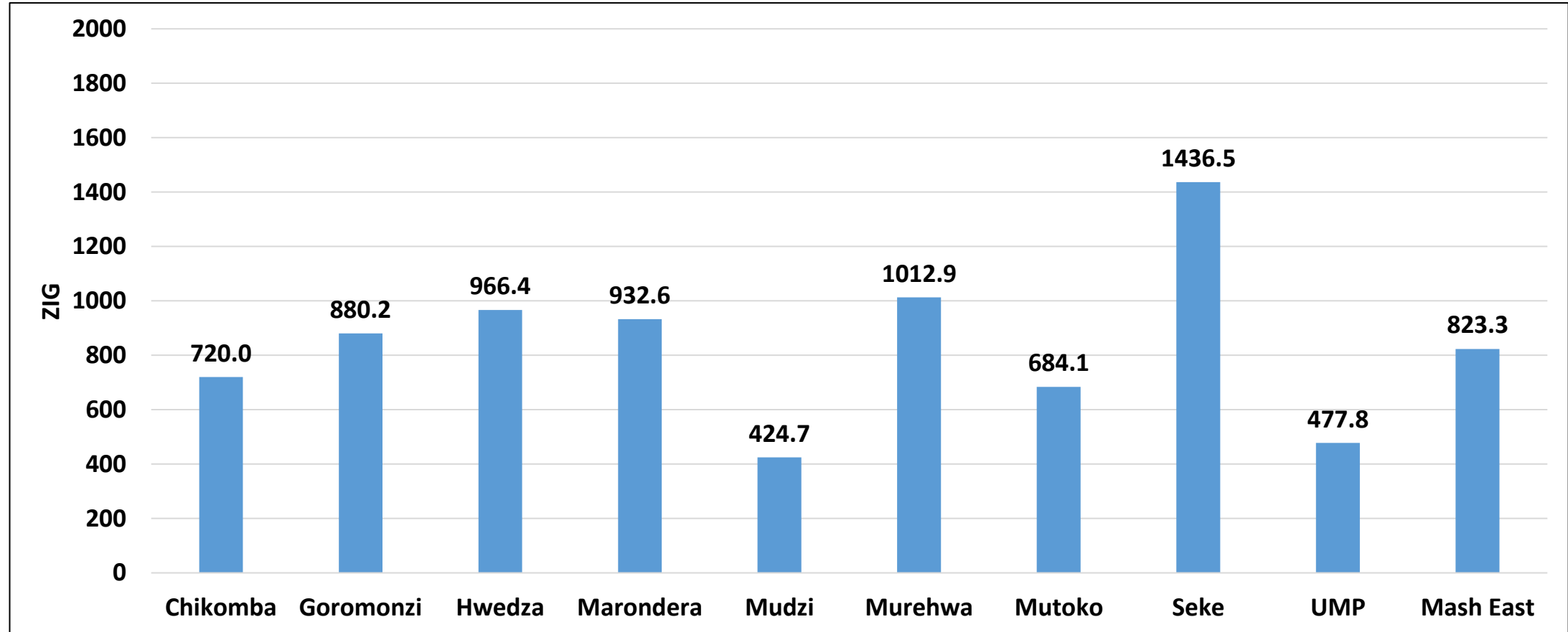
- Seke (ZiG 1436.5) had the highest monthly expenditure.

Food and Non-Food Expenditure Ratio
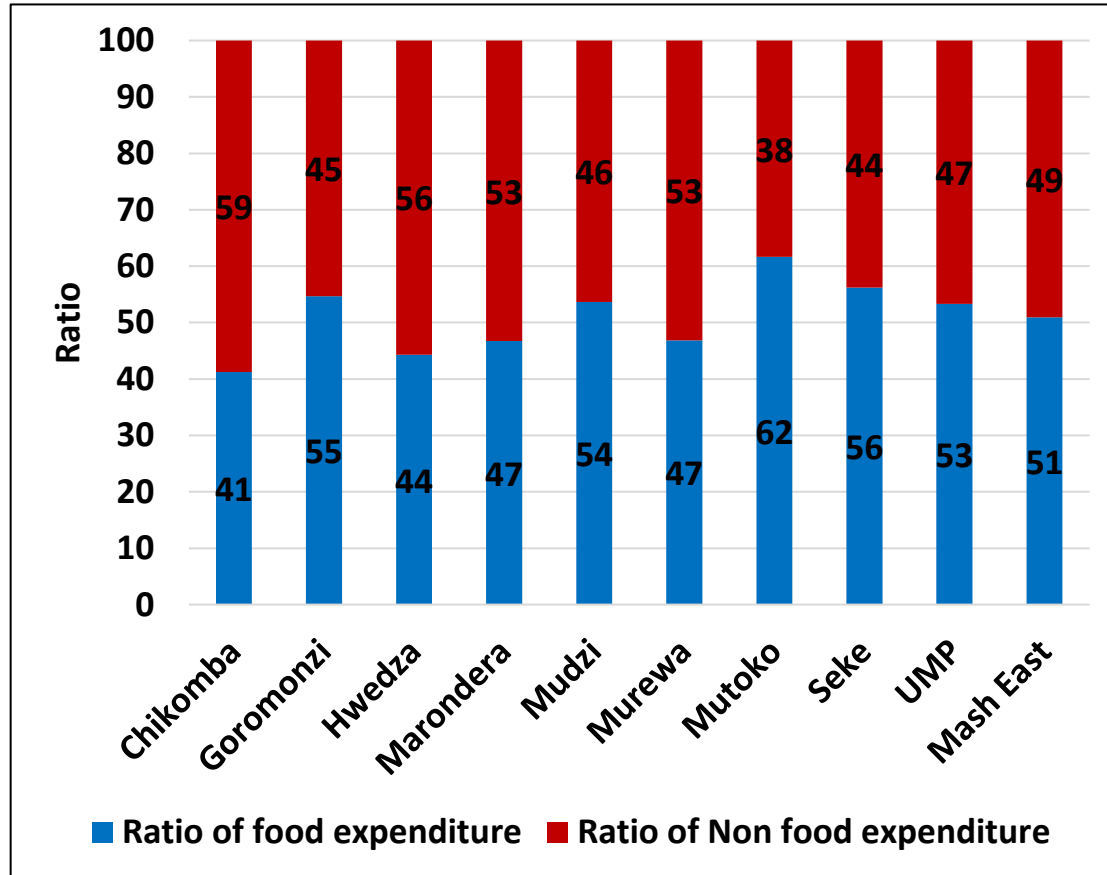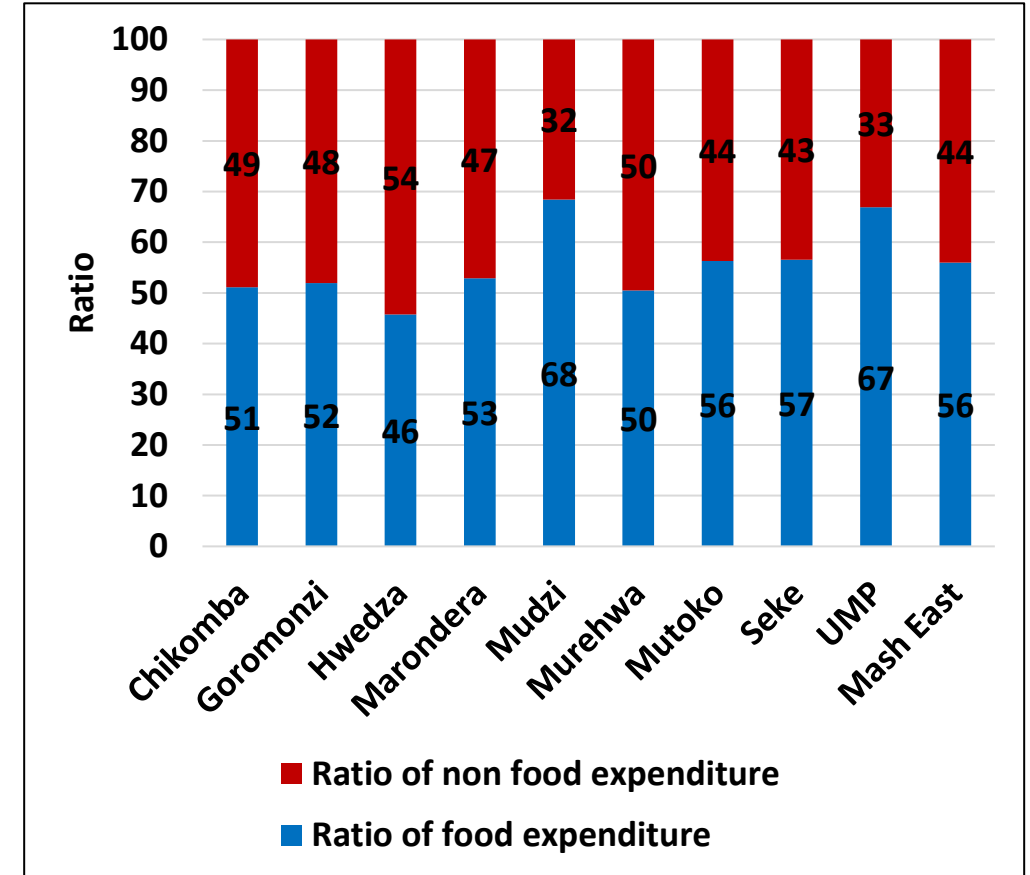
- The food expenditure ratio increased from 51% in 2023 to 56% in 2024.
- The proportion of non-food expenditure ratio in 2024 was 44%.

114

Assets, Loans and Remittances

Assets

Asset	Proportion of Households (%)
Pruning/cutting shears	1.6
	2.3
Traditional/modern beehive	2.6
	3.0
	3.0
Cultivator, ridger, planter	3.9
	6.0
Bicycle	14.9
	15.9
Scotch cart	24.1
	26.4
Solar system (panel, battery, inverter)	27.4
	29.7
Wheel barrow	31.5
	35.7
Sickle	41.3
	46.0
Spade or shovel	52.2
	62.8
Telephone (including Mobile phones)	79.3
	85.1
Hoe	94.0
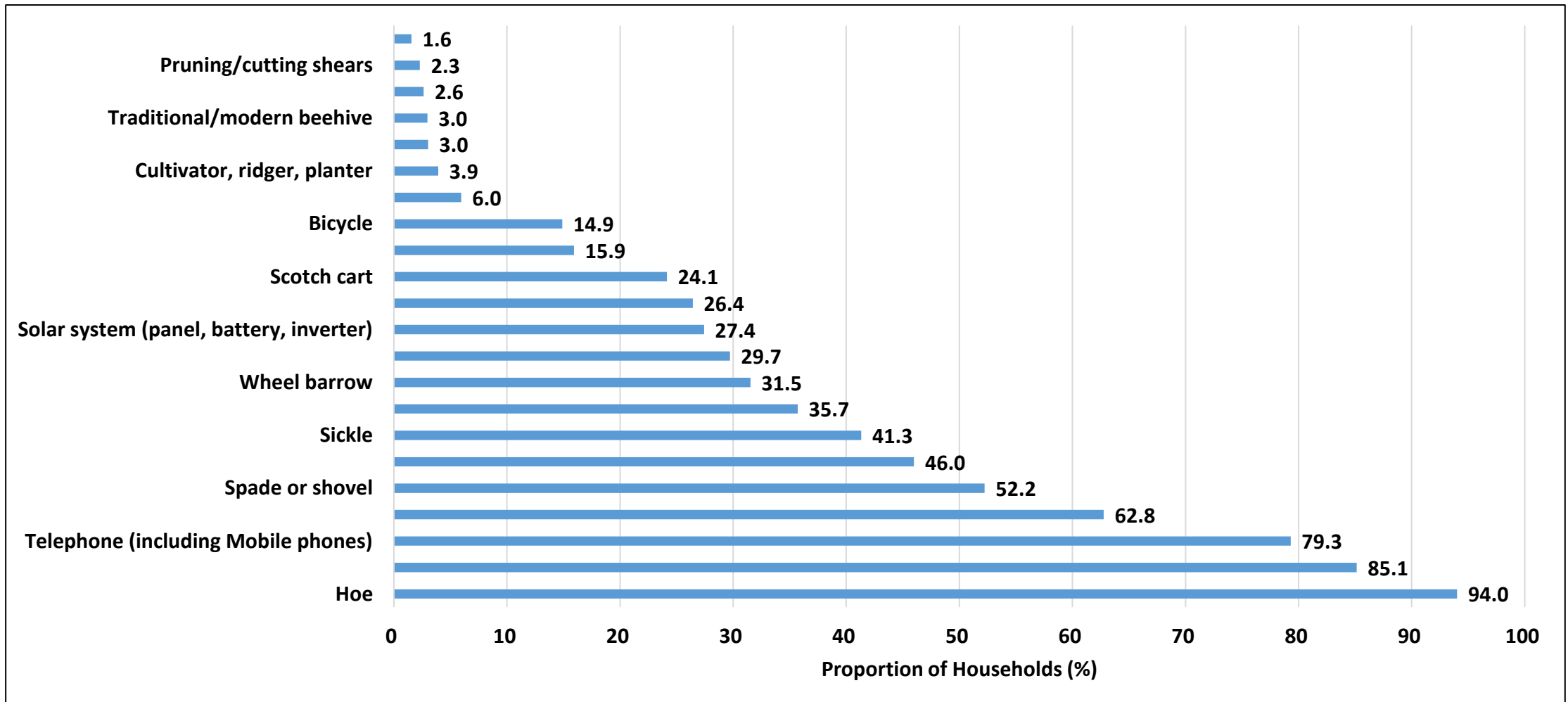
- The most common owned asset by households was a hoe (94%) followed by an axe (85.1%) and a telephone (79.3%).

116

Households which Participated in ISALs/Mukando/ Ukuqogelela
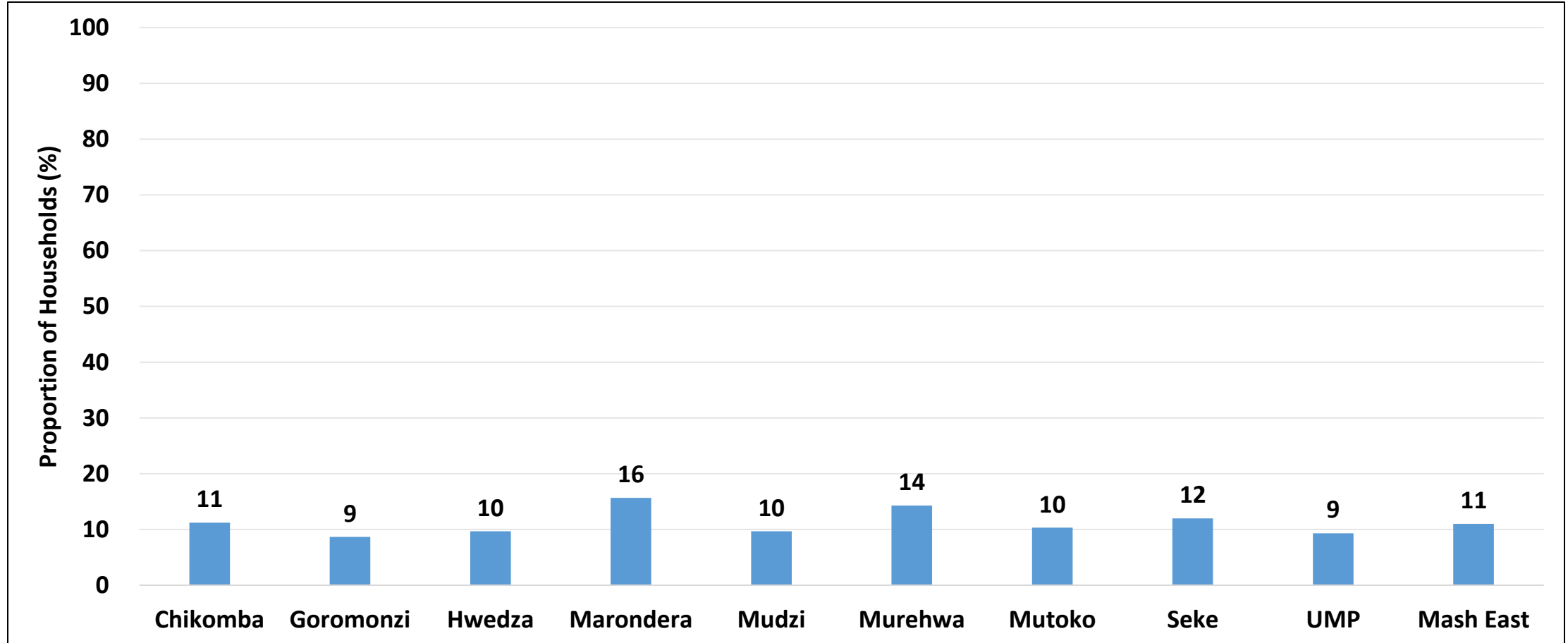
- At least 11% of households had a member participating in ISALs/Mukando/Ukuqogelela.

Households which Accessed Loans
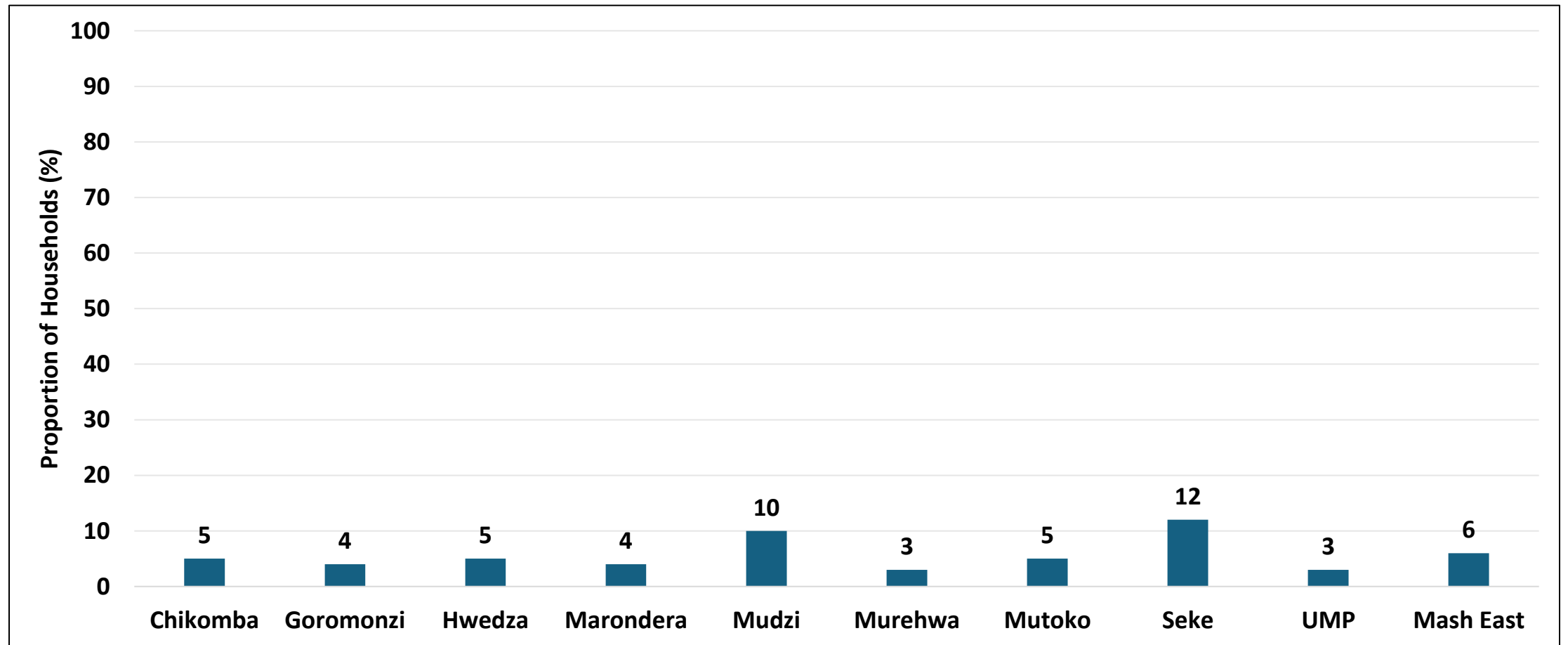
- At least 6% of the households accessed loans.
- Seke (12%) and Mudzi (10%) had the highest proportion of households which accessed loans.

