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

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Acknowledgements

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- Food and Nutrition Council
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- Ministry of Health and Child Care
- Ministry of Local Government and Public Works
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- 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
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- 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
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Acknowledgement of Financial Support

Acronyms

EA	Enumeration Area
FDG	Focus Group Discussion
FNC	Food and Nutrition Council
FNSP	Food and Nutrition Security Policy
RLA	Rural Livelihoods Assessment
ZimLAC	Zimbabwe Livelihoods Assessment Committee

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
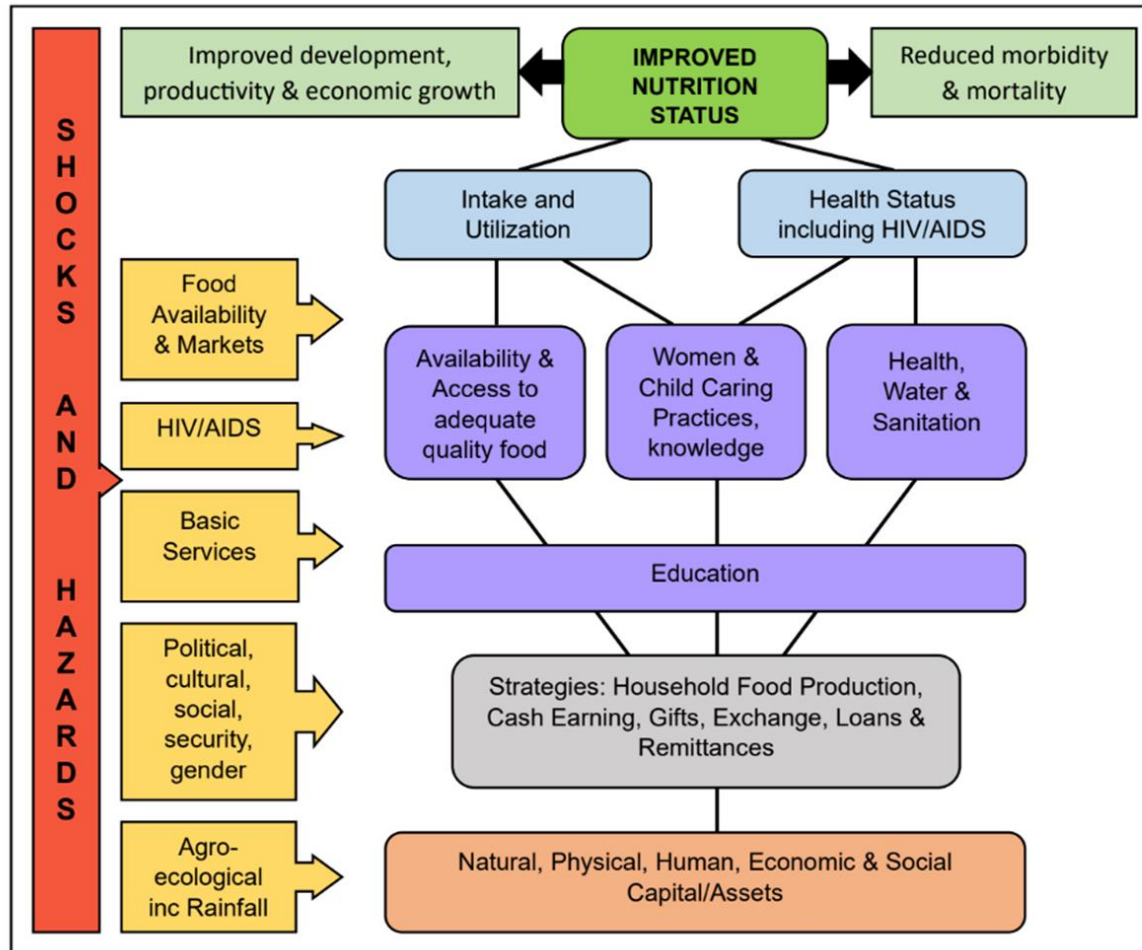
Methodology – Assessment Design