Source of Loans
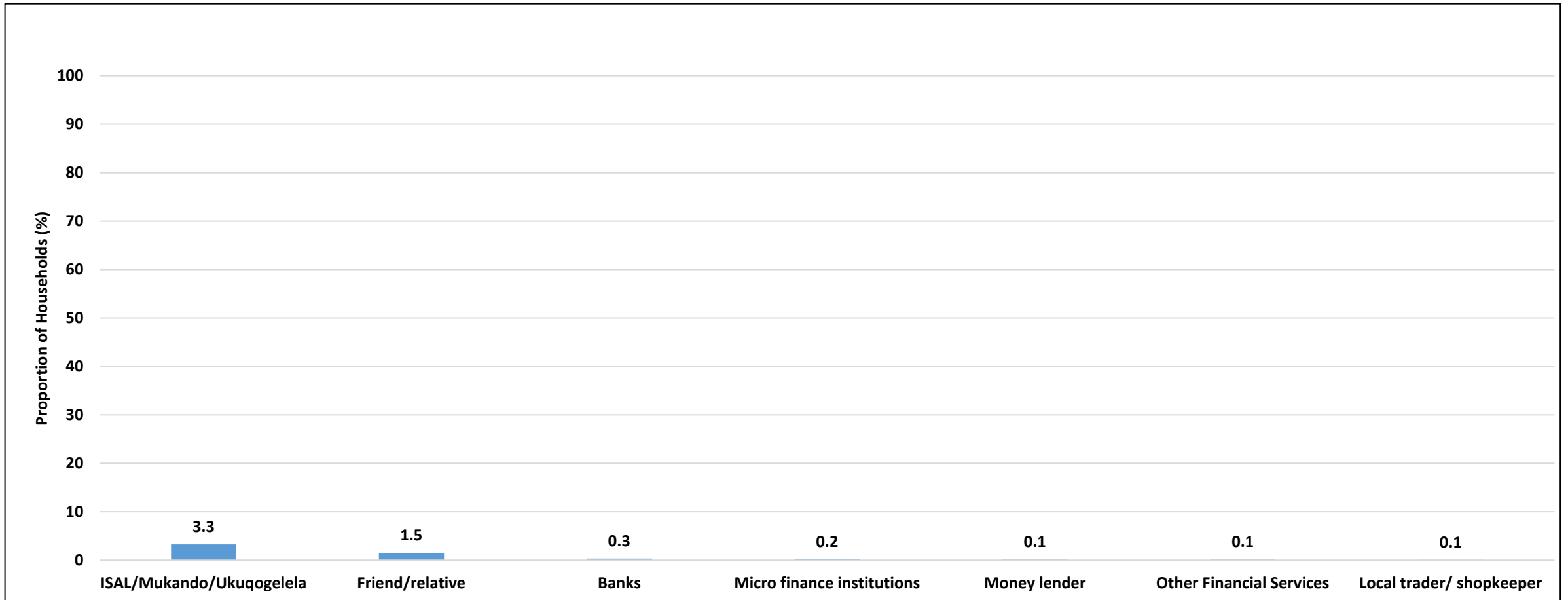
- The main source of loans for households was ISALs Mukando/Ukuqogelela (3.3%).

Remittances
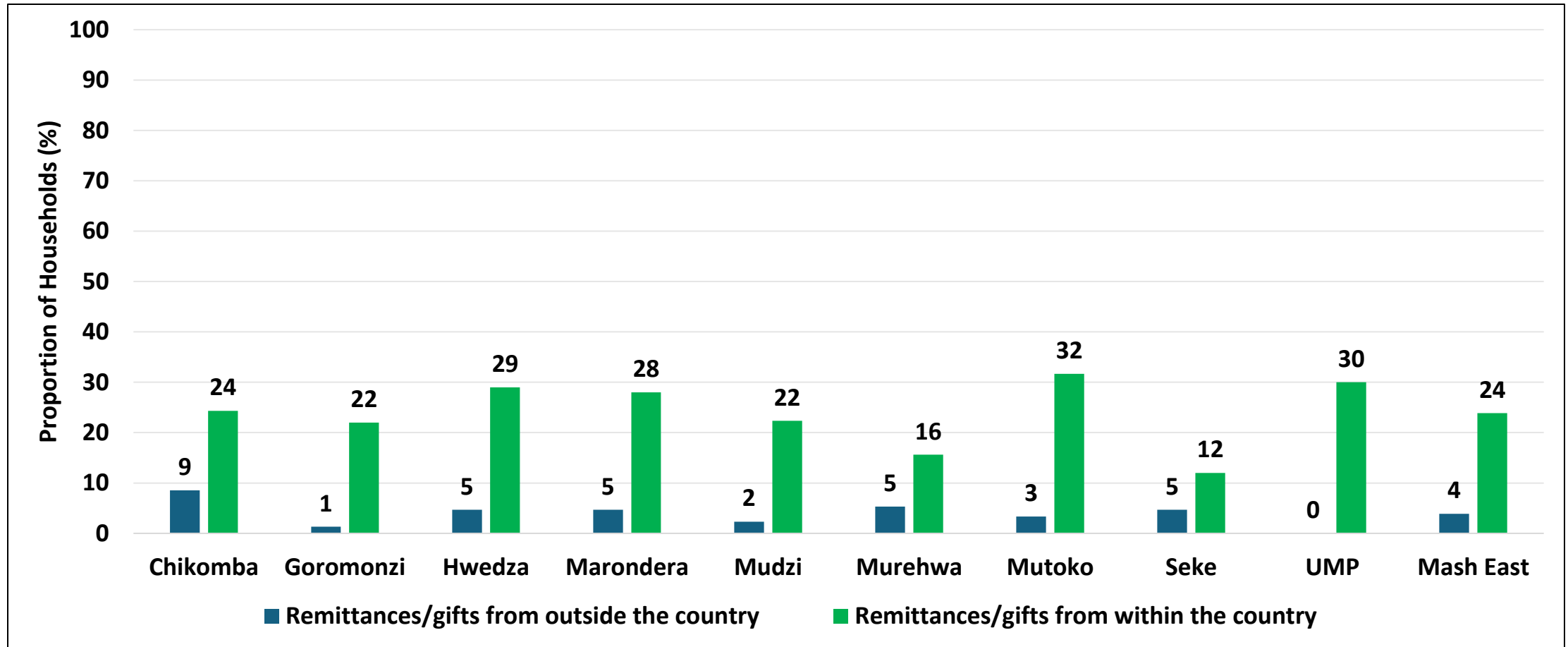
- Remittances received by households were mainly from within the country (24%).

- Mutoko (32%) had the highest proportion of households that had received remittances from within the country.

- Chikomba (9%) had the highest proportion of households that had received remittances from outside the country.

Nutrition Status

Child Nutrition Status

Child Stunting		The share of children under the age of five who are short for their age (having a low height-for-age), reflecting chronic undernutrition.
Child Wasting		The share of children under the age of five who are too thin for their height (low-weight-for-height), reflecting acute undernutrition.
Child Underweight		The share of the children under the age of the five who are too thin for their age (low weight-for-age).
Overweight /Obesity		The share of children under the age of five who are too heavy for their height (high weight-for-height).

Indicator	Indicator definition (WHO standards, 2006)	National prevalence (%)	Prevalence cut-off values for public health significance
Stunting	Height/Length for age <–2 SD of the WHO Child Growth Standards median	27.4	<2.5%: Very Low 2.5-<10%: Low 10-<20%: Medium 20-<30%: High ≥30%: Very High (DeOniset al., 2019)
Global Acute Malnutrition	Weight for height <-2SD of the WHO Child Growth Standards median and/oedema	4.9	<5% Acceptable 5–9.9%: Poor 10–14.9%: Serious >15%: Critical
Severe Acute Malnutrition	Weight for height <–3 SD of the WHO Child Growth Standards median	1.7	0% = acceptable >0%: Unacceptable
Underweight	Weight for age <-2SD of the WHO Child Growth Standards median and/oedema	9.8	
Overweight	Weight for height >+2 SD of the WHO Child Growth Standards median	3.9	<2.5%: very low 2.5 to <5%: low 5 to <10%: medium 10 to <15%: high ≥15%: very high
Obesity	Weight for height >+3 SD of the WHO Child Growth Standards median	2.3	

123

Nutrition Status of Children 6-59 months
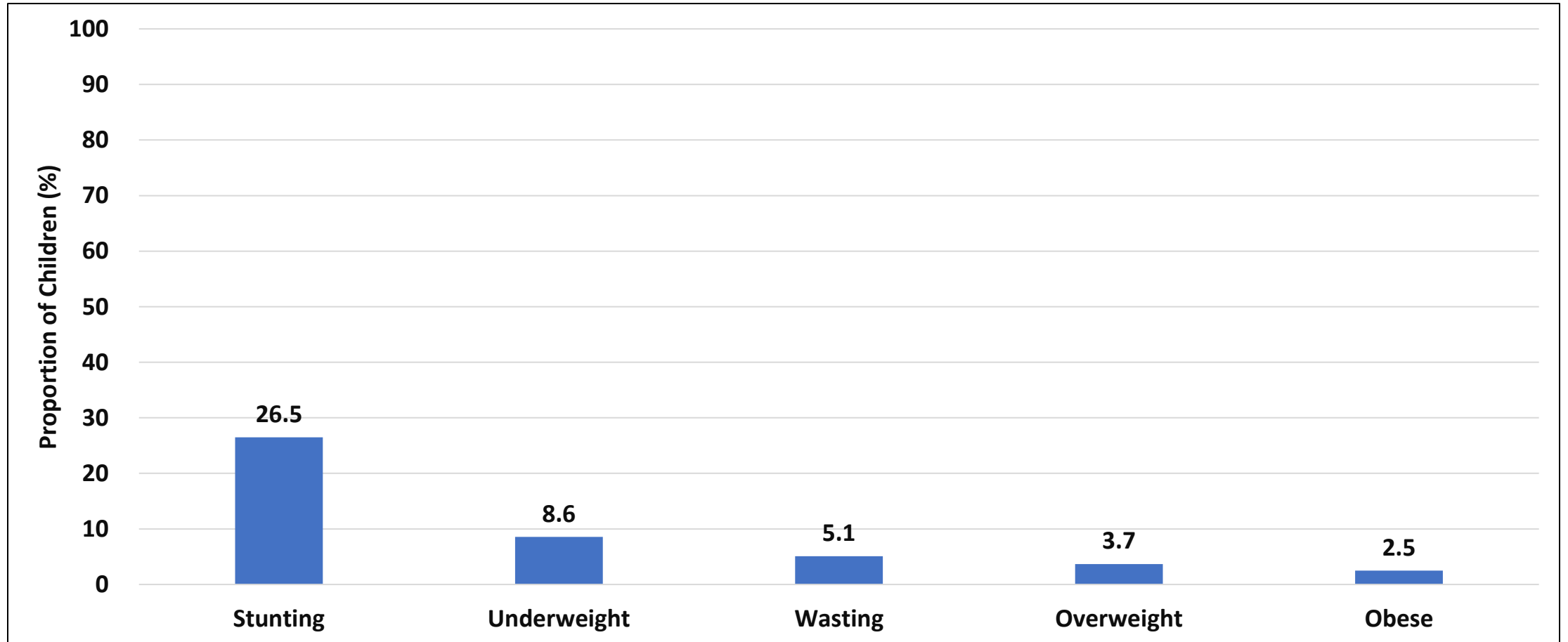
- Stunting rate for the province was 26.5%.

Child Nutrition

Infant and Young Child Feeding Practices

Infant and Young Child Feeding

- Infant and young child feeding (IYCF) practices directly affect the health, development and nutritional status of children less than two years of age and ultimately, impact child survival. Improving IYCF practices in children 0–23 months of age is therefore critical to improved nutrition, health and development.

- The World Health Organization (WHO) recommends breastfeeding practices that consist of early initiation of breastfeeding within one hour of birth, exclusive breastfeeding for six months, and continued breastfeeding with complementary feeding for at least two years.

- Exclusive breastfeeding is a low cost, life-saving child survival intervention.

- WHO recommends that children aged 6–23 months be fed a variety of foods to ensure that nutrient needs are met. Food group diversity is associated with improved linear growth in young children. A diet lacking in diversity can increase the risk of micronutrient deficiencies, which may have a damaging effect on children's physical and cognitive development.

- Poor-quality diets are one of the greatest obstacles to children's survival, growth, development and learning. During the first two years of life, diets lacking in essential vitamins and minerals can irreversibly harm a child's rapidly growing body and brain and increase the risk of stunting, wasting and micronutrient deficiencies. Meanwhile, foods high in sugar, fat or salt can set children on the path to unhealthy food preferences, overweight and diet-related diseases.

Notes

EGG AND/OR FLESH FOOD CONSUMPTION 6–23 MONTHS (EFF)

- WHO guiding principles for feeding breastfed and non-breastfed children state that "meat, poultry, fish or eggs should be eaten daily, or as often as possible"

- There is evidence that children who consume eggs and flesh foods have higher intakes of various nutrients important for optimal linear growth. Consuming eggs is associated with increased intakes of energy, protein, essential fatty acids, vitamin B12, vitamin D, phosphorus and selenium, and with higher recumbent length

- Introduction of meat as an early complementary food for breastfed infants was associated with improved protein and zinc intake. There is also evidence of low prevalence of egg and flesh food intake across many countries.

- Indicator definition: percentage of children 6–23 months of age who consumed egg and/or flesh food during the previous day.

ZERO VEGETABLE OR FRUIT CONSUMPTION 6–23 MONTHS (ZVF)

- WHO indicates that low vegetable and fruit consumption is associated with increased risk of noncommunicable diseases (NCDs).

- Non-consumption of vegetables or fruits on the previous day represents an unhealthy practice.

- Indicator definition: percentage of children 6–23 months of age who did not consume any vegetables or fruits during the previous day.

Notes

UNHEALTHY FOOD CONSUMPTION 6–23 MONTHS (UFC)

- In many low- and middle-income countries, diet patterns are shifting towards higher intakes of added sugars, unhealthy fats, salt and refined carbohydrates.

- A variety of guidance documents indicate the need to avoid or limit these types of foods when feeding IYC.

- Recent national guidance for feeding IYC advises avoidance of foods such as candies, chocolate, chips, French fries, cakes and cookies: Consumption of such foods may displace more nutritious foods and limit the intake of essential vitamins and minerals.

- Recently, unhealthy snack food and beverage consumption has been associated with a higher risk of nutrient inadequacy, and lower length-for-age among one-year-olds *(43)*.

- Food preferences that begin early in life track into later childhood and adolescence. Such practices, if continued throughout adolescence and adulthood, can increase the risk of becoming overweight or obese, and of related chronic diseases later in life.

- Indicator definition: percentage of children 6–23 months of age who consumed selected sentinel unhealthy foods during the previous day.

- *"sentinel unhealthy foods" are foods or categories of foods (e.g. "sweets" or "candies") that are likely to be consumed by IYC and are high in sugar, salt and/or unhealthy fats.*

Breastfeeding Practices
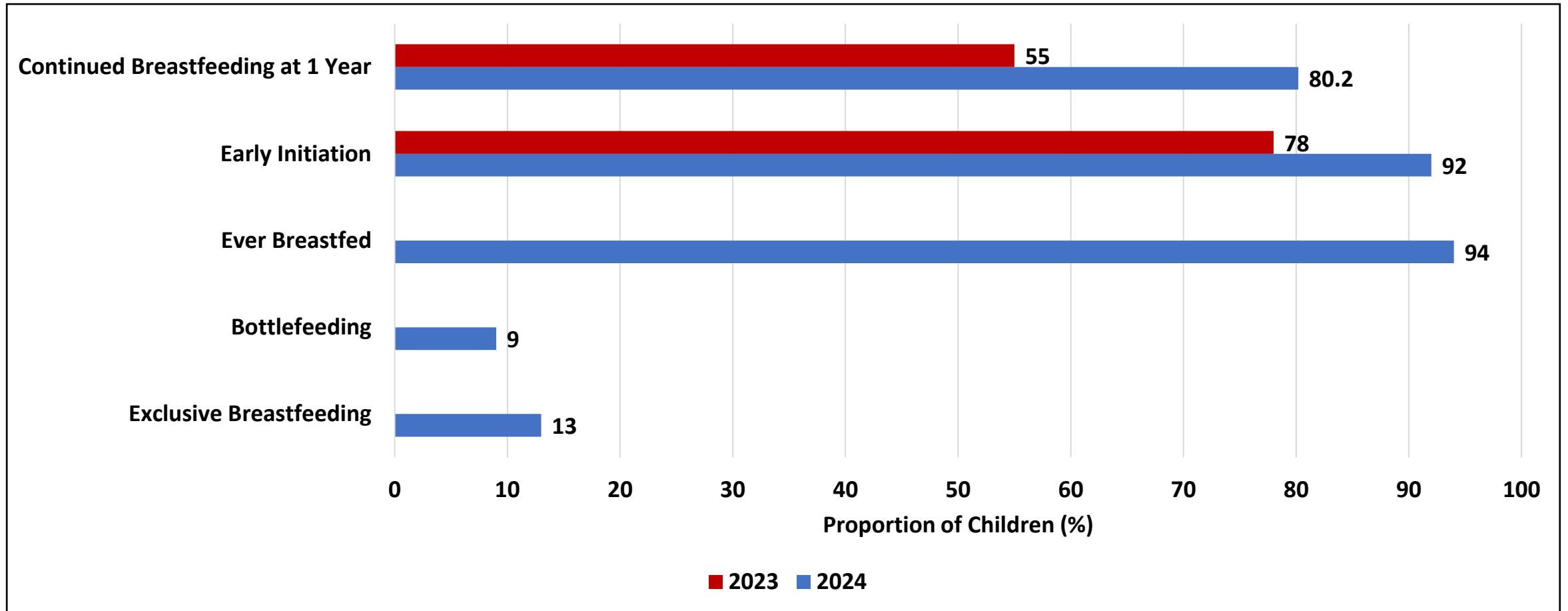
- Exclusive breastfeeding is a low cost, life-saving child survival intervention. The exclusive breastfeeding rate was reported to be 13% in 2024.

- The proportion of children who continued to be breastfed beyond one year increased from 55% in 2023 to 80.2% in 2024.

- At least 94% of the children were ever breastfed.

Foods Given to Children Less than 6 months in Addition to Breastfeeding
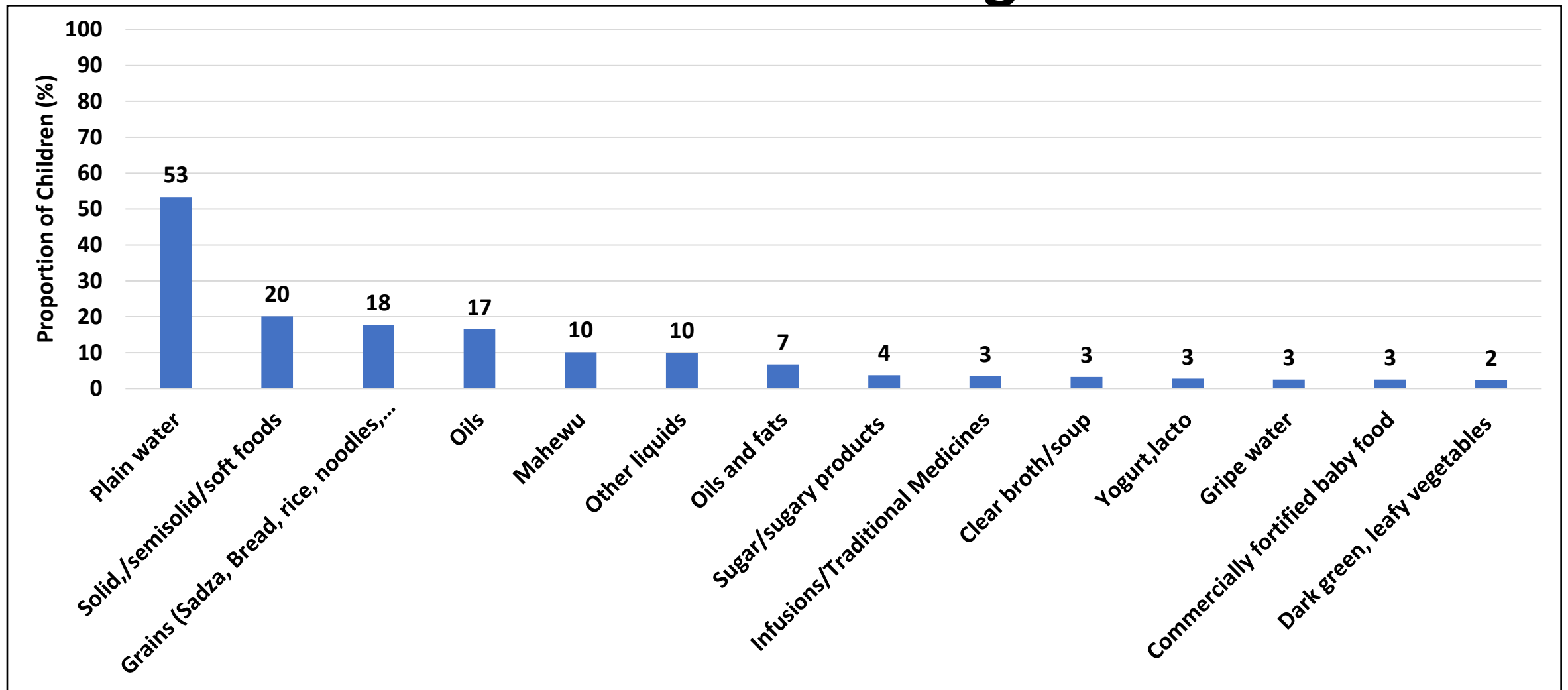
- Nationally, plain water (53%), soft foods (20%), grains (18%) and oils (17%) were the most common foods given to children less than 6 months

Continued Breastfeeding Beyond 1 year
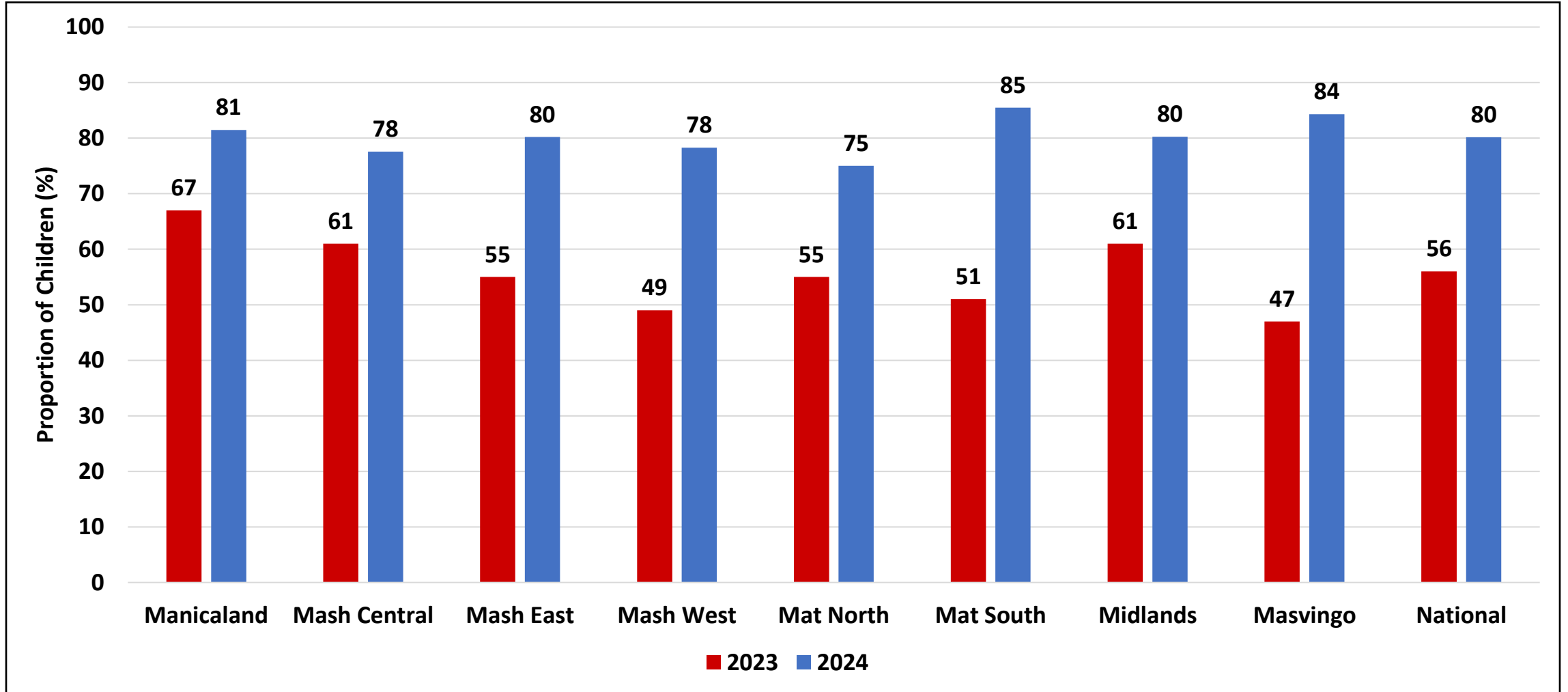
- Breastfeeding provides one third of energy needs between 12 and 24 months.

- The proportion of children who continued to be breastfed beyond one year increased across all provinces.

- In Mashonaland East, 80% of children were breastfed beyond one year, an increase from 55% in 2023.

Bottle Feeding
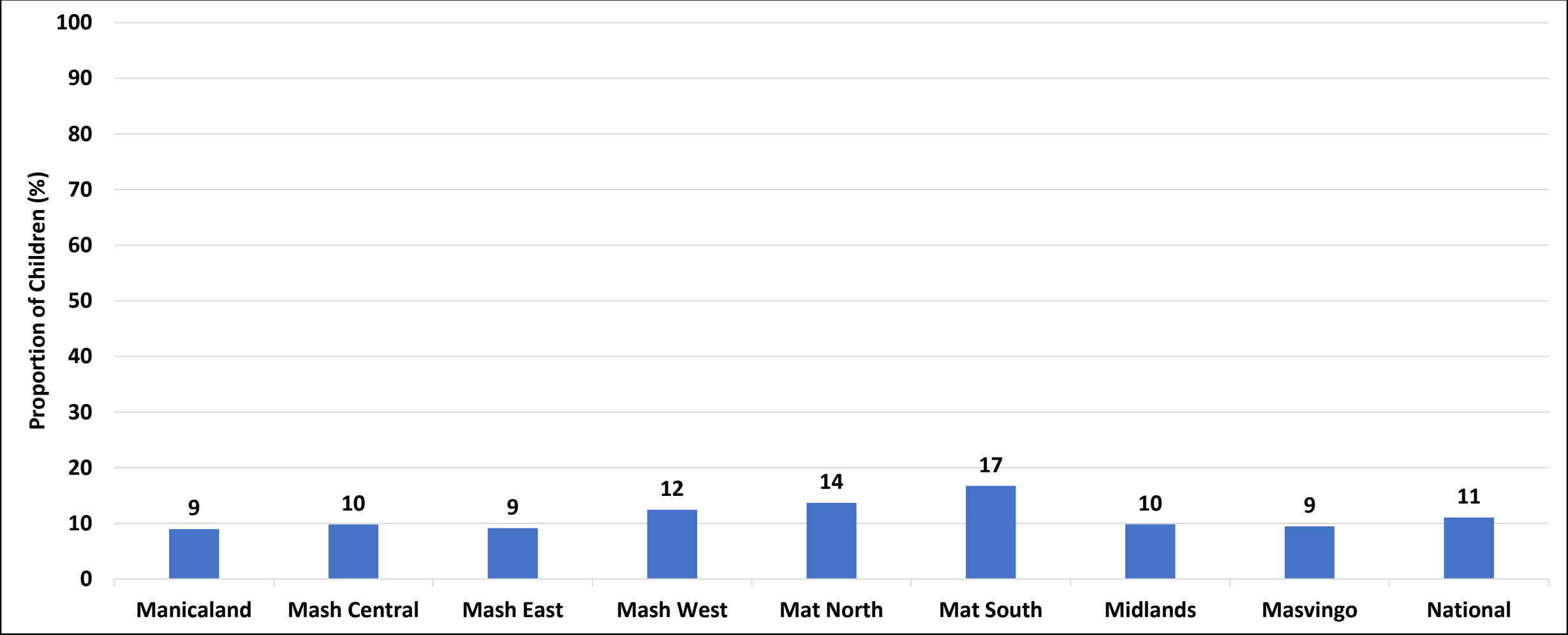
- Bottle feeding interferes with breastfeeding and predisposes infants to diarrheal diseases, especially in an environment with compromised WASH services.
- Mashonaland East reported 9%, below the national average of 11%.

Complementary Feeding

- Minimum Dietary Diversity (MDD) is a proxy indicator for adequate micronutrient density. Both breastfed and non-breastfed infants are expected to consume at least five of the seven food groups that are recommended by the World Health Organisation.

- Minimum Meal Frequency (MMF) is a proxy for a child's energy requirements and is the proportion of breastfed and non-breastfed children 6 to 23 months of age who receive solid, semi-solid, or soft-foods or milk feeds the minimum number of times or more.

- Minimum Acceptable Diet (MAD) is a composite indicator of minimum meal frequency and dietary diversity. It represents minimum standards of IYCF practices.

Infant and Young Child Feeding Diet Quality
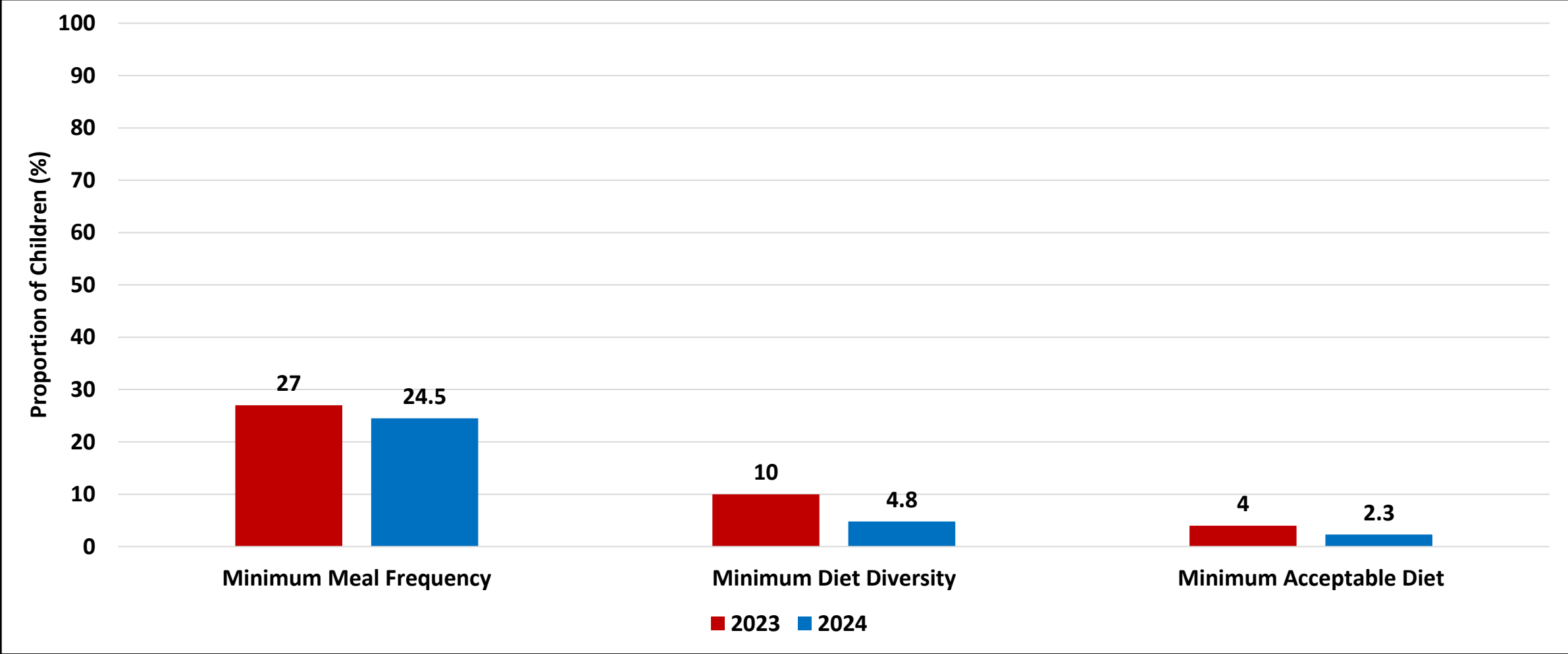
- A Minimum Acceptable Diet indicator reflects the proportion of children who receive adequate diverse age-appropriate foods. Adequate nutrition is essential for growth and development of children aged 6-23 months.

- Nationally, 2.3% of children achieved a minimum acceptable diet, a decrease from 4% in 2023. This remains below the national target of 25%.

- Dietary diversity was also low with only 4.8% of children consuming diversified diets.

135

Infant and Young Child Feeding Diet Quality: By Sex
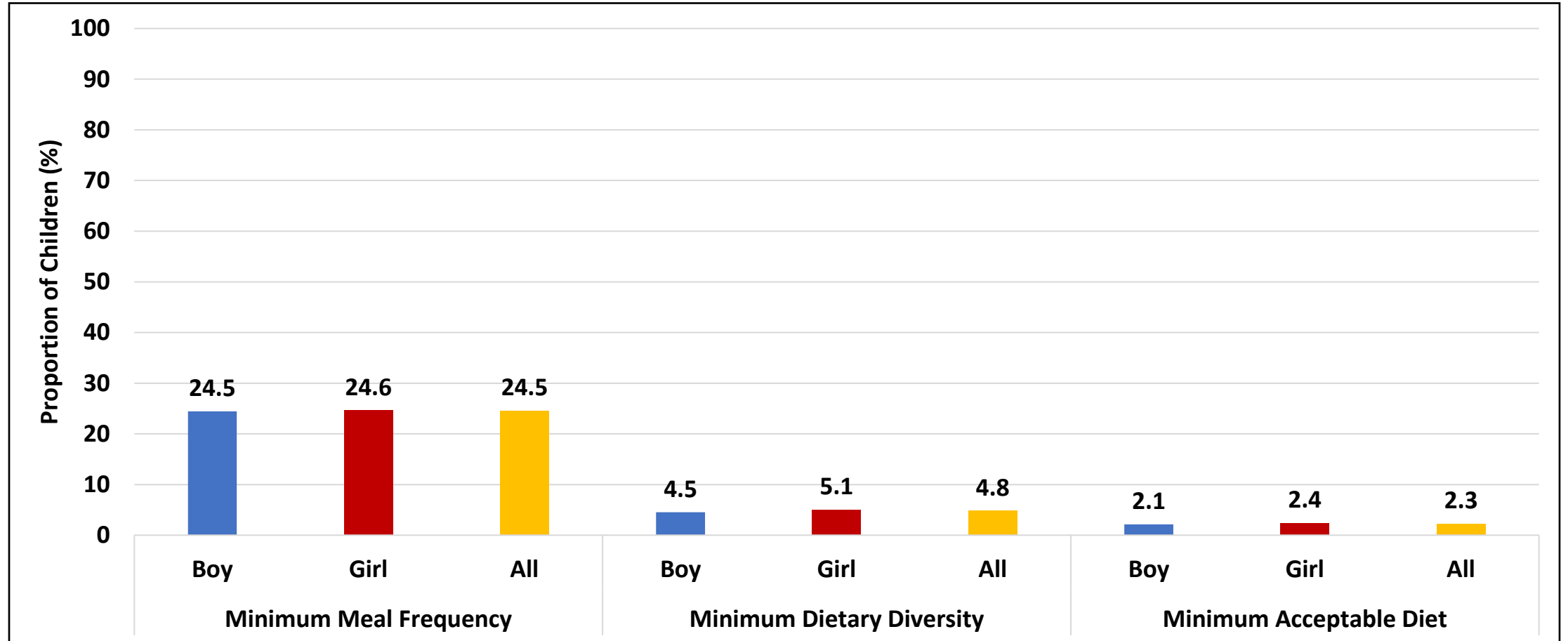
- There was no major difference on diet quality by sex.

Infant and Young Child Feeding Diet Quality

2023
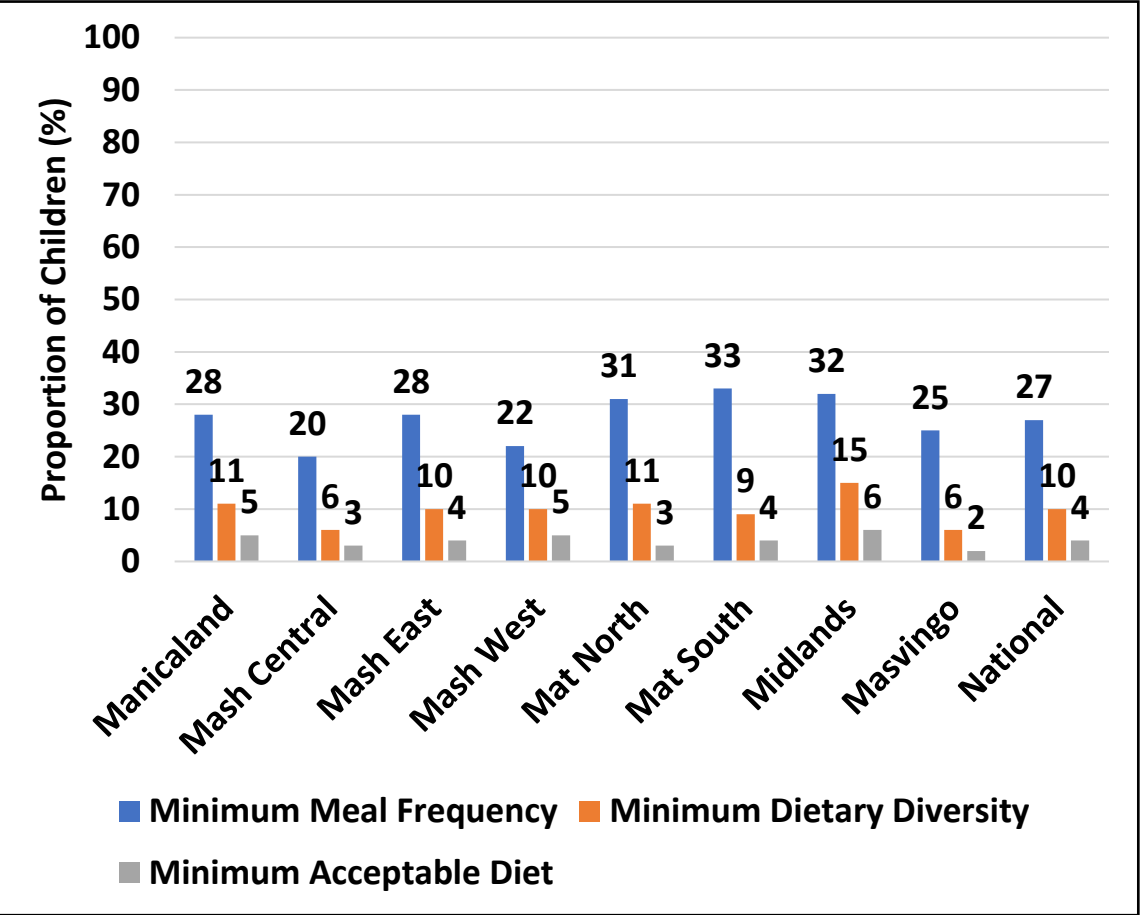
2024
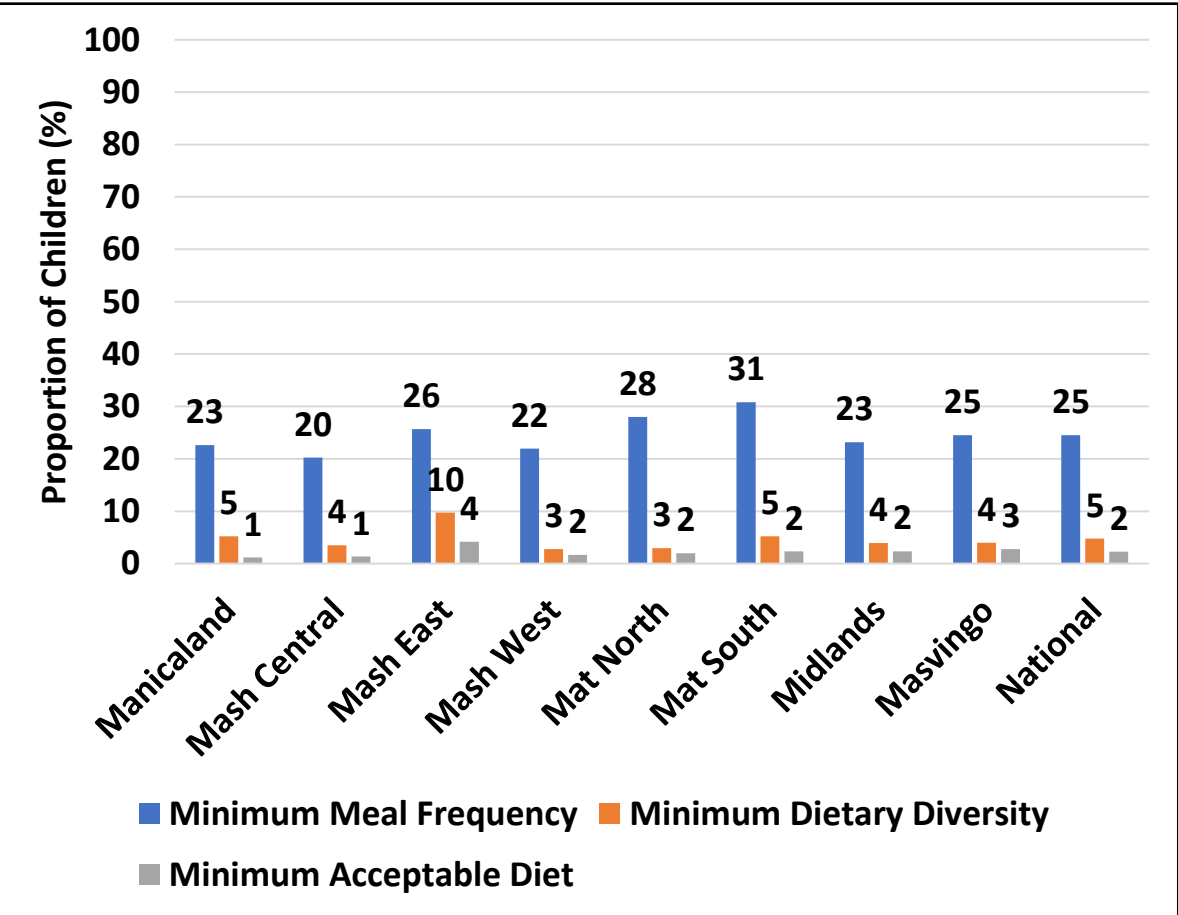
- In Mashonaland East, 4% of children aged 6-23 months received the Minimum Acceptable Diet, the same was recorded in 2023.

- A Minimum Acceptable Diet indicator reflects the proportion of children who receive adequate diverse age-appropriate foods. Adequate nutrition is essential for growth and development of children aged 6-23 months.

137

Foods Consumed by Children 6-23 Months

Province	Breastmilk (%)	Grains, roots, tubers and plantains (%)	Pulses (beans, peas, lentils), nuts and seeds (%)	Dairy products (milk, infant formula, yogurt, cheese) (%)	Flesh foods (meat, fish, poultry, organ meats) (%)	Eggs (%)	Vitamin-A rich fruits and vegetables (%)	Other Fruits and vegetables (%)
Manicaland	43.5	94.8	5.2	11.0	11.3	4.3	**49.6**	27.5
Mash Central	46.1	90.6	3.8	9.2	11.3	6.2	38.0	22.6
Mash East	44.4	91.2	8.1	20.1	14.8	9.5	47.0	39.6
Mash West	41.4	88.2	3.3	9.3	11.2	2.5	40.5	18.9
Mat North	41.7	92.5	6.8	16.6	6.8	1.3	44.0	23.1
Mat South	44.2	94.2	9.9	19.5	**18.9**	2.6	34.0	26.7
Midlands	37.8	92.7	1.0	18.5	9.6	1.8	40.4	26.3
Masvingo	47.9	90.8	6.7	16.9	12.3	2.5	37.4	26.4
National	43.3	91.8	5.6	15.2	12.1	4.0	41.5	26.8

- Most of the children 6-23 months in Mashonaland East consumed grains, roots and tubers (91.2%, followed by breastmilk (44.4%).