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.
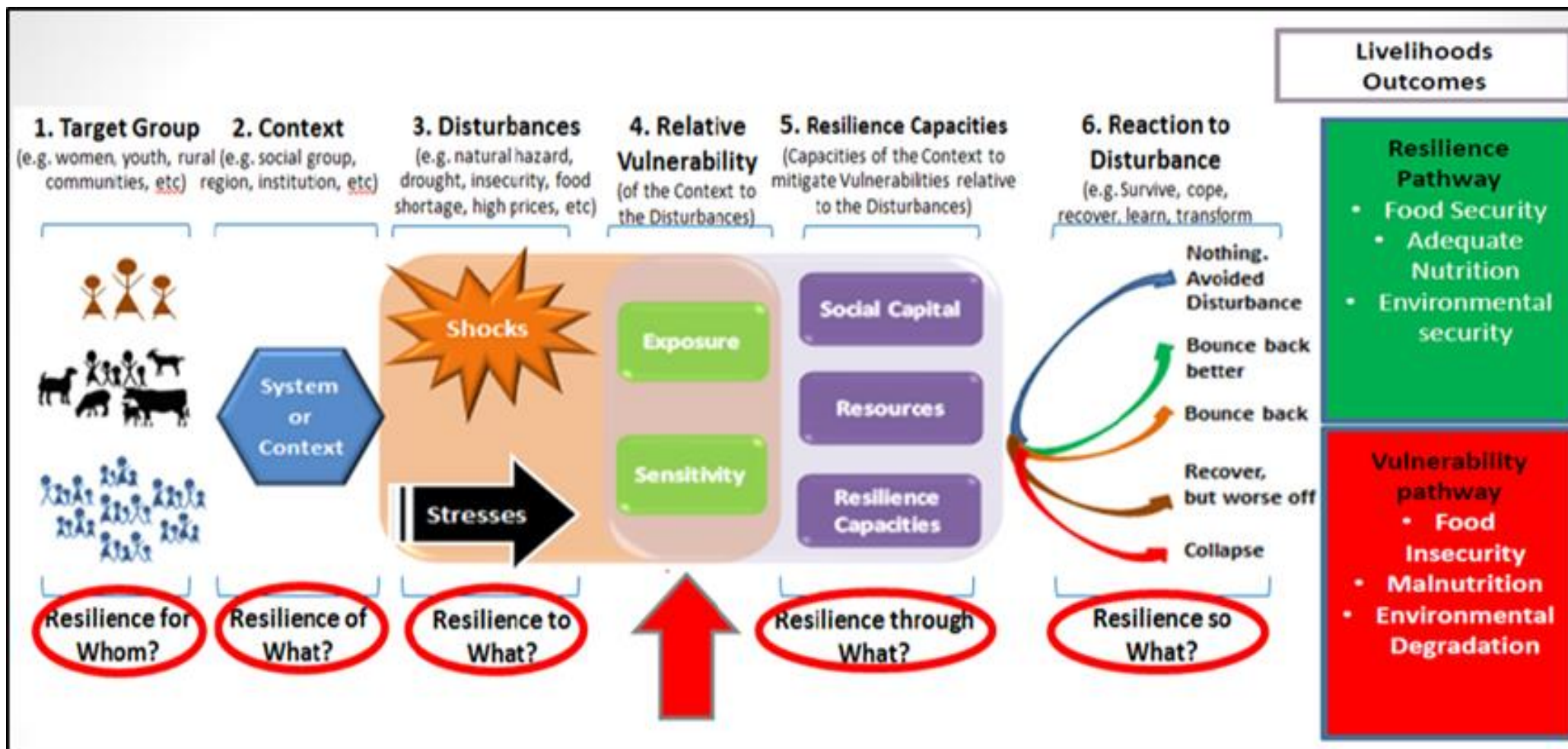
Figure 2: Zimbabwe Resilience Framework (UNDP Zimbabwe, 2015)
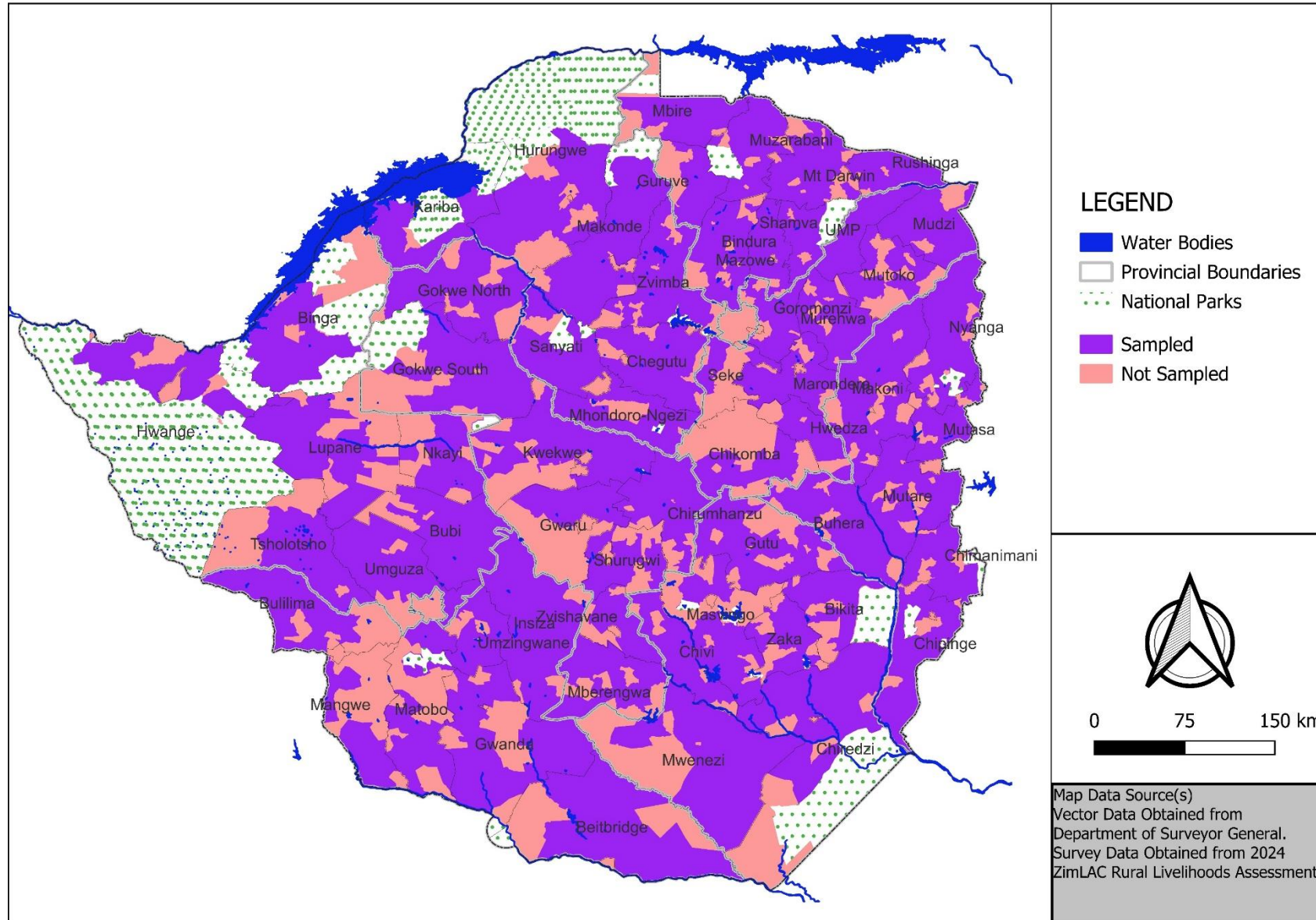
Methodology – Assessment Process

- 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.

- Primary data collection took place from 4 to 20 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 1 800 randomly selected Enumerated Areas (EAs).

- A two staged cluster sampling was used and comprised of:
    - Sampling of 30 clusters per each of the 60 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 2 099 households were interviewed.

- 68 FGDs and 7 Chief's Focus Group Discussions were held across all the districts.

District	Number of Households Interviewed
Bikita	302
Gutu	300
Chiredzi	299
Chivi	300
Masvingo	298
Mwenezi	300
Zaka	300
Masvingo Province	**2 099**

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.

0   75   150 km

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.
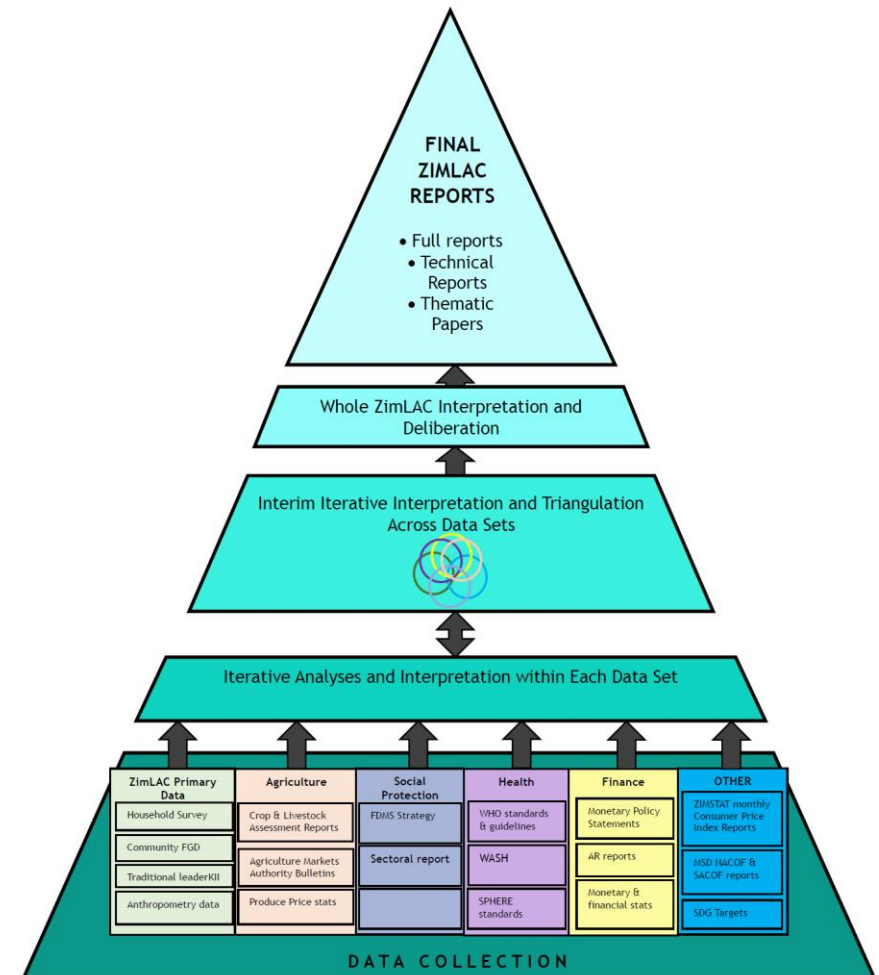
Technical Scope

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	Male (%)	Female (%)	Average Household Size
Bikita	45	55	3.4
Chiredzi	47	53	4.4
Chivi	49	51	5.1
Gutu	46	54	3.4
Masvingo	48	52	3.8
Mwenezi	46	54	3.8
Zaka	43	57	4.4
Masvingo Province	**46**	**54**	**4.0**

- Of the sampled population, 46% were male and 54% were female.

- The average household size was 4.0.

Characteristics of Respondents

District	Age (Years)	Male (%)	Female (%)
Bikita	58	31	69
Chiredzi	45	33	67
Chivi	49	23	77
Gutu	50	31	69
Masvingo	48	32	68
Mwenezi	45	33	67
Zaka	50	31	69
Masvingo Province	**49**	**31**	**69**

- The average age of respondents was 49 years.

Household Members' Characteristics

| District	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 (%)
Bikita	25	17	15	10	10	10	12
Chiredzi	27	21	**17**	9	11	9	6
Chivi	26	**23**	16	10	10	8	9
Gutu	24	16	12	10	**12**	**13**	**13**
Masvingo	25	19	14	10	11	9	12
Mwenezi	26	18	**17**	**12**	11	9	7
Zaka	**28**	**23**	13	8	10	8	9
Masvingo Province	**26**	**19**	**17**	**10**	**10**	**9**	**9**

- At provincial level the 0 to 9 years (26%) age group had the highest proportion of household members followed by the 10 to 17 years (19%) age group.

Characteristics of Household Head: Sex and Age

	Average Household Head Age (Years)	Male headed Households (%)	Female headed Households (%)	Child headed Households (%)	Elderly headed Households (%)
Bikita	**76.4**	54.0	46.0	0.3	34.8
Chiredzi	49.0	**70.7**	29.3	0.3	26.0
Chivi	55.0	59.3	40.7	0.3	**38.7**
Gutu	52.9	47.3	52.7	**1.7**	38.0
Masvingo	54.8	63.0	37.0	0.0	38.4
Mwenezi	47.6	62.7	37.3	0.3	24.7
Zaka	52.1	44.7	**55.3**	1.0	35.3
Masvingo Province	**55.4**	**57.4**	42.6	0.6	33.7

- In Masvingo province 57.4% of households were male headed whilst 42.6% were female headed.