Infant and Young Child Feeding Diet Quality Indicators by Year
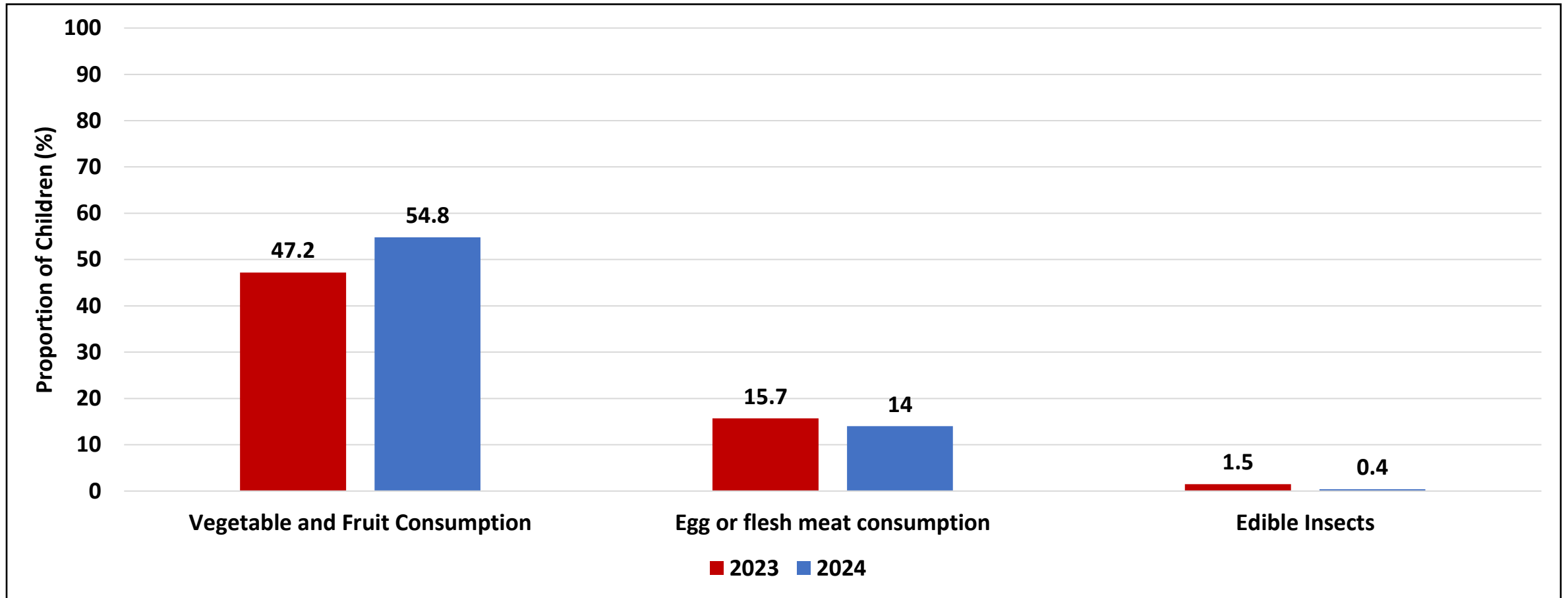
- Vegetable, fruit, egg and flesh meat consumption provides the much-needed nutrients required for optimum growth and development during the window of opportunity (first 1 000 days).

- About 54.8% of the children 6 to 23 months consumed vegetables and fruits 24 hours preceding the assessment.

- Edible insects were not commonly consumed by children.

Non-Vegetable or Fruit Consumption 6–23 Months (ZVF)
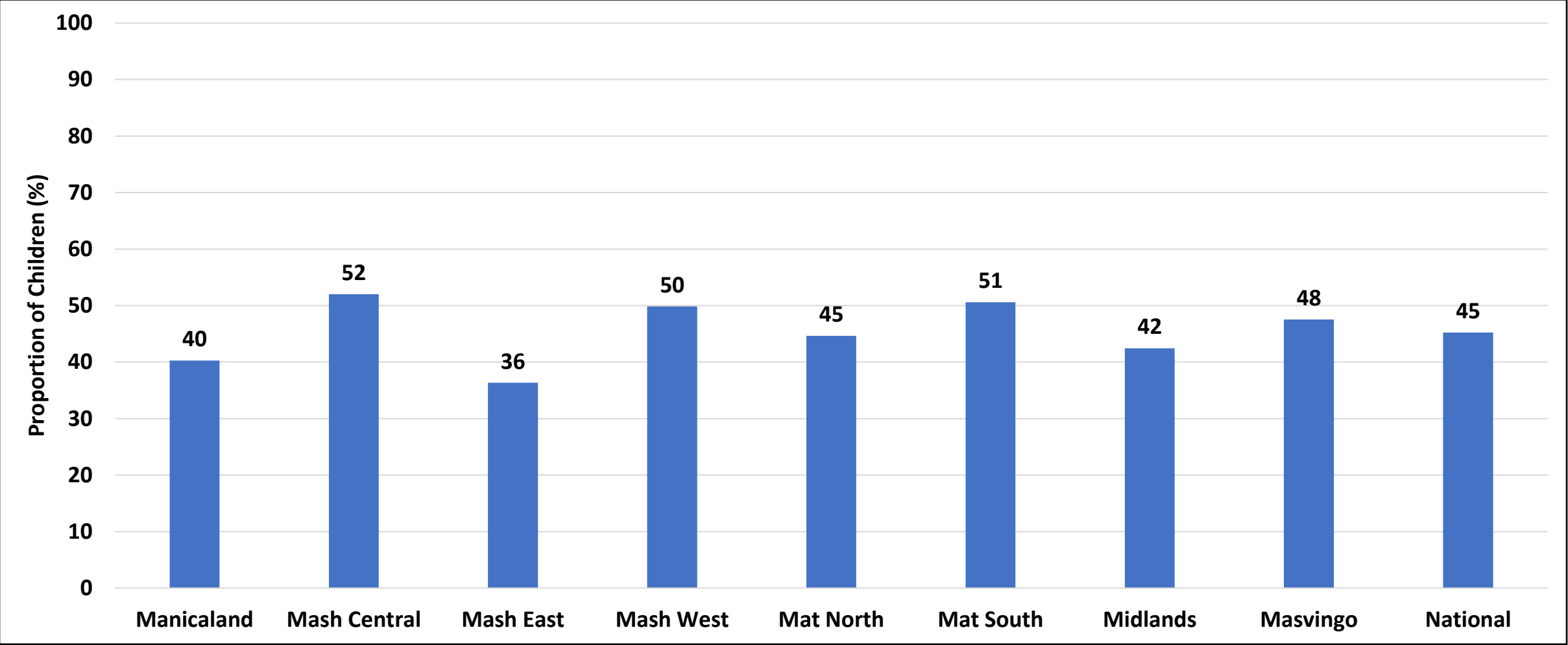
- An estimated 36% of children 6-23 months were neither consuming vegetables nor fruits in the province.

Egg and/Flesh Meat Consumption 6–23 Months (EFF)
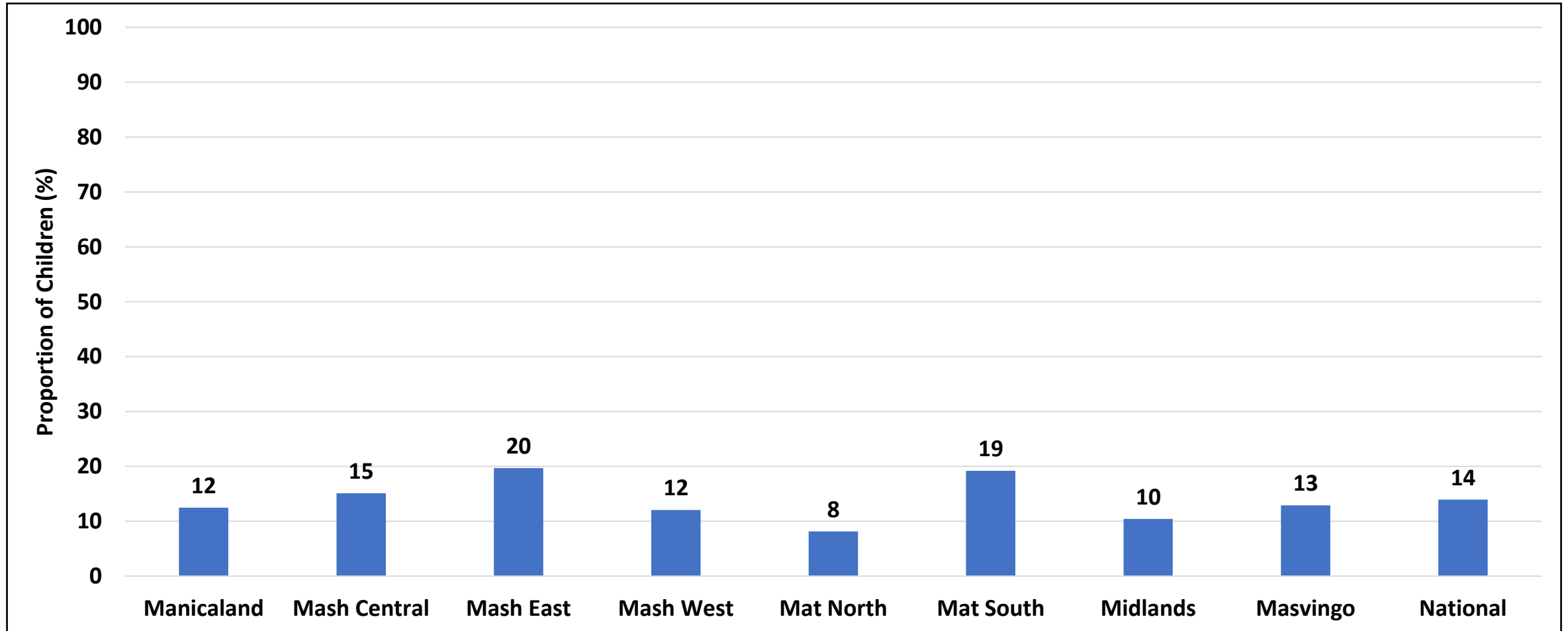
- In the province, 20% of children 6-23 months were consuming egg and/ flesh meat.

Unhealthy Food Consumption 6–23 Month (UFC)
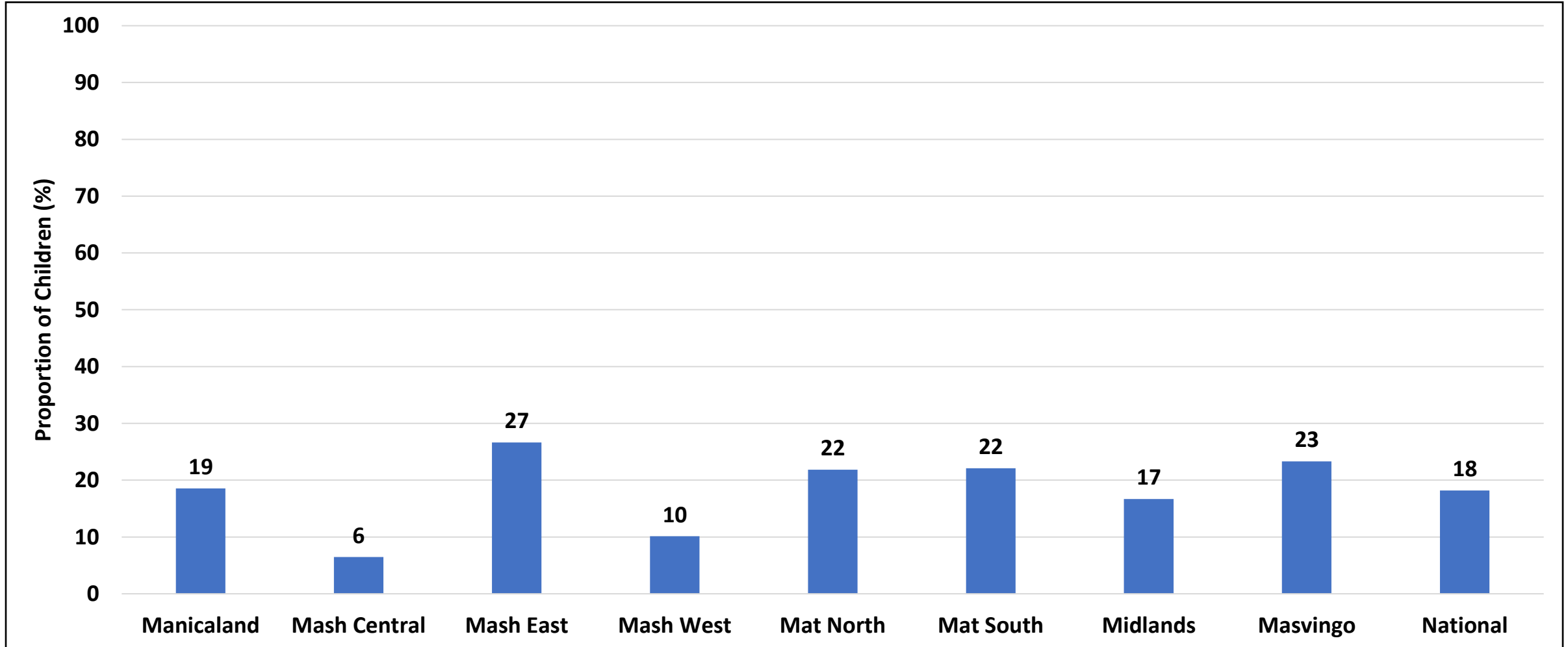
- About 27% of children 6-23 months were consuming unhealthy foods above the national average (18%).

Child Health

Vitamin A Supplementation for Children 6-59 Months

The Zimbabwe VAS Schedule

- The World Health Organization recommends Vitamin A Supplementation (VAS) once every six months for children in the age group of 6 59 months.

- VAS is proven to reduce all cause mortality, incidence of diarrhea and measles in children.

Age Group	Vitamin A Dosage	Timing for Administration
Below 6 months	**Do not give**	N/A
6-11 months	100 000 IU	Once at age 6 months
12-59 months	200 000 IU	Once every 12 months from age 6 months, until child reaches 5 years

Vitamin A Supplementation for Children 6-59 Months
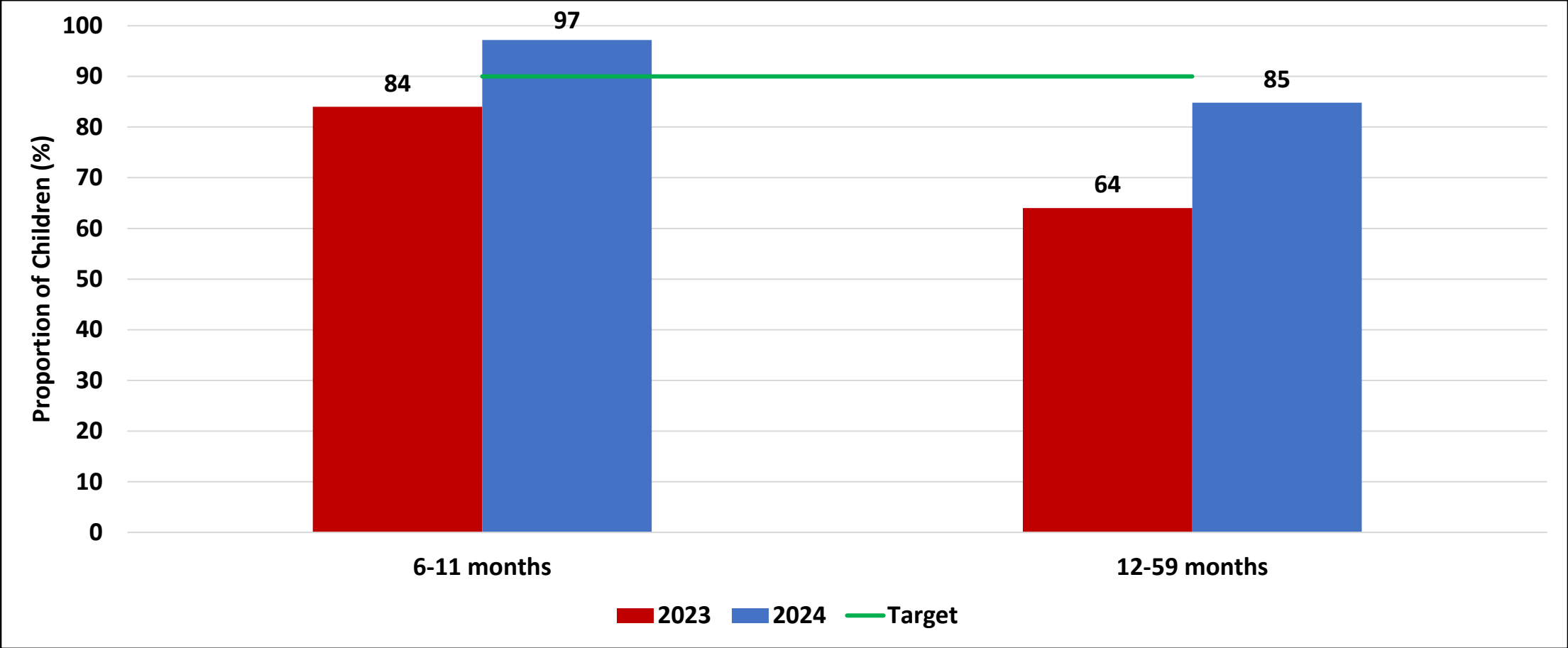
- Overall, Vitamin A supplementation for children increased for the two age categories. However, the 12-59 months category remains a cause for concern since it was below the national target of 90% coverage.

Vitamin A Supplementation for Children 12-59 Months
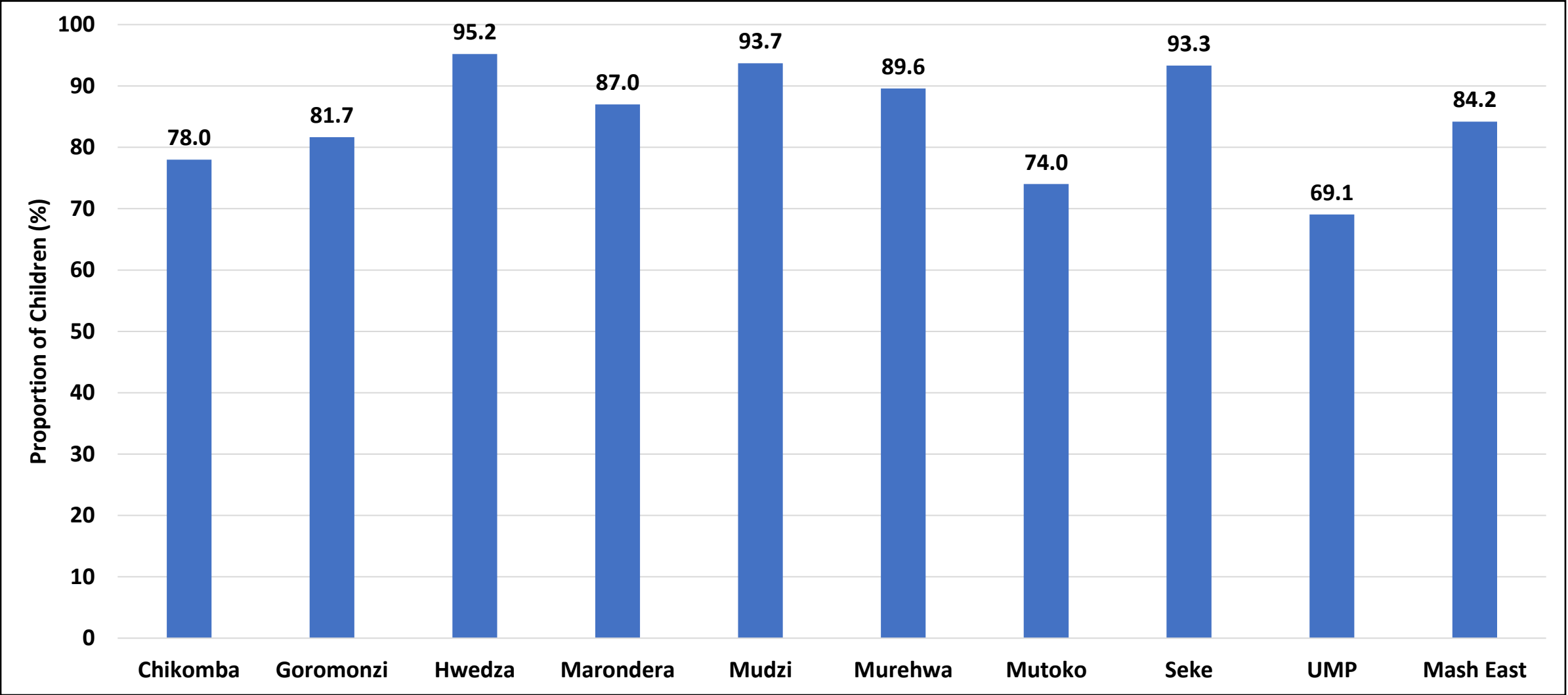
- UMP (69.1%) and Mutoko (74%) reported the least coverage for vitamin A supplementation for children 12-59 months.