- The average age of household head was 55.4 years which is within the economic productive age group.
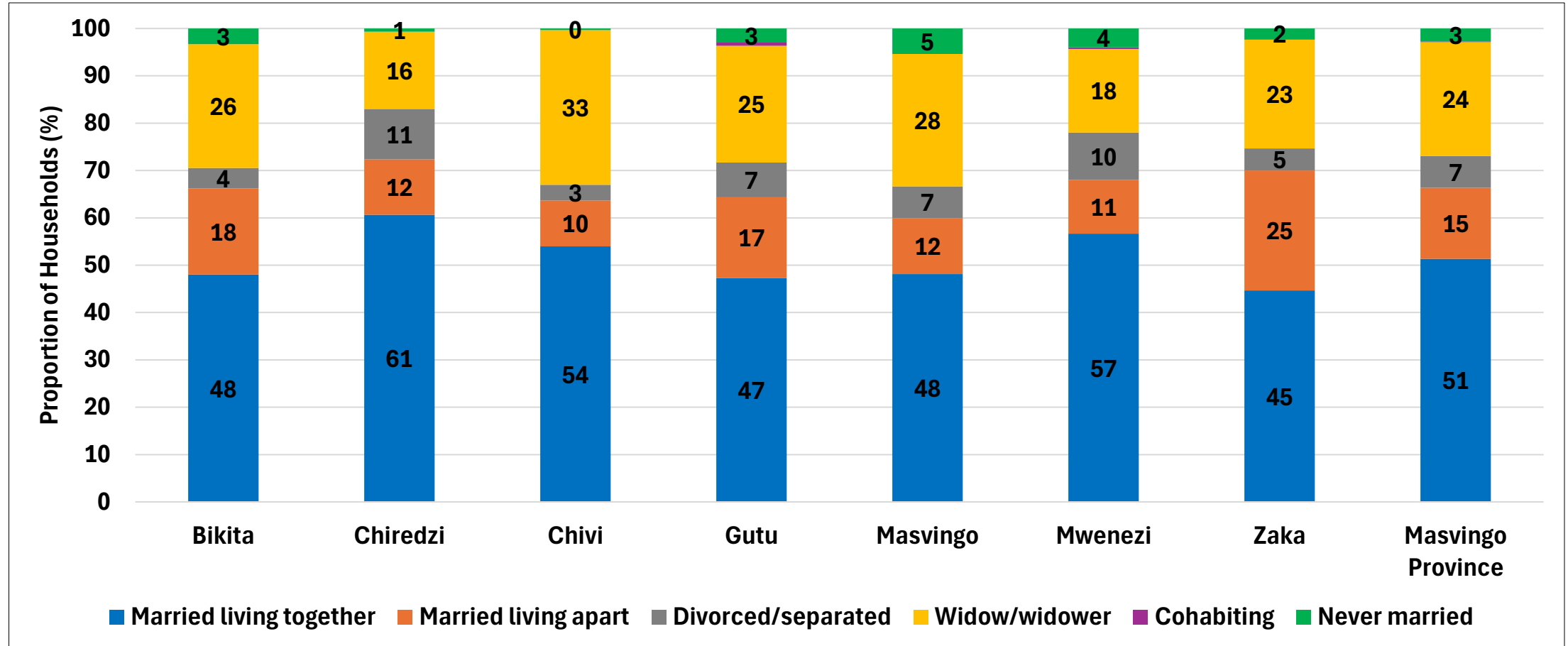
Characteristics of Household Head: Education Level Attained
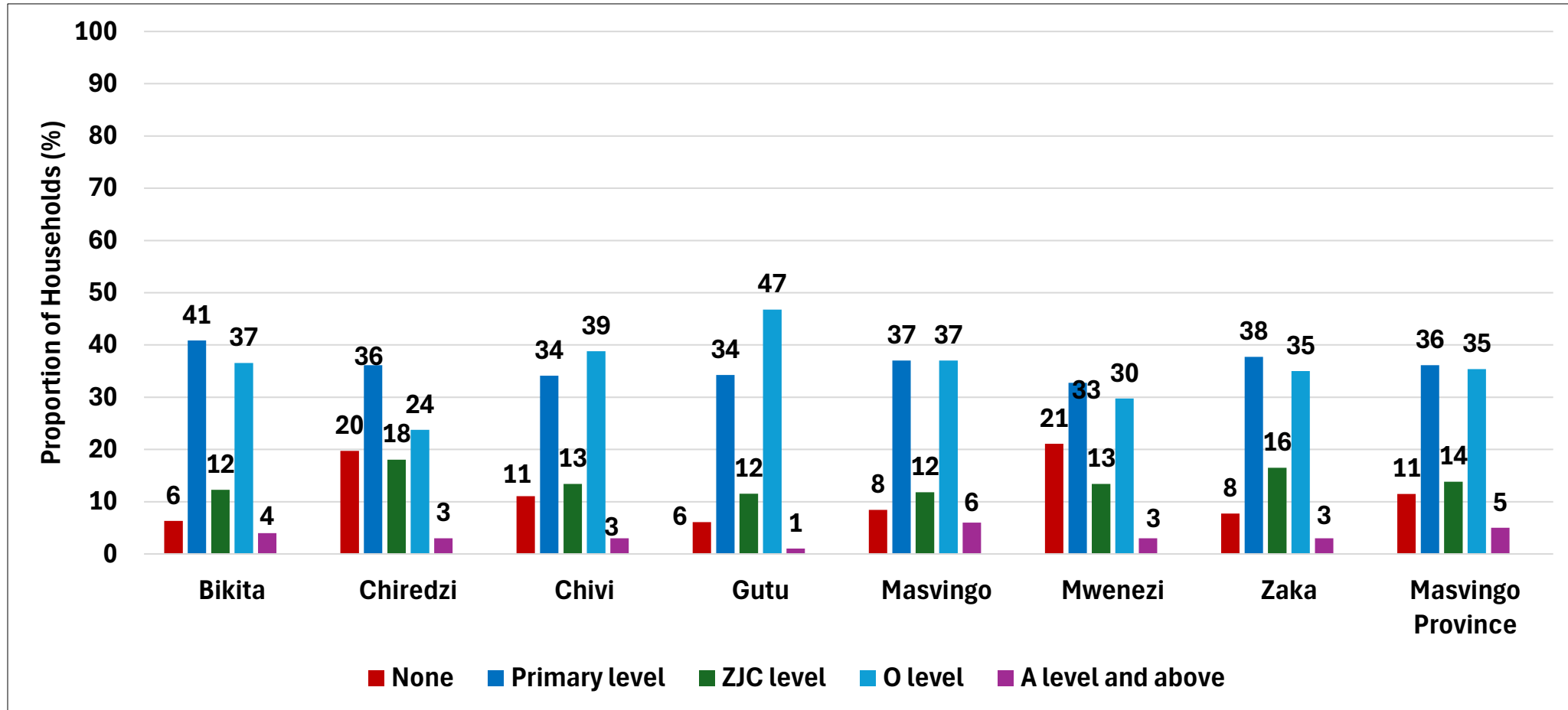
- About 89% of the household heads had at least attained primary level education or higher in the province.

Characteristics of Household Head: Marital Status

- In Masvingo province, most of household heads (51%) were married and living together followed by widows or widowers (24%).

- Chivi (33%) had the highest proportion of household heads who were widowed.

Characteristics of Household Head: Religion

District	Roman Catholic (%)	Protestant (%)	Pentecostal (%)	Apostolic Sect (%)	Zion (%)	Other Christian (%)	Islam (%)	Traditional (%)	No religion (%)
Bikita	15.0	9.0	2.0	36.0	31.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	7.0
Chiredzi	2.3	6.8	17.4	29.5	23.5	5.3	0.0	1.5	13.6
Chivi	9.4	13.8	10.1	23.9	21.7	5.8	0.0	0.0	15.2
Gutu	6.5	6.5	7.8	18.2	6.5	35.1	1.3	18.2	0.0
Masvingo	3.3	8.1	14.6	28.5	24.4	3.3	0.0	0.0	17.9
Mwenezi	2.8	9.4	5.7	40.6	18.9	0.0	0.0	18.9	3.8
Zaka	5.6	3.7	11.1	29.6	37.0	13.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Masvingo Province	**6.4**	**8.2**	**9.8**	**29.5**	**23.3**	**8.9**	**0.2**	**5.5**	**8.2**

- The highest proportion of household heads were mainly from Apostolic Sect (30.9%) and Zion (23%)

- About 7.1% of household heads had no religion.

Orphaned Children by District
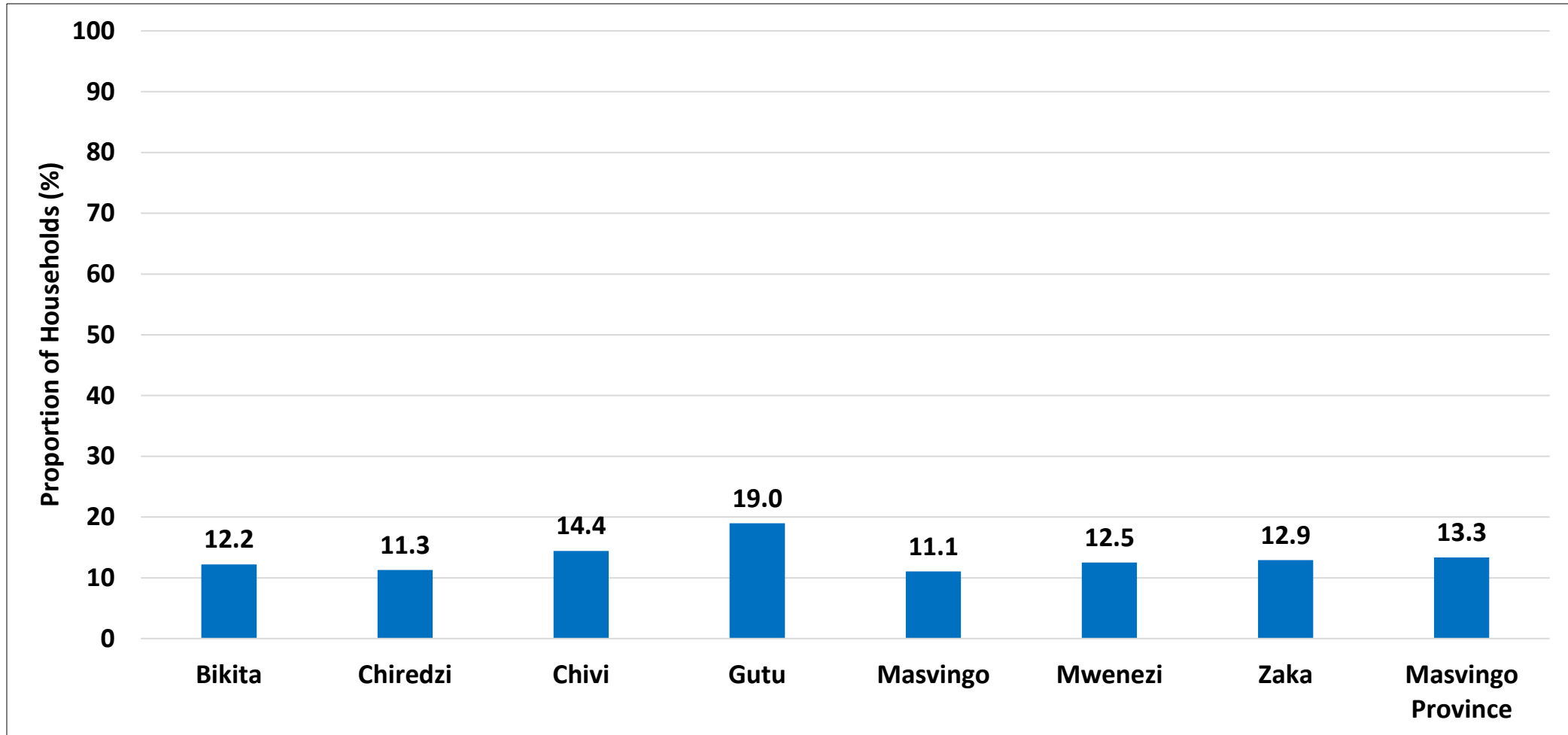
- The proportion of households that had orphans in Masvingo Province was 13.3%.