Child Illness (6-59 Months)
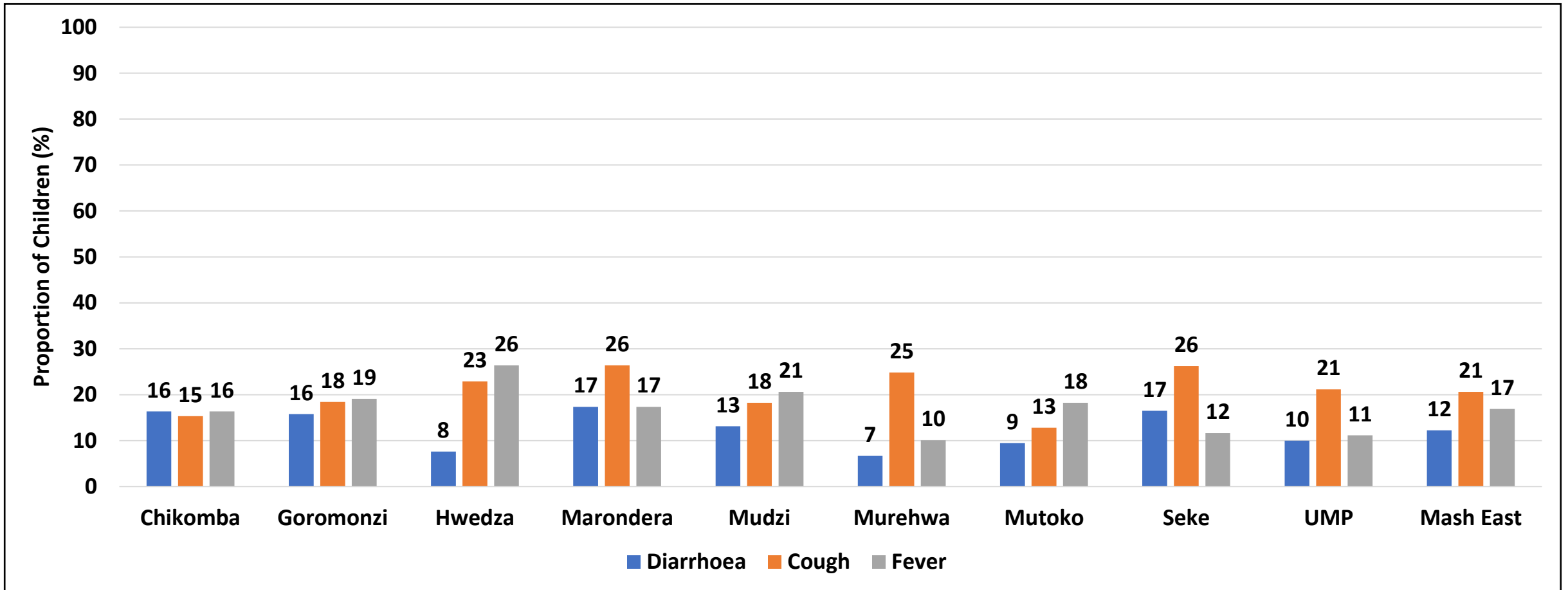
- Cough was the most reported illness for children across all the districts, with Marondera (26%) and Seke (26%) recording the highest.

- Hwedza (26%) reported the highest proportions of children who experienced fever in the two weeks preceding the survey.

Child Food Poverty

- **Children living in food poverty** is defined as the proportion of children under five years of age consuming foods and beverages from four or fewer of the eight defined food groups.

- **Severe child food poverty** refers to the proportion of children under 5 consuming foods and beverages from zero, one or two out of eight defined food groups during the previous day.

- **Moderate child food poverty** refers to the proportion of children under five 5 consuming foods and beverages from three or four out of eight defined food groups during the previous day.

Child Food Poverty
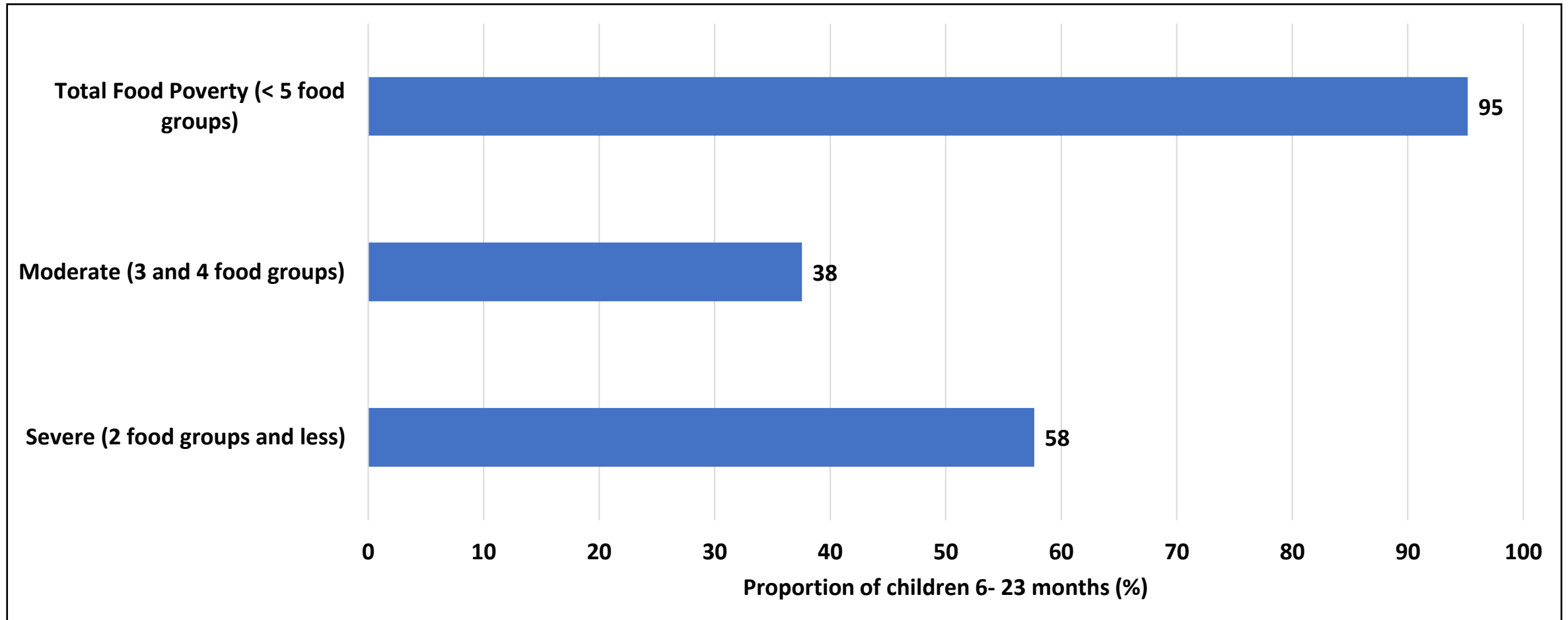
- Of the children 6 to 23 months, 95% consumed a meal which did not meet minimum dietary diversity in the 24 hours preceding the assessment.

- Attention needs to be given to the 58% of children who were in severe food poverty.

Child Food Poverty
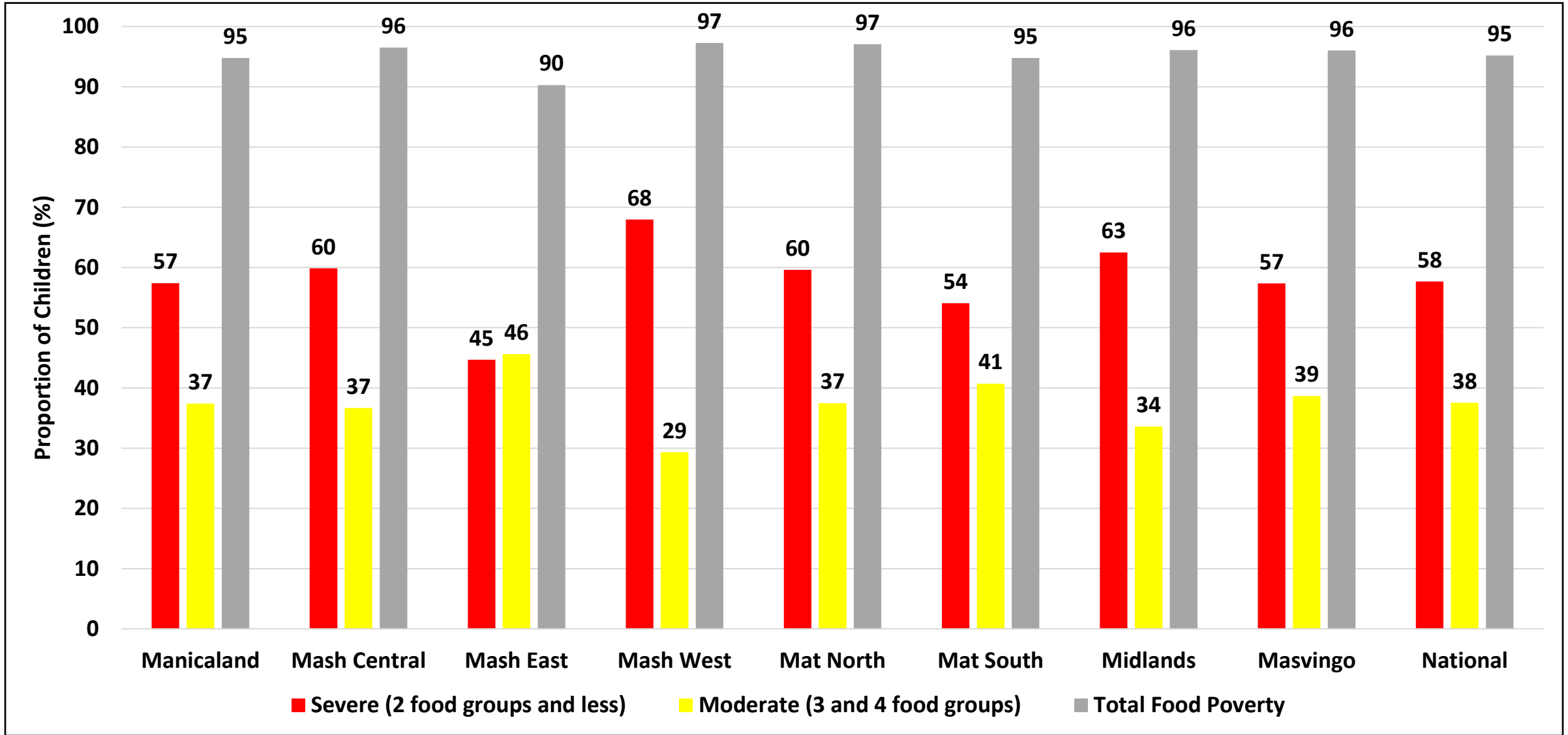
In Mashonaland East, 45% of children aged 6-23 months were experiencing severe food poverty.

150

Adult Nutrition

Nutrition Status of Adolescents (10-19 Years)
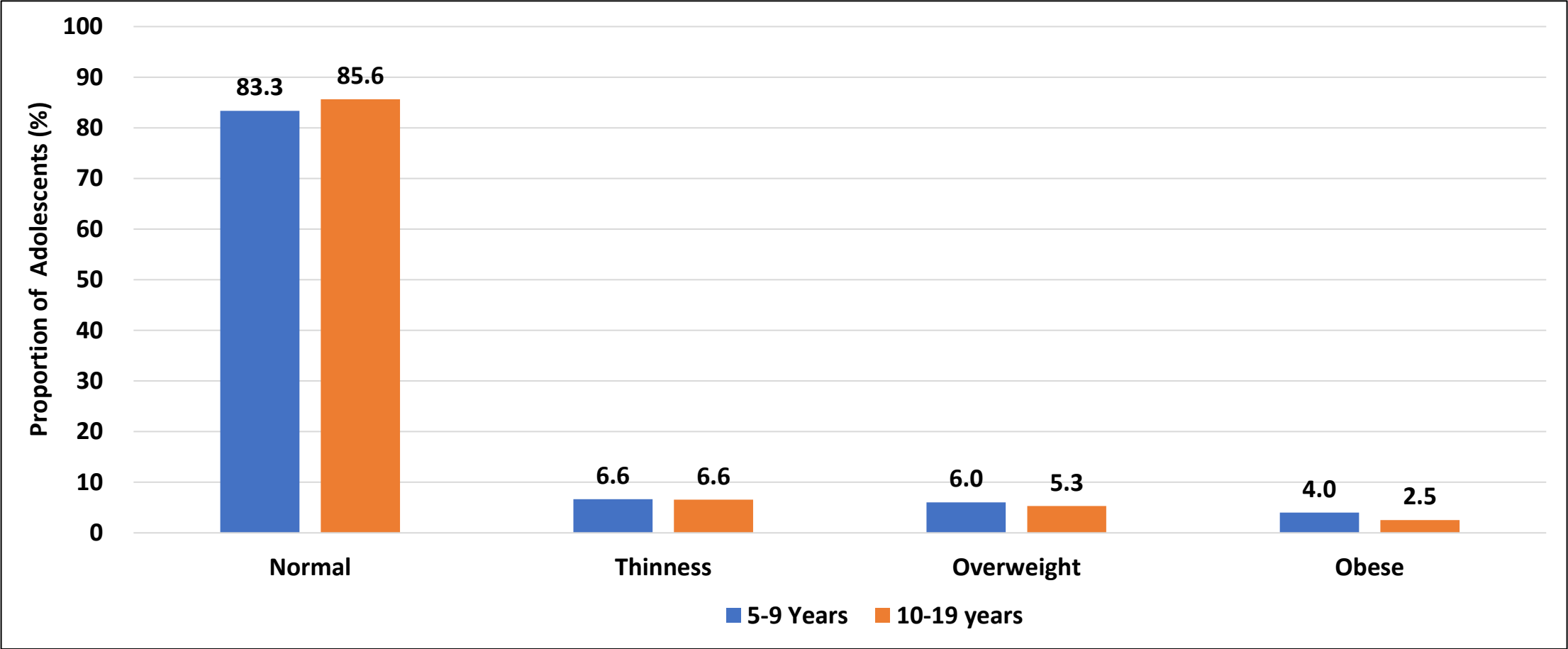
- About 6% of adolescents (5-9 years) were overweight.

Nutrition Status of Adults
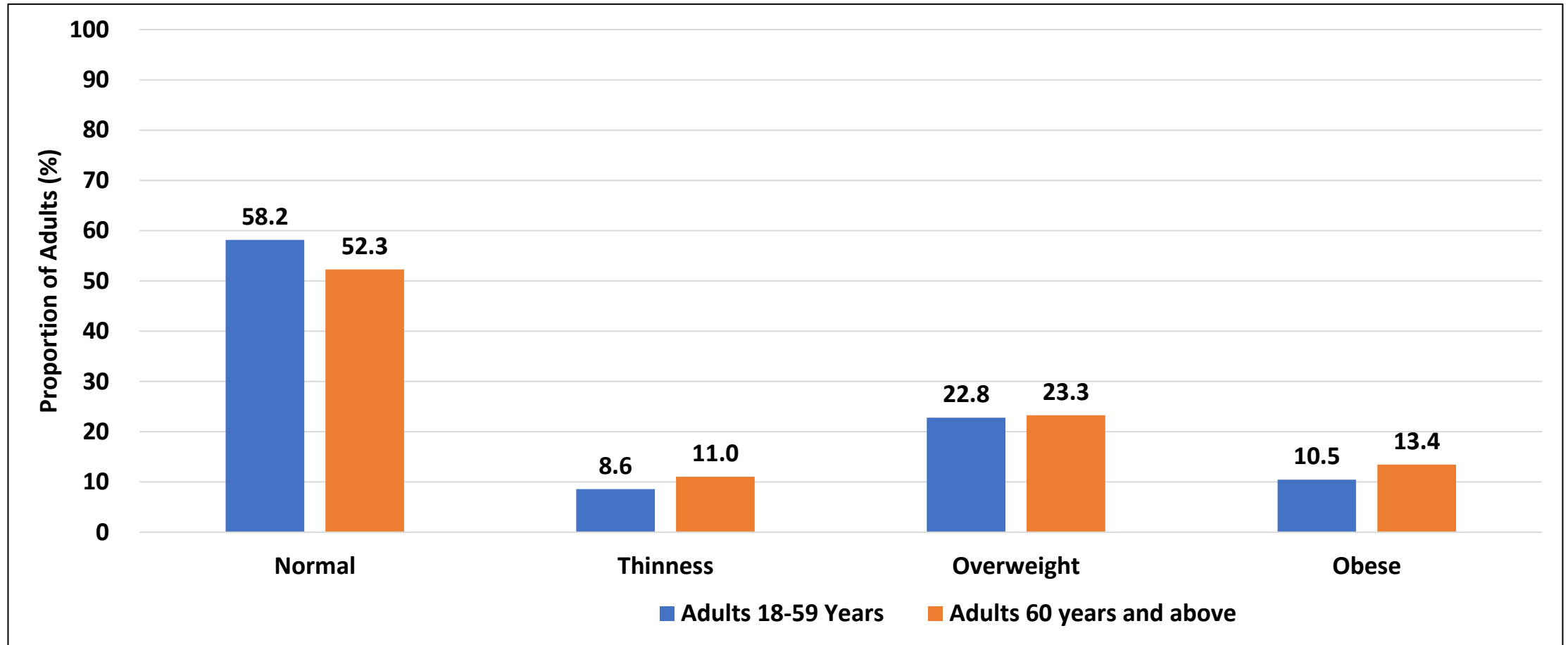
- Adults aged 18-59 (22.8%) and 60 years and above (23.3%) were overweight.

Physical Activity and Non Communicable Diseases

Type of Physical Activity by Children 5-9 years

Province	Walking (%)	Dancing (%)	Swimming (%)	Jogging (%)	Aerobic exercise (%)	Bicycle Riding (%)	Gardening (%)	Sporting Activities (%)	None (%)
Manicaland	55.2	12.6	0.8	17.8	0.5	0.7	23.8	17.1	27.5
Mash Central	63.2	21.2	0.6	23.1	1.3	0.4	17	20.8	22.6
Mash East	79.5	21	0.8	27.7	1	0.7	18.5	13.6	14.3
Mash West	65.5	5.8	0.1	31.7	0.2	1.2	21.2	22.7	18.2
Mat North	78.4	11.3	0.4	19.8	0.1	1.3	28	28.4	11.9
Mat South	74.8	20.1	2.8	34.3	0.1	1.9	29.1	21.2	18.9
Midlands	85	20	0.4	33.6	0.5	0.3	31.8	12.4	9.3
Masvingo	82	14.7	0.9	32.2	2.3	3.5	32.1	24.6	8.1
National	73.3	15.9	0.8	27.8	0.7	1.2	25.1	19.9	16.1

- Establishing healthy habits in childhood is crucial for long-term well-being. The main physical activity engaged by children aged 5-9 years in Mashonaland East was walking (79.5%) , jogging (27.7%) and dancing (21%).

- Almost 14% of children aged 5-9 years in rural households reported not to be engaging in any physical activity.

- Children who do not engage in regular exercise are more prone to obesity, cardiovascular problems, weakened bones and muscles.

Type of Physical Activity by Adolescents 10-19 years

Province	Walking (%)	Dancing (%)	Swimming (%)	Jogging (%)	Aerobic (%)	Bicycle Riding %)	Gardening (%)	Sporting Activities (%)	None (%)
Manicaland	59.4	8.5	1.1	17.5	0.6	1.1	44.7	23.2	17.7
Mash Central	65.6	18.7	0.8	21.6	0.5	2.1	35.1	27.7	13.2
Mash East	78.9	19	0.8	24.9	0.8	2.7	34.4	21.9	11.6
Mash West	67	5.8	0.4	27.4	0.4	2.9	37.2	29.7	14.9
Mat North	78.1	12.3	0.7	22.5	0.2	4.8	42.9	28.8	8.1
Mat South	74.6	16.3	2.1	28.9	0.5	7.5	47.3	25.9	14.5
Midlands	85.7	18.7	0.5	31.8	0.3	1.5	41.1	19.2	8.3
Masvingo	81.4	9.9	1.2	30.5	1.6	5.8	56.3	35.8	3.1
National	74.3	13.9	0.9	25.8	0.6	3.5	42.2	27.7	11.3

- Investing in adolescent health and physical wellbeing has been shown to yield a health benefit into adulthood.

- Adolescents aged 10-19 years in Mashonaland East engaged in walking (78.9%), gardening (34.4%) and jogging (24.9%).

- About 11.6% of adolescents did not participate in any physical activity.

- The adolescence period is generally considered a healthy period but many Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) that manifest later in life are a result of modifiable risk behaviors established during this time, such as smoking, unhealthy diet patterns.

Type of Physical Activity by Adults 18-59 Years

Province	Walking (%)	Dancing (%)	Swimming (%)	Jogging (%)	Aerobic Exercise (%)	Bicycle Riding (%)	Gardening (%)	Sporting Activities (%)	None (%)
Manicaland	59.4	8.5	1.1	17.5	0.6	1.1	44.7	34.6	17.7
Mash Central	65.6	18.7	0.8	21.6	0.5	2.1	35.1	38.1	13.2
Mash East	78.9	19	0.8	24.9	0.8	2.7	34.4	31.4	11.6
Mash West	67	5.8	0.4	27.4	0.4	2.9	37.2	41.8	14.9
Mat North	78.1	12.3	0.7	22.5	0.2	4.8	42.9	50.1	8.1
Mat South	74.6	16.3	2.1	28.9	0.5	7.5	47.3	39	14.5
Midlands	85.7	18.7	0.5	31.8	0.3	1.5	41.1	23.7	8.3
Masvingo	81.4	9.9	1.2	30.5	1.6	5.8	56.3	51.3	3.1
National	74.3	13.9	0.9	25.8	0.6	3.5	42.2	39.7	11.3

- The main physical activity engaged by adults aged 18-59 years in Mashonaland East was walking 78.9 %, gardening 34.4% and sporting activities (31.4%).