- The highest proportion of 'households with orphaned children was recorded in Gutu district (19.0%) whilst the least was in Masvingo district (11.1%).
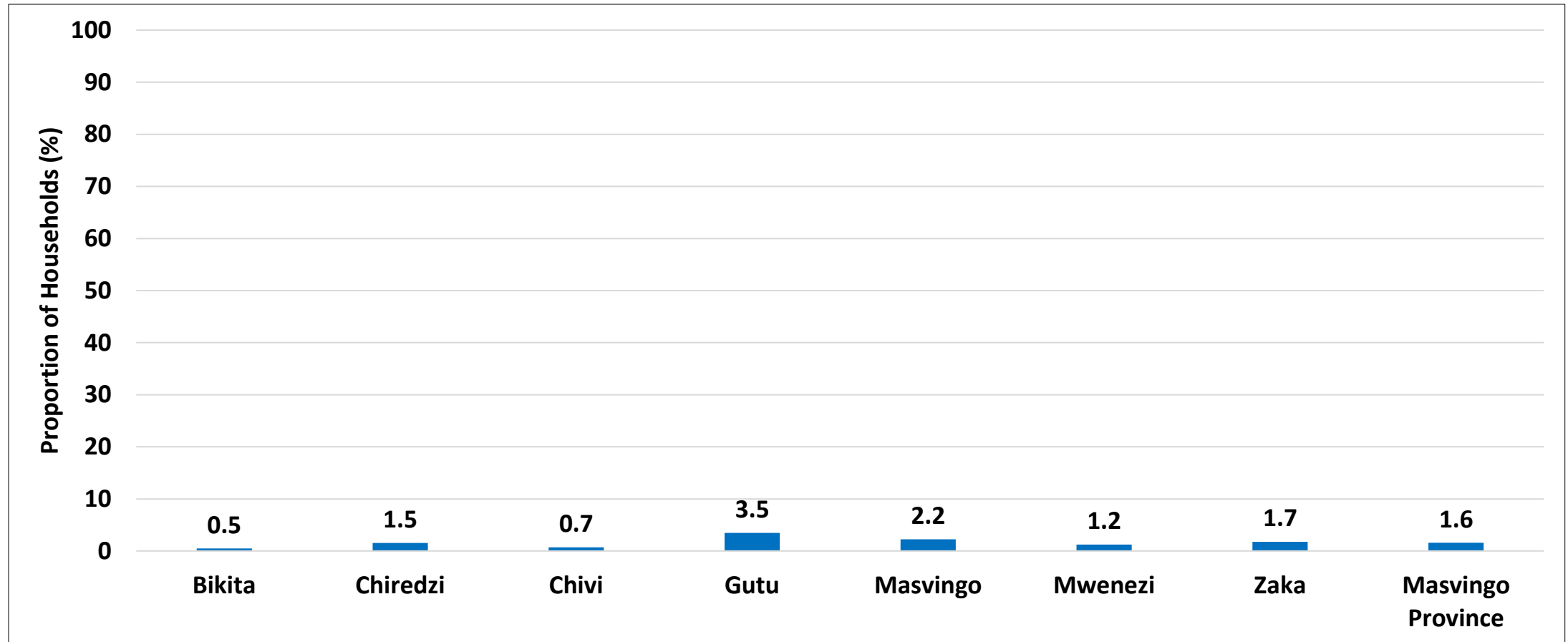
Chronic Conditions

Households with Members that had Chronic Conditions
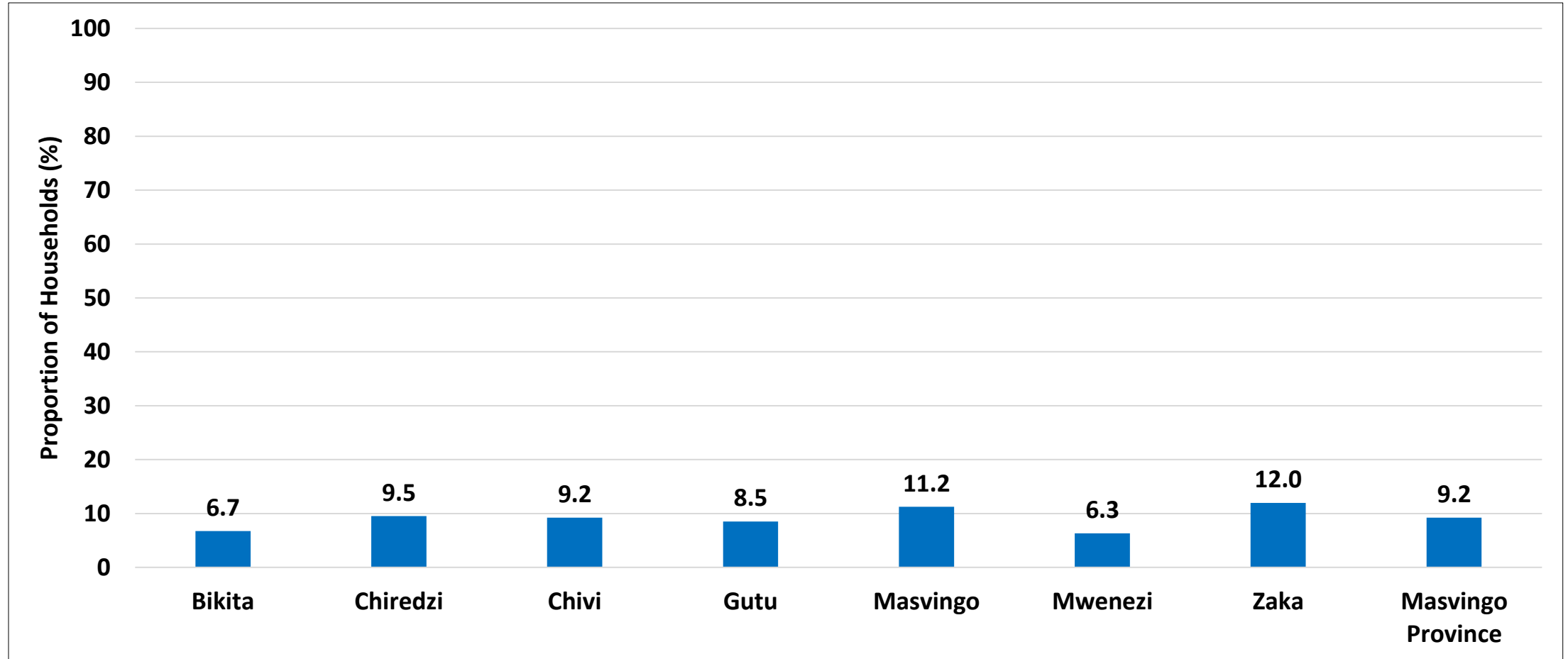
- At provincial level, 9.2% of the households had a member/s who had a chronic condition.