Type of Physical Activity by Elderly 60 Years and Above

Province	Walking (%)	Dancing (%)	Swimming (%)	Jogging Running (%)	Aerobic Exercise (%)	Bicycle Riding (%)	Gardening (%)	Sporting Activities (%)	None (%)
Manicaland	49.6	1.8	0.1	2.1	0.4	0.2	45	10.2	30.8
Mash Central	60.6	7.3	0	1.9	0	0.9	37	9.4	25.1
Mash East	72.1	5.7	0	3.4	0.7	1.5	41.9	7	18.9
Mash West	64.5	0.9	0	0.8	0	2.2	28.7	8.9	25.3
Mat North	72.6	3.9	0.1	2.7	0	3.1	48	16.7	19.8
Mat South	72.8	5.5	1	4.9	0.1	3.8	47.1	14.3	19.8
Midlands	79	8.9	0	3.8	0.1	0.5	38.5	0.6	14.3
Masvingo	75.8	4.1	0	2.5	0.4	2.3	57.2	13.4	13.2
National	69.6	5	0.2	2.9	0.2	1.8	43.3	9.8	20.2

- The main physical activity engaged by household members aged 60 years and above was walking (72.1%) and gardening (41.9%)

- Eighteen percent of household members above 60 years reported that they were not engaging in any physical activity.

Type of Physical Activity by WBCA 15-49 Years

Province	Walking (%)	Dancing (%)	Swimming (%)	Jogging (%)	Aerobic exercises (%)	Bicycle (%)	Gardening (%)	Sporting activities (%)	None (%)
Manicaland	59.4	4.7	0.4	7.1	0.2	0.5	55.5	20	16.9
Mash Central	68.6	13.8	0.2	7.8	0.4	0.6	51.8	13	12.4
Mash East	74.7	13	0.2	9.5	0.5	0.5	47.7	11.7	13.2
Mash West	67.3	2.4	0.4	10.1	0	1.1	48.6	16.3	13
Mat North	76.5	11.8	0.3	6.5	0.1	0.7	51.9	20	14.2
Mat South	74.1	12.9	1.8	13.6	0.4	3.9	63.7	17.8	14
Midlands	84.2	15.6	0.3	16.7	0.4	0.5	50.8	1.7	8.9
Masvingo	83.4	9	0.5	13.3	1	3	71.9	20.3	3.2
National	73.6	10.5	0.5	10.6	0.4	1.3	55	14.6	11.9

- The main physical activity engaged by Women of Child Bearing age in Mashonaland East was walking (74.7%).

Chronic Conditions by Age

Condition	5-9 years (%)	10-19 years (%)	15-49 WCBA (%)	18-59 years (%)	60 years and above (%)
Arthritis, chronic body pain	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.4	4.8
Asthma	0.1	0.3	0.7	0.8	1.9
Cancer	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.7
Cerebral palsy	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.0
Diabetes, high blood sugar	0.0	0.1	0.9	1.1	8.4
Epilepsy, seizures, fits	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.3	0.3
Heart disease	0.0	0.1	0.3	0.3	1.6
HIV infection AIDS	0.1	0.5	3.8	4.3	4.2
Hypertension, High blood pressure	0.0	0.0	1.6	1.9	16.4
Kidney diseases	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.2
Liver diseases	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1
Mental illness	0.1	0.1	0.3	0.6	0.6
Not willing to disclose	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.4
Stroke	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.1	1.2
Tuberculosis	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.2	0.4
Ulcer, chronic stomach pain	0.0	0.1	0.3	0.3	0.9

- Hypertension/ High blood pressure (16.4%) was reported as a medically confirmed chronic condition amongst the 60 years and above age group.

Shocks and Hazards

Households Experiencing Shocks
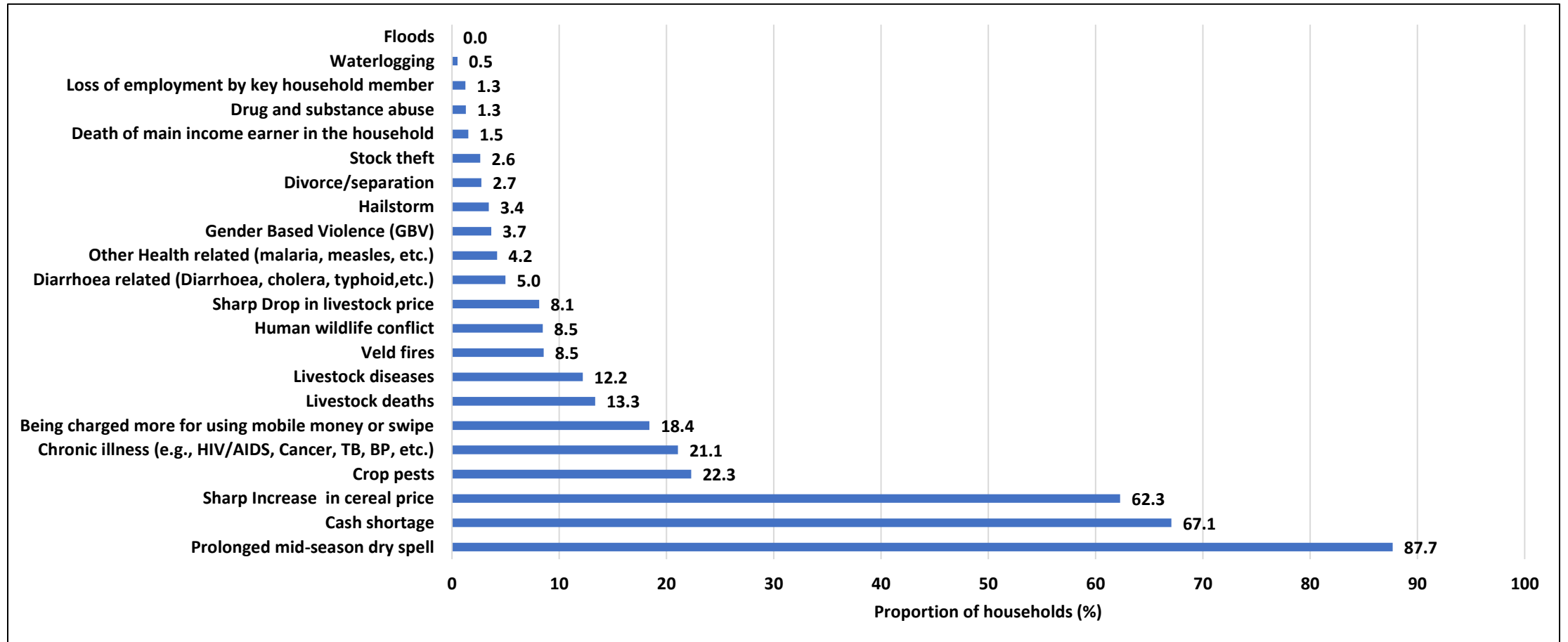
- Prolonged mid-season dry spell (87.7%), cash shortage (67.1%) and sharp increase in cereal prices (62.3%) were the most prevalent shocks experienced by households.

162

Number of Shocks Experienced by Households
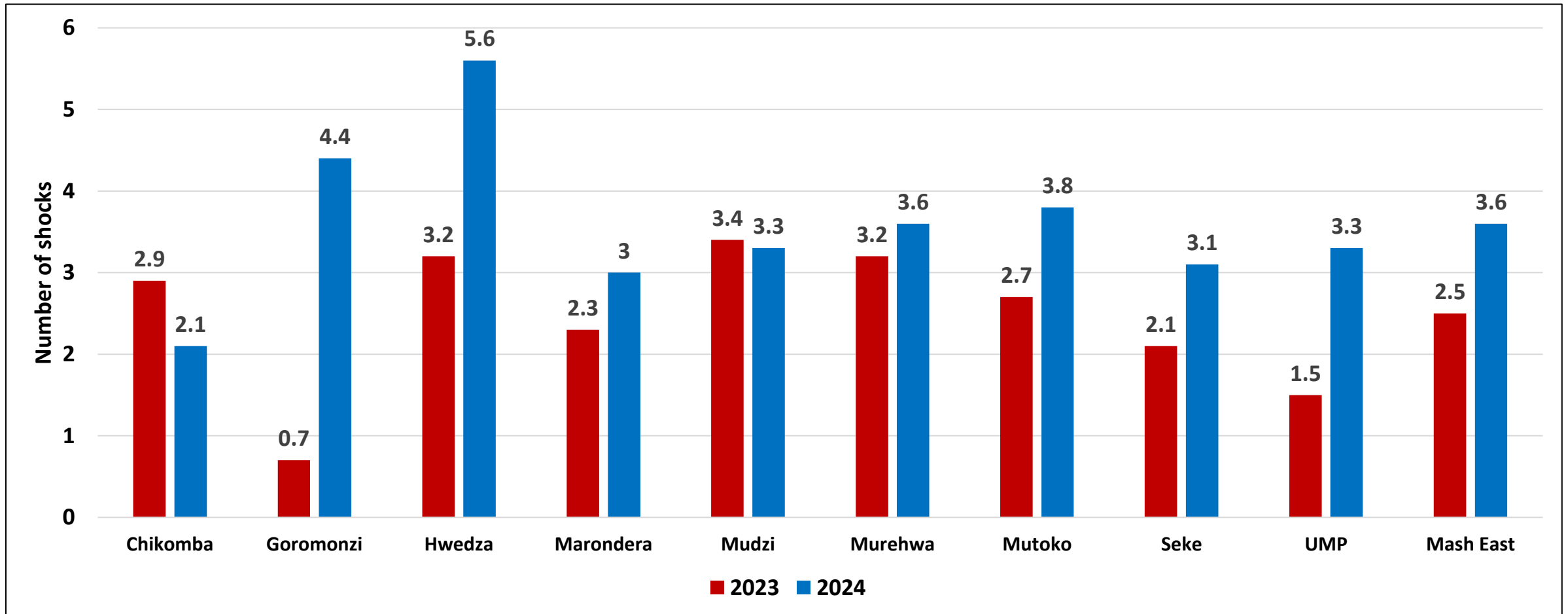
- The average number of shocks experienced by households was 3.6.

- The number of shocks experienced by households increased in 2024 compared to the previous year.

Average Shock Exposure Index
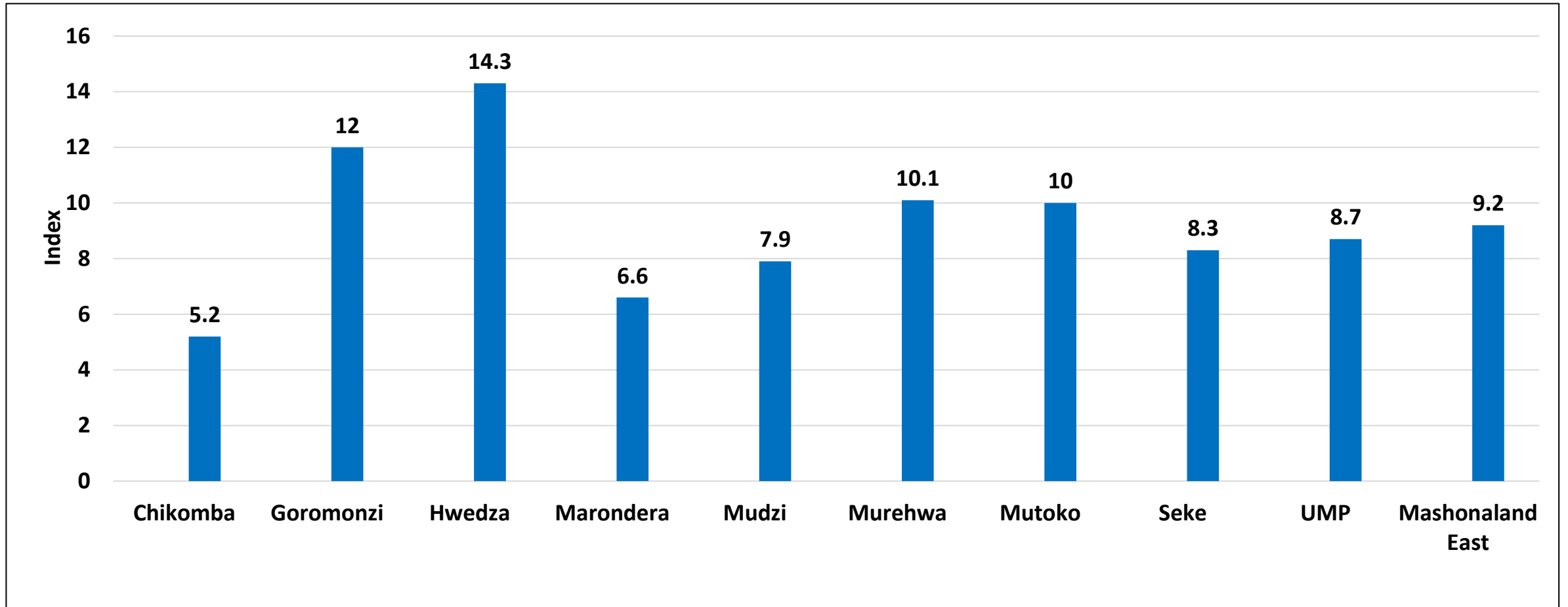
- The average shock exposure index for the province was 9.2.

Comparison Between Shock Exposure and Ability to Cope Indices
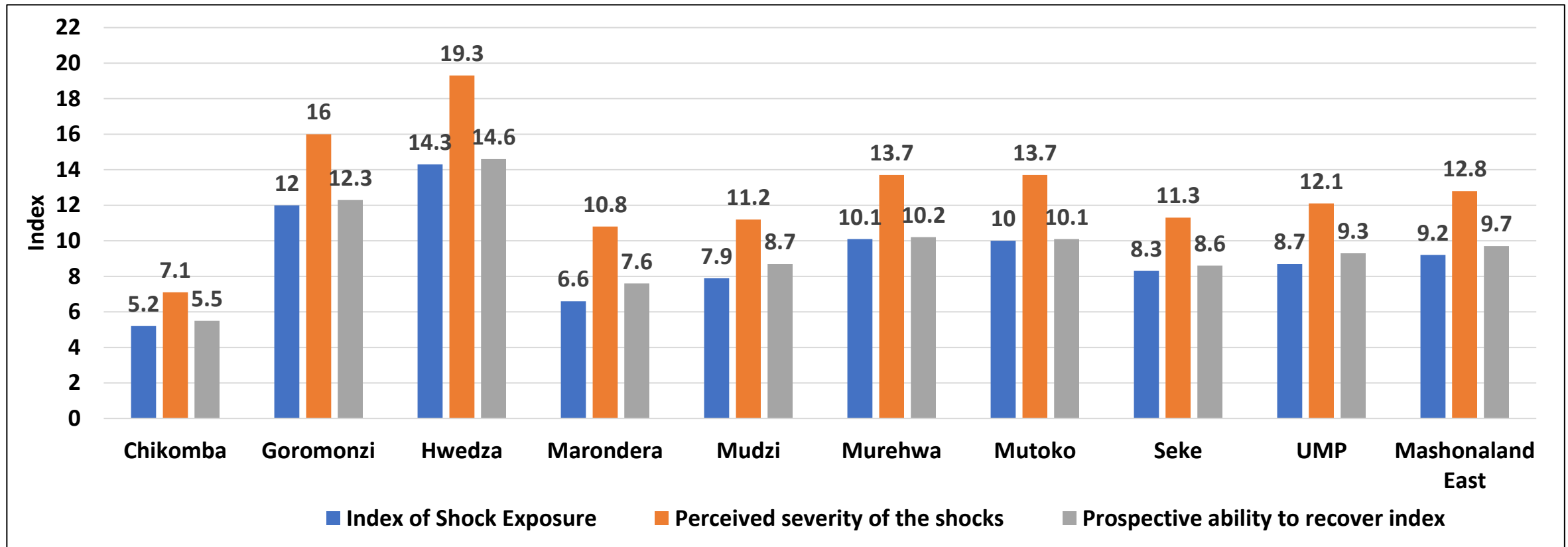
- The shock severity index was 12.8. Average Shock Recovery Index was 9.7.

- Shock exposure index is slightly lower than the shock recovery index meaning households were just able to cope on their own.

Households which Reported Prolonged Mid-Season Dry Spell as a Shock
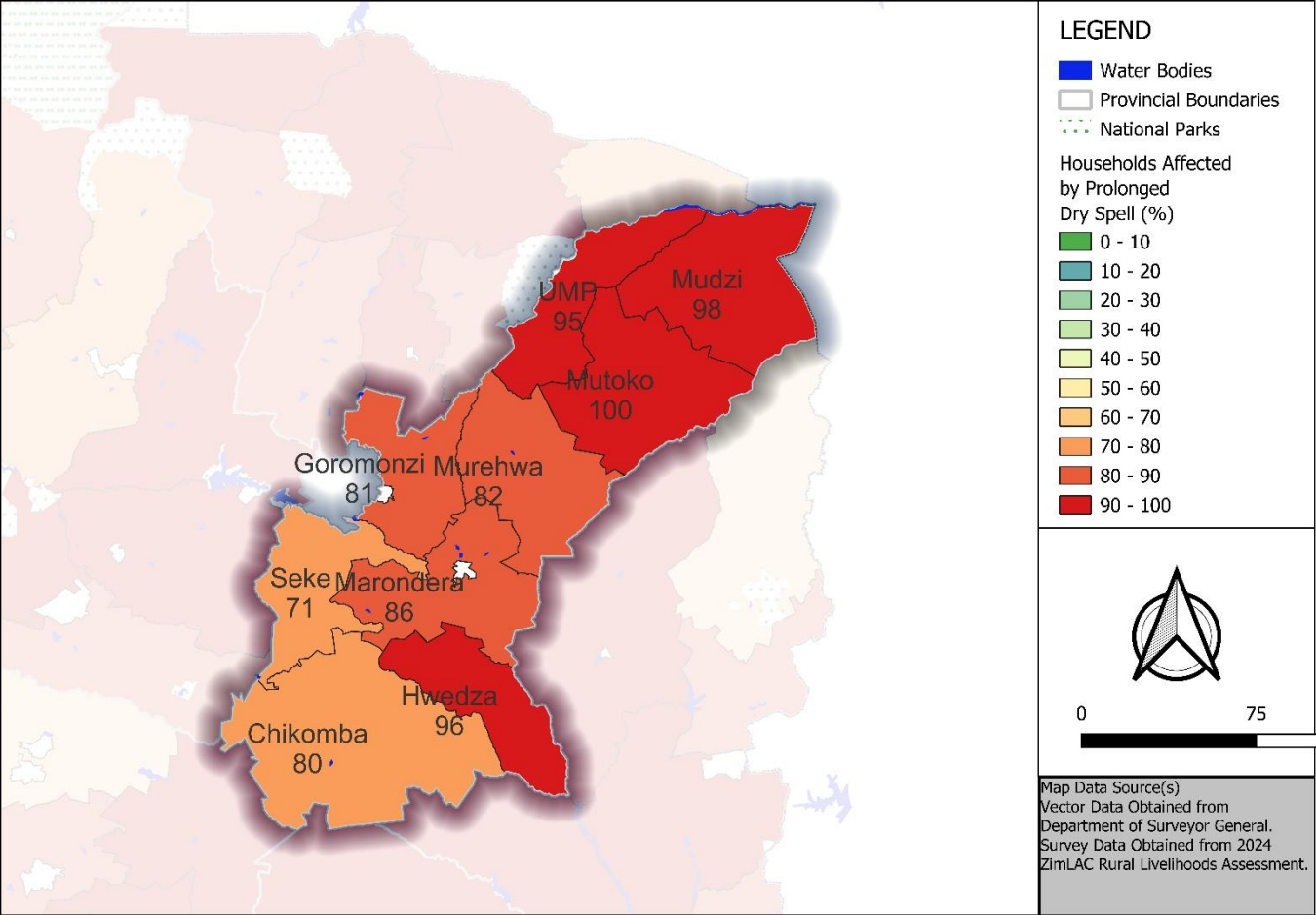
- Most districts reported prolonged mid-season dry spell as a shock. Mutoko (100%), Mudzi (98%), Hwedza (96%) and UMP (95%) had the greatest proportion of households that reported prolonged mid-season dry spell as a shock.

Households which Reported Cash Shortage as a Shock
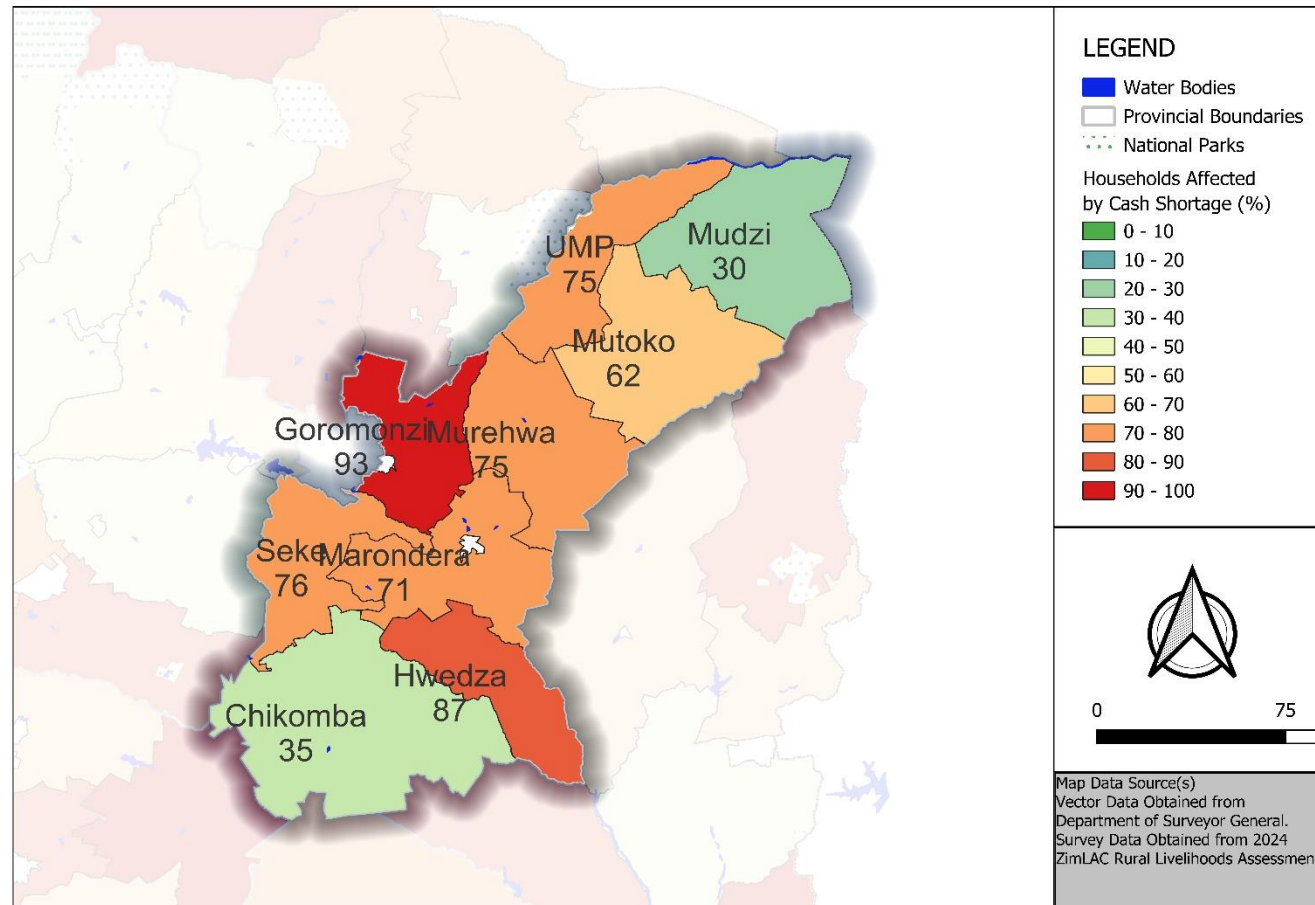
- Goromonzi (93%), Hwedza (87%) and Seke (76%) had the highest proportion of households which reported cash shortage as a shock.

Households that Reported Sharp Increase in Cereal Prices as a Shock
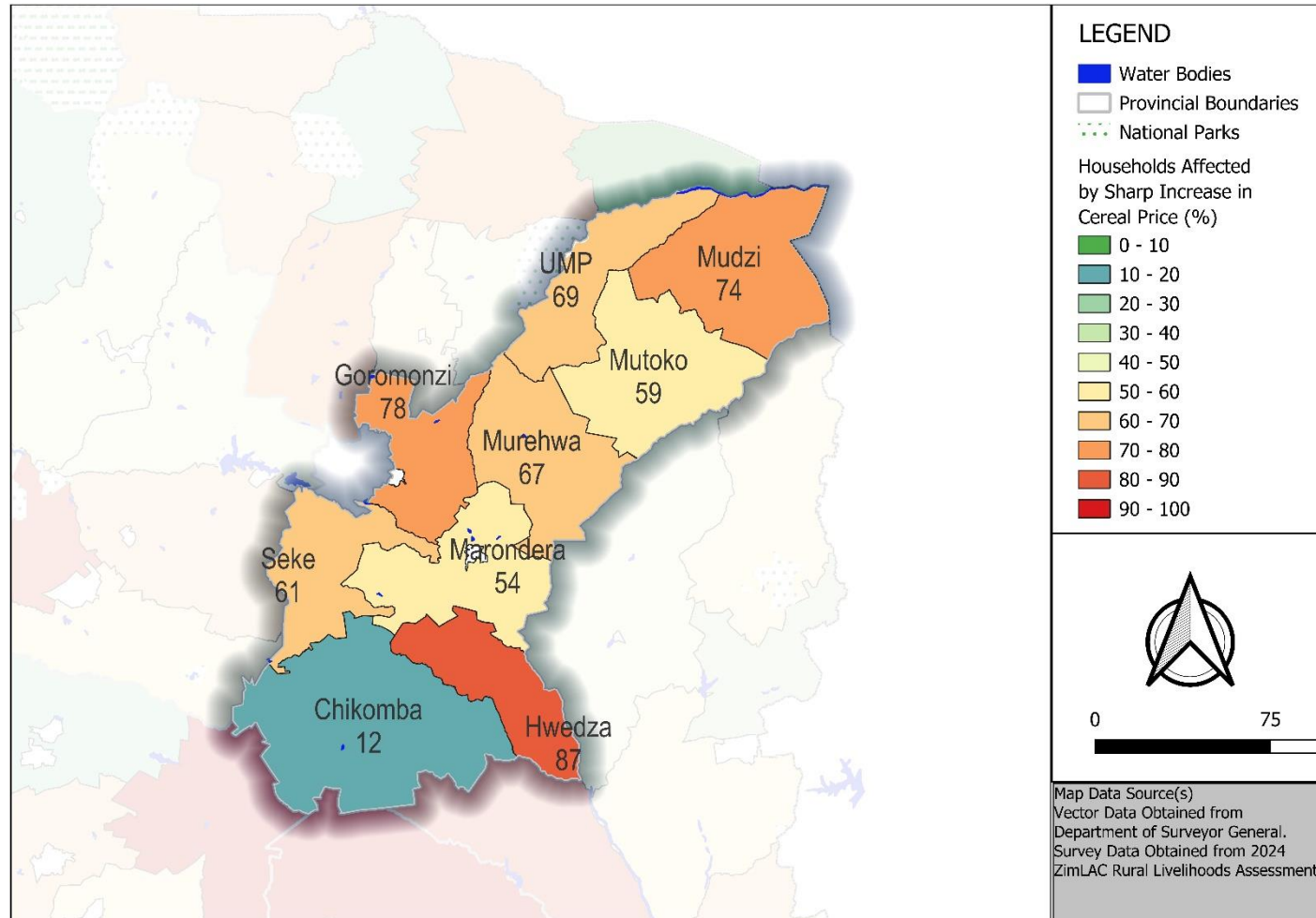
Hwedza (87%), Goromonzi (78%) and Mudzi (74%) had the highest proportion of households which reported cereal prices increase as a shock.

Households which Reported Livestock Deaths as a Shock
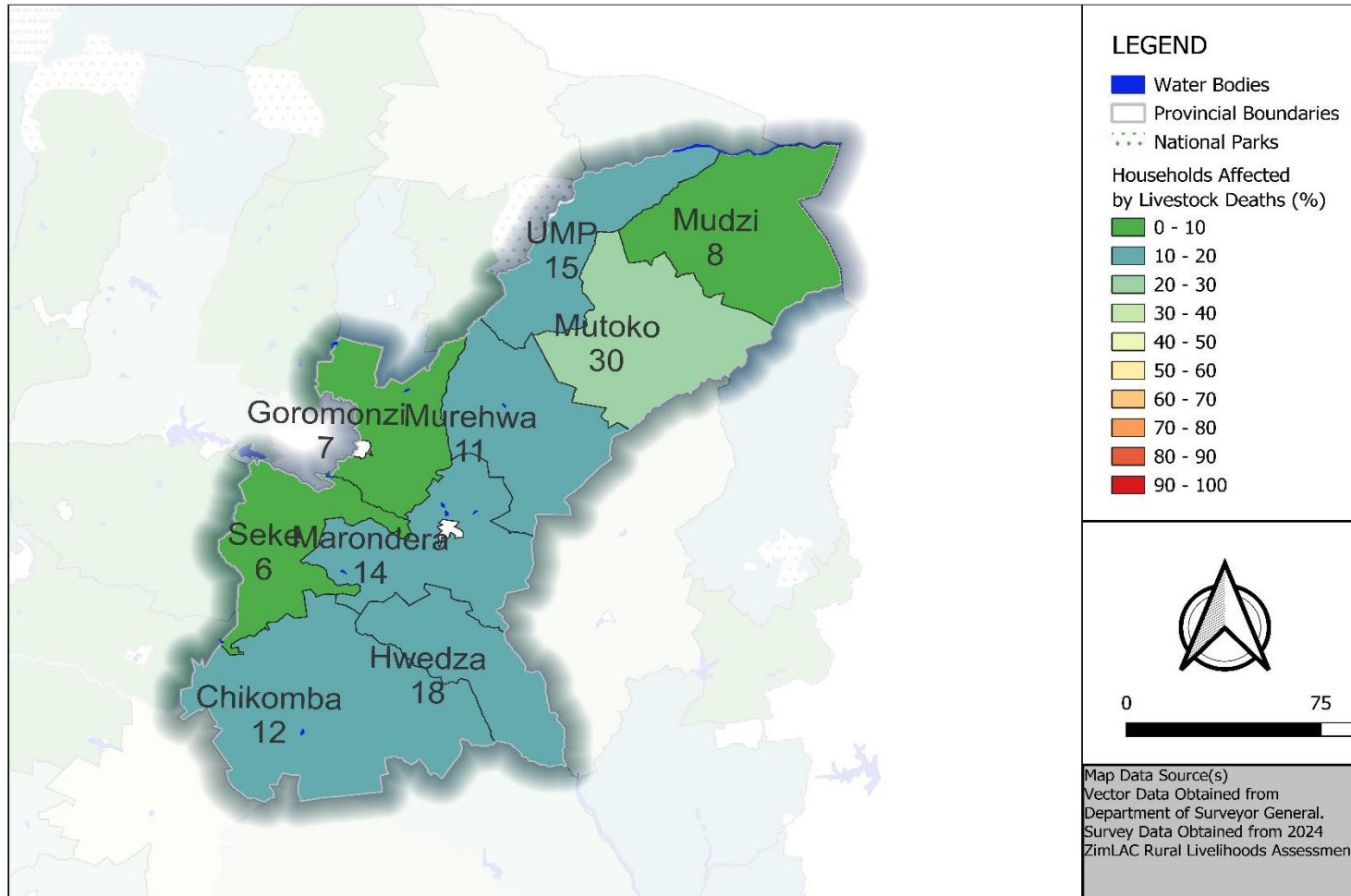
- The highest proportion of households which reported livestock deaths as a shock were in Mutoko (30%) and Hwedza (18%).

Households which Reported Diarrhoea Related Illnesses as a Shock
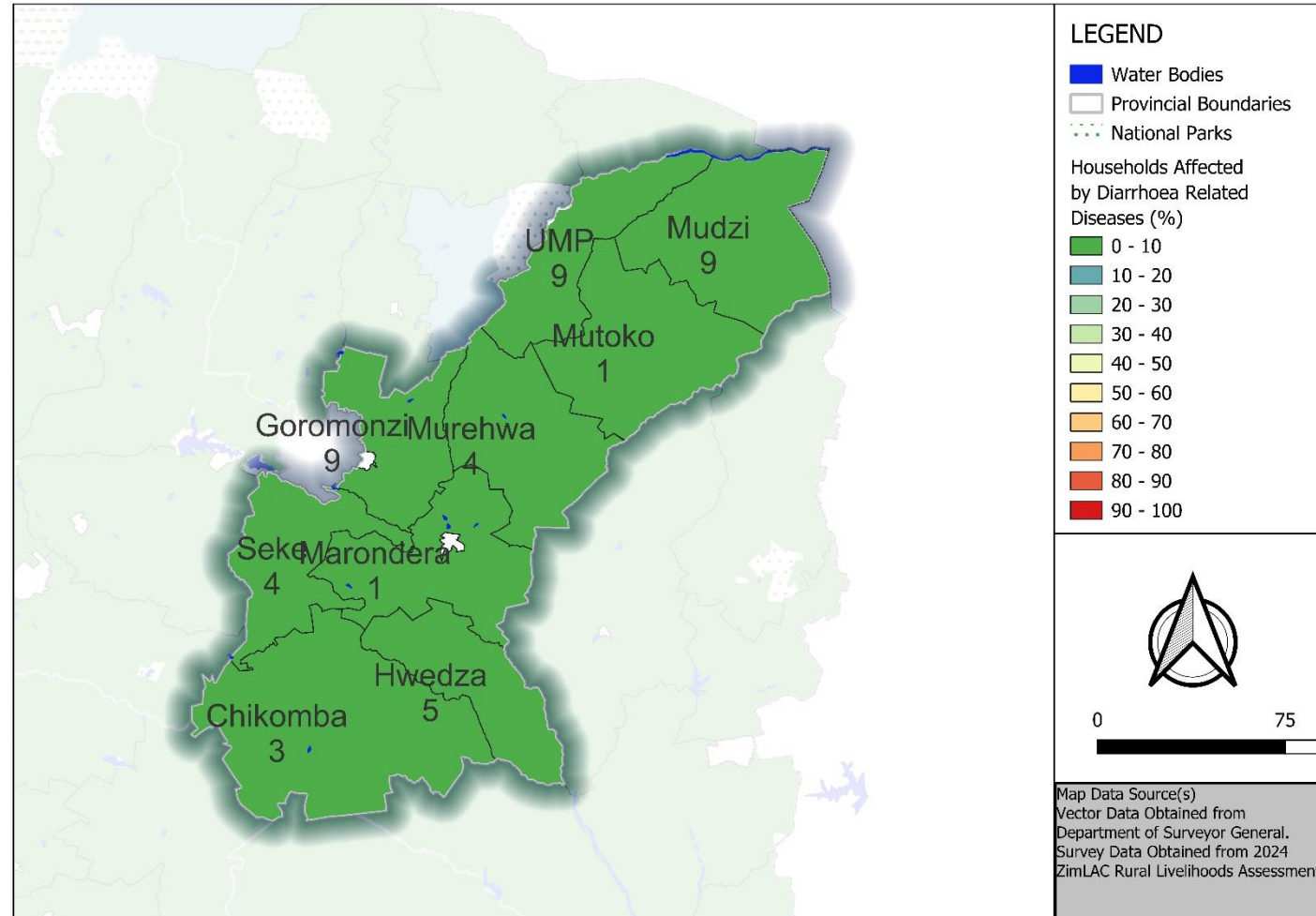
- The highest proportion of households which reported diarrheal related illnesses as a shock were in Goromonzi (9%), UMP (9%) and Mudzi (9%).

Food Security

Food Security Analytical Framework

- Food security exists when all people at all times, have **physical, social and economic** access to food which is safe and consumed in sufficient quantity and quality to meet their dietary needs and food preferences and it is supported by an environment of adequate sanitation, health services and care allowing for a healthy and active life (Food and Nutrition Security Policy, 2012).

- The four dimensions of food security as give in Figure 3 are:

  - **Availability** of food

  - **Access to food**

  - The safe and healthy **utilisation** of food

  - The **stability** of food availability, access and utilisation

Food Security Analytical Framework

- Household cereal security was determined by measuring a household's potential access to enough cereal to give each member 2100 kilocalories per day in the consumption period 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025.

- Each of the surveyed households' potential to acquire minimum expenditure food basket was computed by estimating the household's likely disposable income (both cash and non cash) in the 2024/25 consumption year from the following possible income sources;

  - Cereal stocks from the previous season;

  - Own food crop production from the 2023/24 agricultural season;

  - Potential income from own cash crop production;

  - Potential income from livestock

  - Potential income from casual labour and remittances; and

  - Income from other sources such as gifts, pensions, gardening, formal and informal employment.

Food Security Analytical Framework

- The total energy that could be acquired by the household from the cheapest energy source using its potential disposable income was then computed and compared to the household's minimum energy requirement.

- When the potential energy that a household could acquire was greater than its minimum energy requirements, the household was deemed to be food secure. When the converse was true, the household was defined as food insecure.

- The severity of household food insecurity was computed by the margin with which its potential energy access was below its minimum energy requirements.

Food Security Status at Peak Hunger

- During the peak hunger period (January to March 2025) it was estimated that approximately **57%** of the rural households will be cereal insecure.

- The 57% of rural households translated into approximately **5,894,368** individuals requiring a total of **592,733 MT** of cereal (Maize Grain) from the National Strategic Grain Reserves.

Cereal Insecurity by Pillars

District	Food insecurity from cereals stocks (%)	Food insecurity from cereals stocks plus food crops (%)	Food insecurity from cereals stocks plus food crops plus cash crops (%)	Food insecurity from cereals stocks plus food crops plus cash crops plus remittances (%)	Food insecurity from cereals stocks plus food crops plus cash crops plus livestock plus casual labour and remittances (%)	Food insecurity from cereals stocks plus food crops plus cash crops plus livestock plus casual labour and remittances plus income (%)
Chikomba	74	69	69	69	63	47
Goromonzi	92	92	92	92	90	64
Hwedza	86	85	80	80	74	53
Marondera	83	83	77	77	73	42
Mudzi	88	88	88	88	85	64
Murehwa	86	84	81	81	77	59
Mutoko	93	92	90	90	86	72
Seke	83	82	82	82	79	40
UMP	93	92	92	92	91	75
Mash East	87	85	83	83	80	58

- Considering all sources of potential income, the cereal insecurity prevalence is projected to be 58% during the peak hunger period in the 2024/25 consumption year.

Cereal Insecurity Trends: 2020-2024
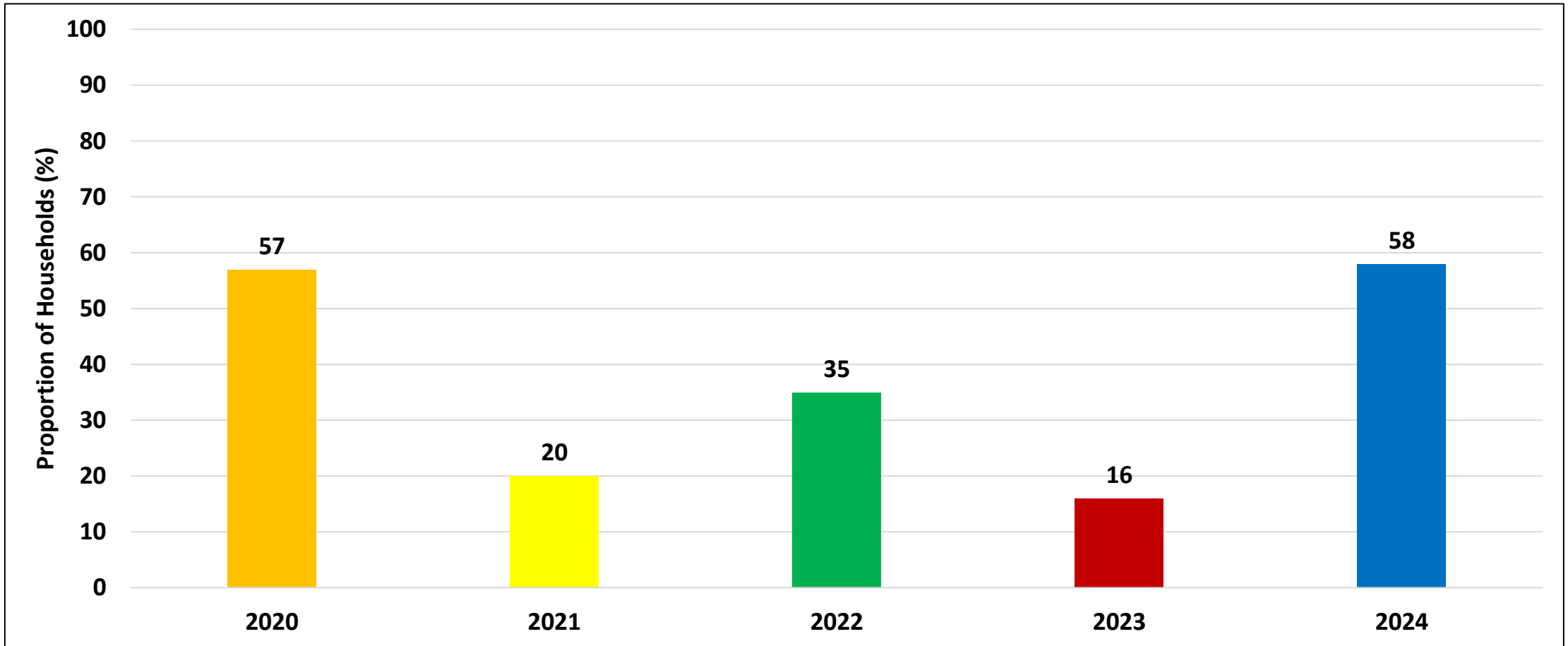
- Generally, the household cereal insecurity has deteriorated across all didtricts due to poor rains.