- Zaka (12.0%) had the highest proportion of households with a chronically ill member whilst the least was in Mwenezi (6.3%).
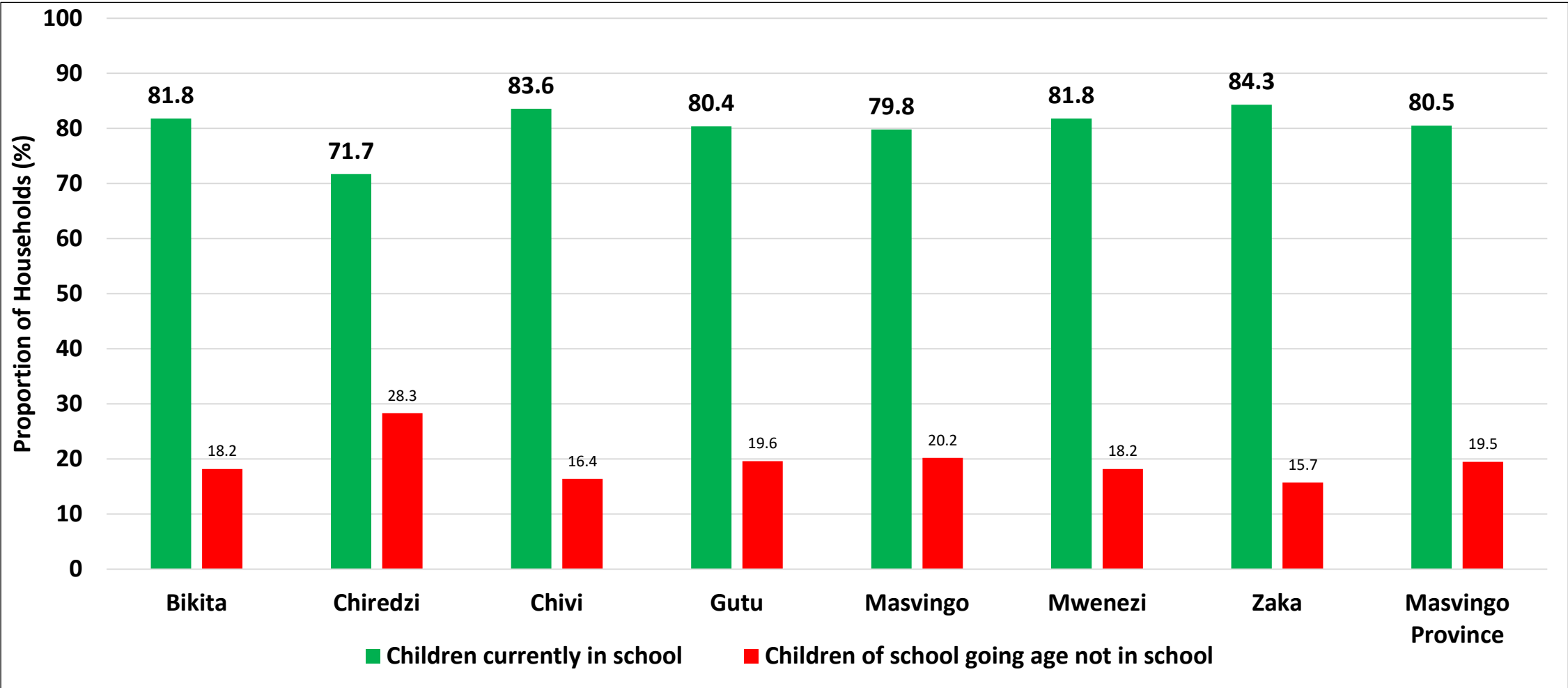
Households with Members that Missed Medication for Chronic Condition

- At provincial level, 1.6% of the households had members who had missed medication for chronic conditions.

- G u t u (3.5%) had the highest proportion of households with a member who had missed medication whilst the least was in Bikita (0.5%).

Education

School Attendance

At the time of the assessment, 19.5% of children of school going age were not going to school.

Reasons for Children not Being in School

|	Financial challenges (%)	Child considered too young (%)	Pregnancy/marriage (%)	Completed O/A level (%)
Bikita	5.5	2.3	4.0	4.3
Chiredzi	15.2	3.1	3.9	1.7
Chivi	7.1	1.4	1.4	3.4
Gutu	6.8	4.1	0.9	4.7
Masvingo	9.9	3.3	2.6	2.4
Mwenezi	6.3	3.1	0.7	3.4
Zaka	6.1	1.3	2.7	3.5
Masvingo Province	**8.3**	**2.5**	**2.3**	**3.2**

- Of the 19.5% children out of school, financial challenges (8.3%) were reported to be the main reason why children were not going to school.