Cereal Insecurity Progression by Quarter
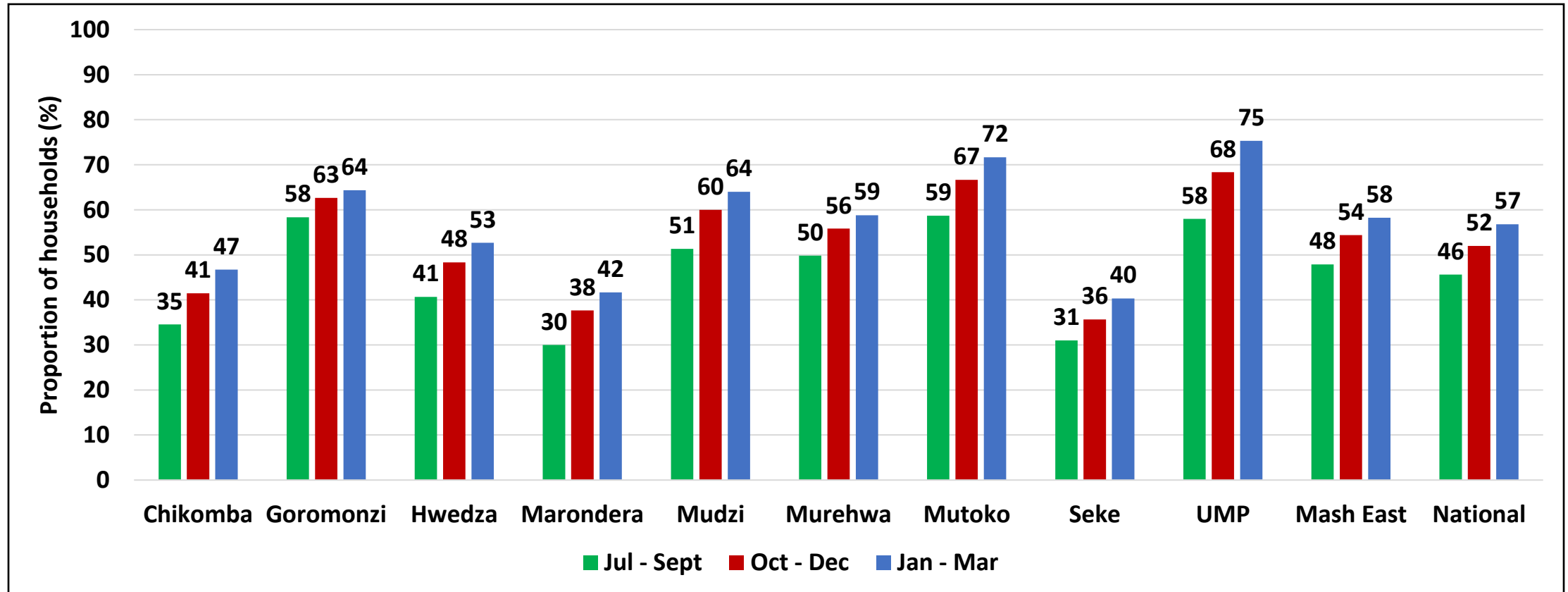
- About 46% of the rural households were projected to be facing food access challenges in the July to September quarter.

- In Mashonaland East 48% will be facing food access challenges and Mutoko (59%) will be having the highest proportion of households facing food access challenges in July to September 2024.

Cereal Insecure Population by Quarter

District	Food Insecure Population		
	Jul - Sept	Oct - Dec	Jan - Mar
Chikomba	42,807	51,369	57,892
Goromonzi	225,283	242,018	248,455
Hwedza	30,447	36,187	39,431
Marondera	40,852	51,292	56,739
Mudzi	81,355	95,090	101,429
Murehwa	102,380	114,665	120,808
Mutoko	94,507	107,394	115,449
Seke	62,148	71,503	80,859
UMP	72,051	84,887	93,583
Mashonaland East	**751,828**	**854,404**	**914,643**

- Goromonzi (248,455) and Murehwa (120,808) were projected to have the highest populations of cereal insecure people during the peak hunger period.

Cereal Requirements (MT) by District by Quarter

District	Cereal Requirements		
	Jul - Sept	Oct - Dec	Jan - Mar
Chikomba	1,584	1,901	2,142
Goromonzi	8,335	8,955	9,193
Hwedza	1,127	1,339	1,459
Marondera	1,512	1,898	2,099
Mudzi	3,010	3,518	3,753
Murehwa	3,788	4,243	4,470
Mutoko	3,497	3,974	4,272
Seke	2,299	2,646	2,992
UMP	2,666	3,141	3,463
Mashonaland East	27,818	31,613	33,842

- Goromonzi was projected to have the highest cereal requirements throughout the three projected periods.

Youth Challenges and Priorities

Youth Challenges

Bar chart titled "Youth Challenges" showing Proportion of Communities (%):

- Shortages of clinics: 2.3
- Lack of interest: 2.3
- Politics: 3.4
- Other: 4.6
- Poor communication infrastructure: 5.7
- Limited access to recreational facilities: 5.7
- Bad roads: 6.9
- Shortages of schools: 8.0
- Lack of school fees: 9.2
- Economic challenges/high cost of living: 16.1
- Limited access to water for projects: 18.4
- School dropouts: 26.4
- Lack of capital: 31.0
- Prolonged long season dry spells: 36.8
- Early marriages: 37.9
- Lack of life survival/entrepreneurial skills: 40.2
- Drug and substance abuse: 64.4
- Lack of income generating projects: 69.0
- Unemployment: 77.0

Proportion of Communities (%)

- In Mashonaland East province, unemployment (77.0%), lack of income generating projects (69.0%) and drug and substance abuse (64.4%) were reported as major challenges affecting youths.

Youth Priorities
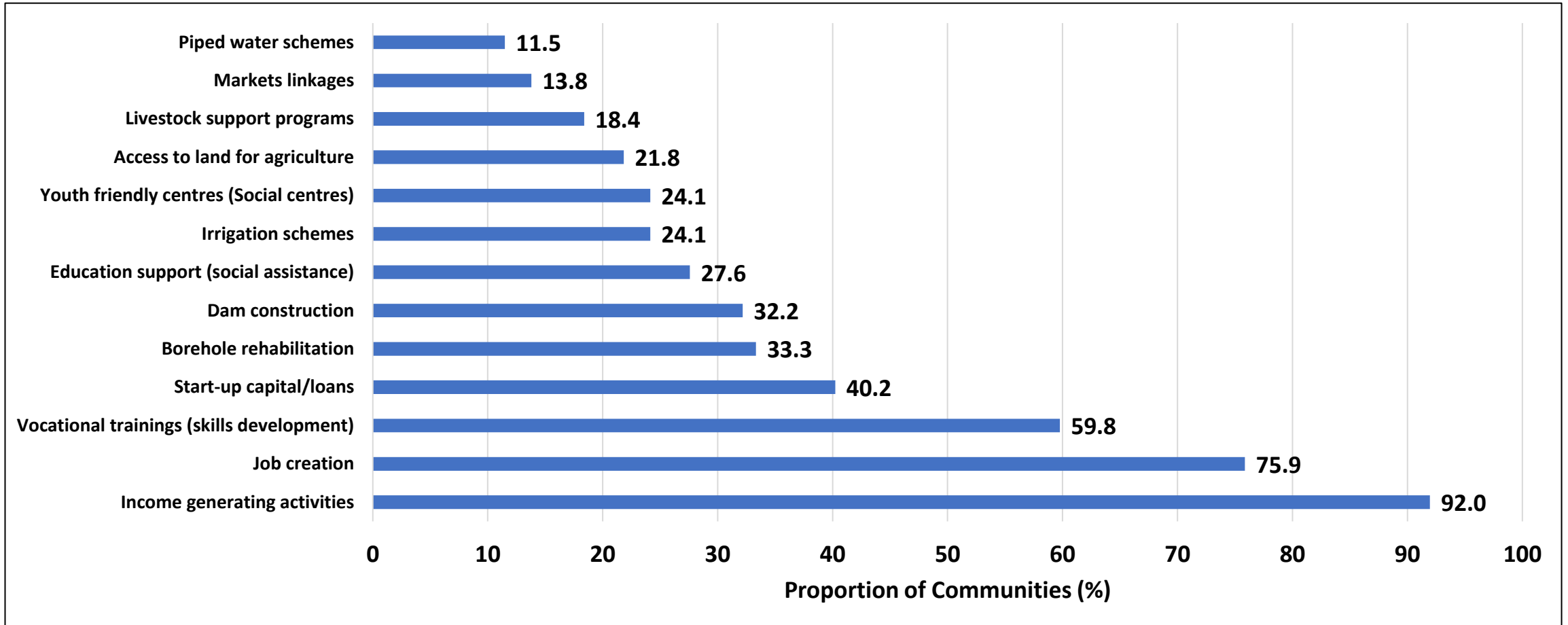
- In Mashonaland East Province, income generating activities (92.0%), job creation (75.9%), vocational training and skills development (59.8%) and start-up capital/loans (40.2%) were reported as the major development priorities for youths.

Community Development Challenges and Priorities

Community Development Challenges

Community Development Challenges. Proportion of Communities (%)

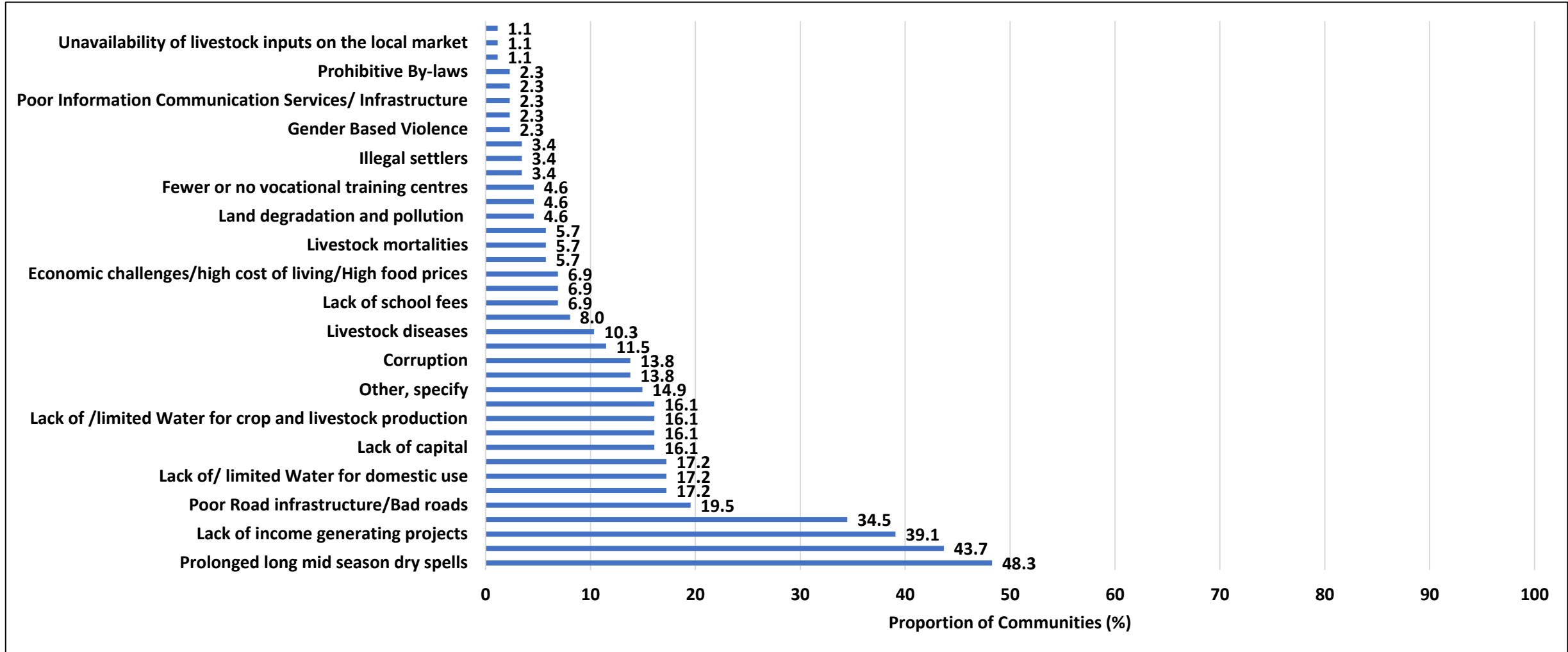| Challenge	Value
Unavailability of livestock inputs on the local market	1.1
	1.1
	1.1
Prohibitive By-laws	2.3
	2.3
Poor Information Communication Services/ Infrastructure	2.3
	2.3
Gender Based Violence	2.3
	3.4
Illegal settlers	3.4
	3.4
Fewer or no vocational training centres	4.6
	4.6
Land degradation and pollution	4.6
	5.7
Livestock mortalities	5.7
	5.7
Economic challenges/high cost of living/High food prices	6.9
	6.9
Lack of school fees	6.9
	8.0
Livestock diseases	10.3
	11.5
Corruption	13.8
	13.8
Other, specify	14.9
	16.1
Lack of /limited Water for crop and livestock production	16.1
	16.1
Lack of capital	16.1
	17.2
Lack of/ limited Water for domestic use	17.2
	17.2
Poor Road infrastructure/Bad roads	19.5
	34.5
Lack of income generating projects	39.1
	43.7
Prolonged long mid season dry spells	48.3

- In Mashonaland East province, prolonged mid season dry spell (48.3%) was ranked high as a community development challenge followed by unemployment (43.7%) and lack of income generating projects (39.1%).

Community Development Priorities
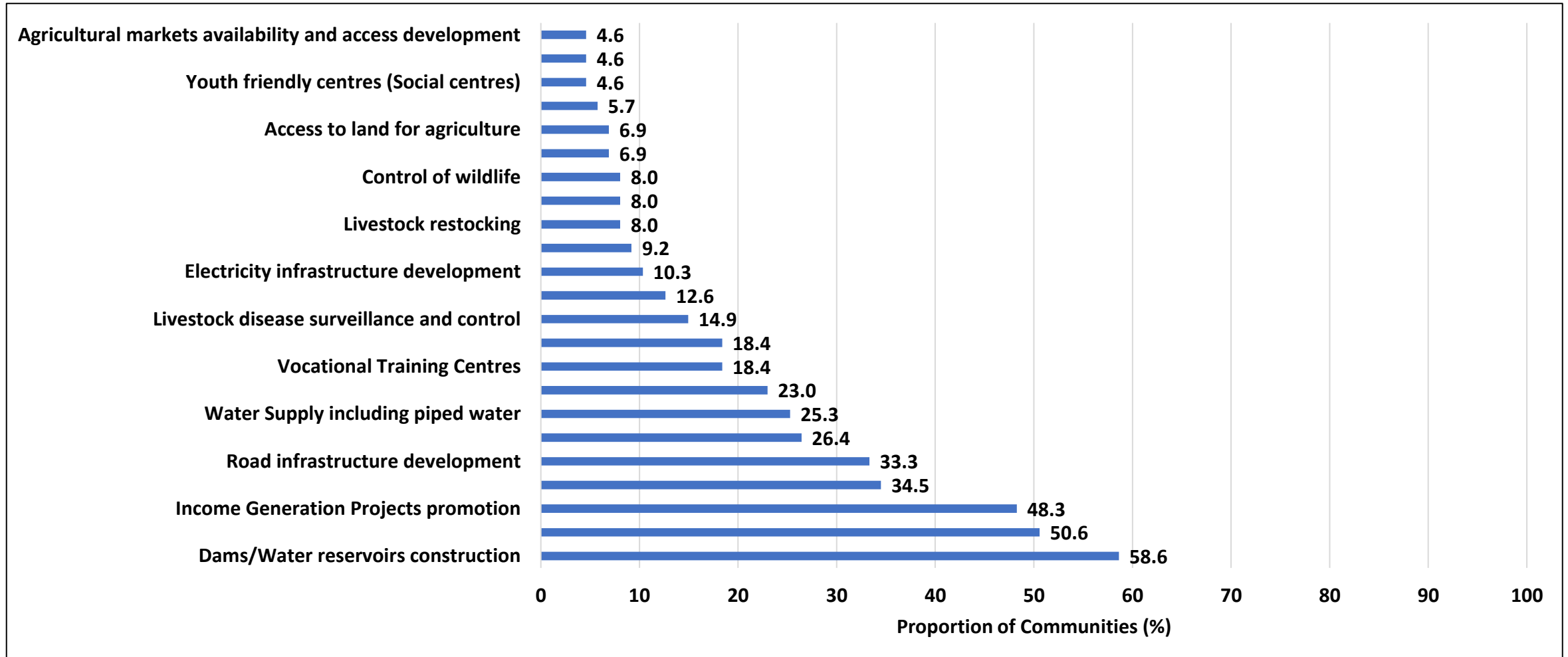
- Most communities prioritised dam construction (58.6%), borehole rehabilitation (50.6%) and income generation projects promotion (48.3%).

Conclusions and Recommendations

Conclusions and Recommendations

- **Cereal Sufficiency:** The findings indicate that there is cereal insufficiency in the province in the period July to September at 93%. It is projected that 46% of the households in Mashonaland East province will be facing food access challenges during the period July to September 2024. To cushion the households against cereal insufficiency, there is need for the government to move cereals from areas of surplus to those with insufficient supplies. It is imperative that the Department of Social Development and its partners, speed up food deficit mitigation programs to help out the communities who are in need. Retargeting measures need to be put in place to identify those chronic and acutely food insecure in order to provide the appropriate response mechanisms.

- **Crop production:** Maize remains the most grown crop across the province grown by about 85% of the households. The production of traditional grains remains low; sorghum (12%), finger millet (2%) and pearl millet (1%). It is recommended that the Ministry of Lands, Agriculture, Fisheries, Water and Rural Development should scale up campaign programmes that encourage production of traditional grains. Furthermore the Ministry should also scale up trainings for communities on fabrication of moisture and temperature control storage technologies. There should be investment in post-harvest management training and technology transfer to farmers to improve production time and processing of traditional grains. In view of the prolonged mid season dry spell that was experienced which led to failure of most crops, there is need to encourage putting up of more irrigation schemes to assist those farmers who solely depend on rain fed agriculture.

Conclusions and Recommendations

- **Nutrition:** The proportion of households with acceptable food consumption was 54% and 7% had poor diets. Goromonzi (23%) had the highest proportion of households with poor diets. The Ministry of Health and Child Care with its partners should scale-up food and nutrition awareness on diversification of food and food groups. Food and Nutrition Security Committees at relevant levels should be continuously strengthened to support nutrition specific and nutrition-sensitive interventions and that might include; promotion of traditional foods, food fairs, home and school nutrition gardening and good food handling and processing practices from farm to fork. Emphasis should be put on infant and young feeding practices that promote exclusive breastfeeding in the first six months and comprehensive complementary feeding practices thereafter.

- **WASH:** The proportion of households practicing open defecation in the province was 12% and only 5% of those with sanitation facilities had handwashing stations. There is need for Government (Ministry of Health and Child Care) and local authorities to come up with robust strategies to promote the putting up of toilets in rural areas. A commitment to re-invest in strengthening community trainings emphasizing on hygiene is necessary. Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 6 calls for the global community to achieve access to hygiene for all by 2030. Hand hygiene is one of the most important elements of hygiene. However, both access to the facilities to practice hand hygiene and support for the behaviours required are missing in many settings. The Government of Zimbabwe through the WASH Department and its development partners should come up with practical hardware and software programmes on handwashing to promote the practice.

Conclusions and Recommendations

- **Education:** At the time of the assessment, 20.2% of school going age children were not going to school and of those 8% were out of school due to financial challenges. It is recommended that the Government through the Ministry responsible for education, strengthen existing strategies and policies aimed at attainment of the Government's efforts to ensure universal access to education. There is need to strengthen structures and processes for the identification of the most vulnerable children under the BEAM module. Treasury should timeously honour all BEAM financial commitments to ensure that beneficiaries remain in school. The province need to develop and implement multi-sectoral platforms that specialise in Specialised Protection Systems for children to ensure education for children is peached high. Ministry of Lands, Agriculture, Fisheries, Water and Rural Development.

- **Shocks and Hazards:** Prolonged mid-season dry spell (87.7%), cash shortage (67.1%) and sharp increase in cereal prices (62.3%) were the most prevalent shocks reported by households. The average shock exposure index was 9.2 There is need for Government through the District Development Coordinators' offices to strengthen stakeholder coordination to build social cohesion particularly to cushion communities against the high Average Shock Exposure Index. The Ministry of Lands, Agriculture, Fisheries, Water and Rural Development should scale up campaigns on adoption of climate smart technologies and sensitisation of communities on new approaches to cushion themselves against the effects of different weather phenomena. There is need for strengthened policy monitoring and evaluation for economic-related shocks, especially the practice of adaptive policy mechanisms for coping with uncertainties such as cash shortages

Conclusions and Recommendations

Community Development and Youth

- About 77% of the communities reported that unemployment was the major challenge affecting youth development followed by lack of income generating projects (69%) and drug and substance abuse (64.4%). On community development, prolonged dry spell (48,3%) was the major challenge reported, followed by lack of income generating projects (39.1%). Most communities prioritised dam construction (58.6%), borehole rehabilitation (50.6%) and income generation projects promotion (48.3%).

- There is need for Government through the responsible ministries and departments (RIDA, ZINWA, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Transport, Youth and Women Affairs) and its development partners to increase investment in the development of water resources, income generating activities and road infrastructure establishment and rehabilitation.

- Initiatives by the Government through the Ministry of Finance and Investment Promotion, private sector and development partners to enhance economic opportunities for the youth are recommended. The promotion of income generating activities, start up loans, vocational training and skills development and improved access to start-up capital and loans should be up-scaled. Efforts by the Ministry of Public Services on drug and substance abuse needs to be strengthened.

Report Writing

Rangarirai Mureya Food and Nutrition Council

Supported by