Children Being Sent Away From School Due to Non-Payment of Fees
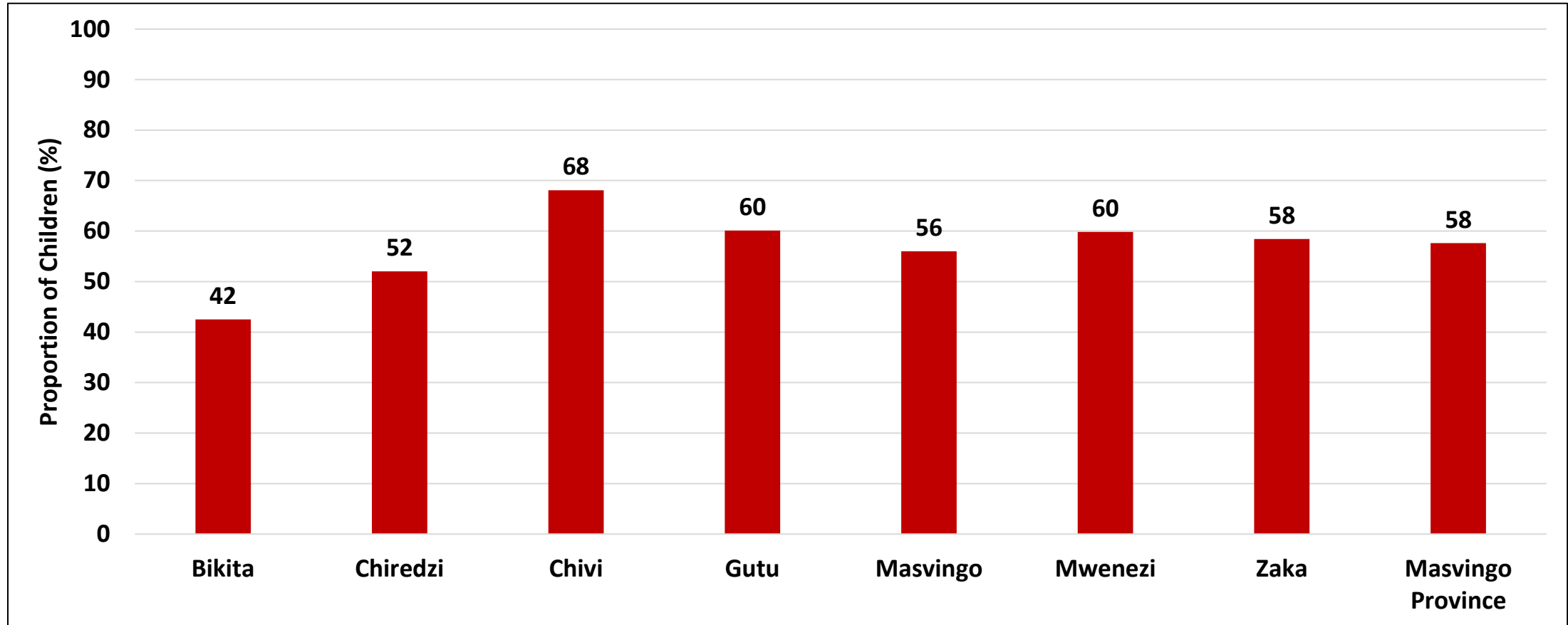
- About 58% of the children in the province had been sent away from school in the first term of 2024 due to non-payment of school fees.
- Chivi (68%), Gutu (60%) and Mwenezi (60%) had the highest proportion of children that had been sent away from school due to non-payment of fees.
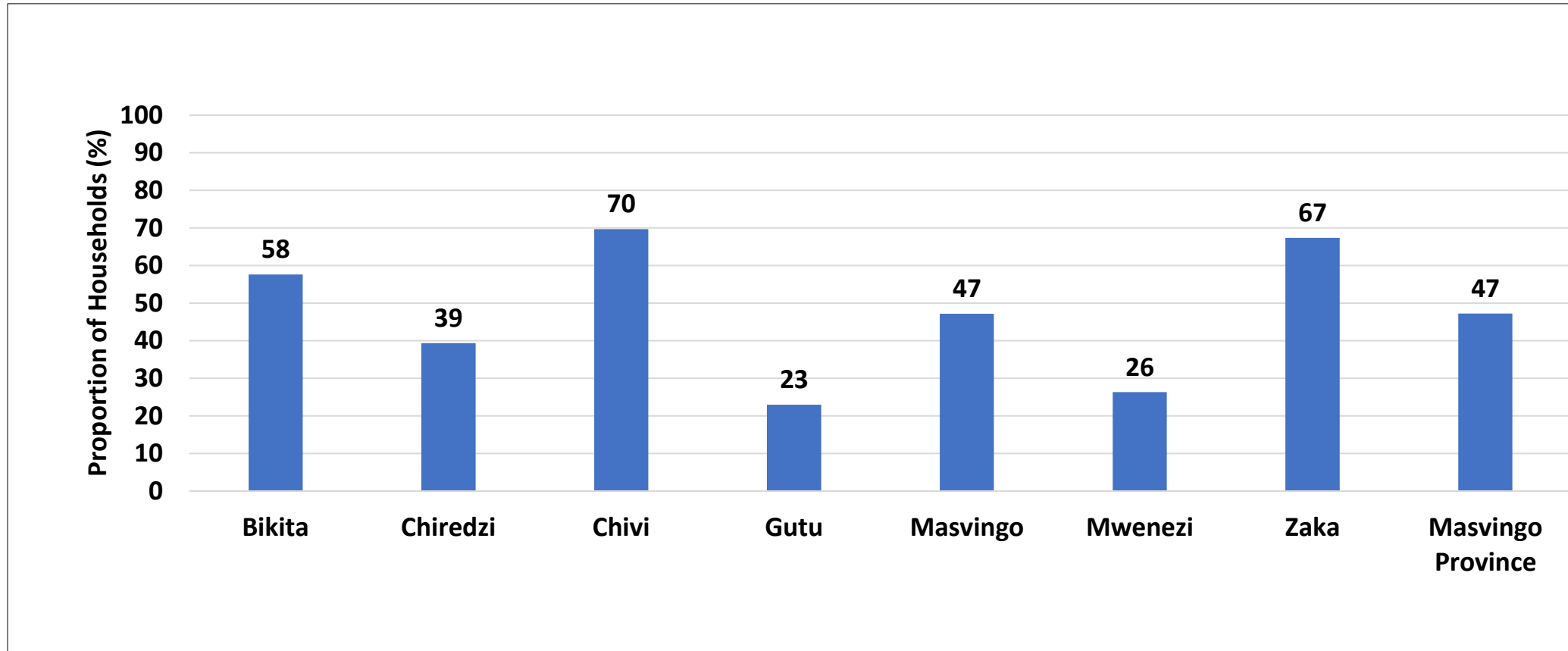
Children Receiving Hot Meals at School
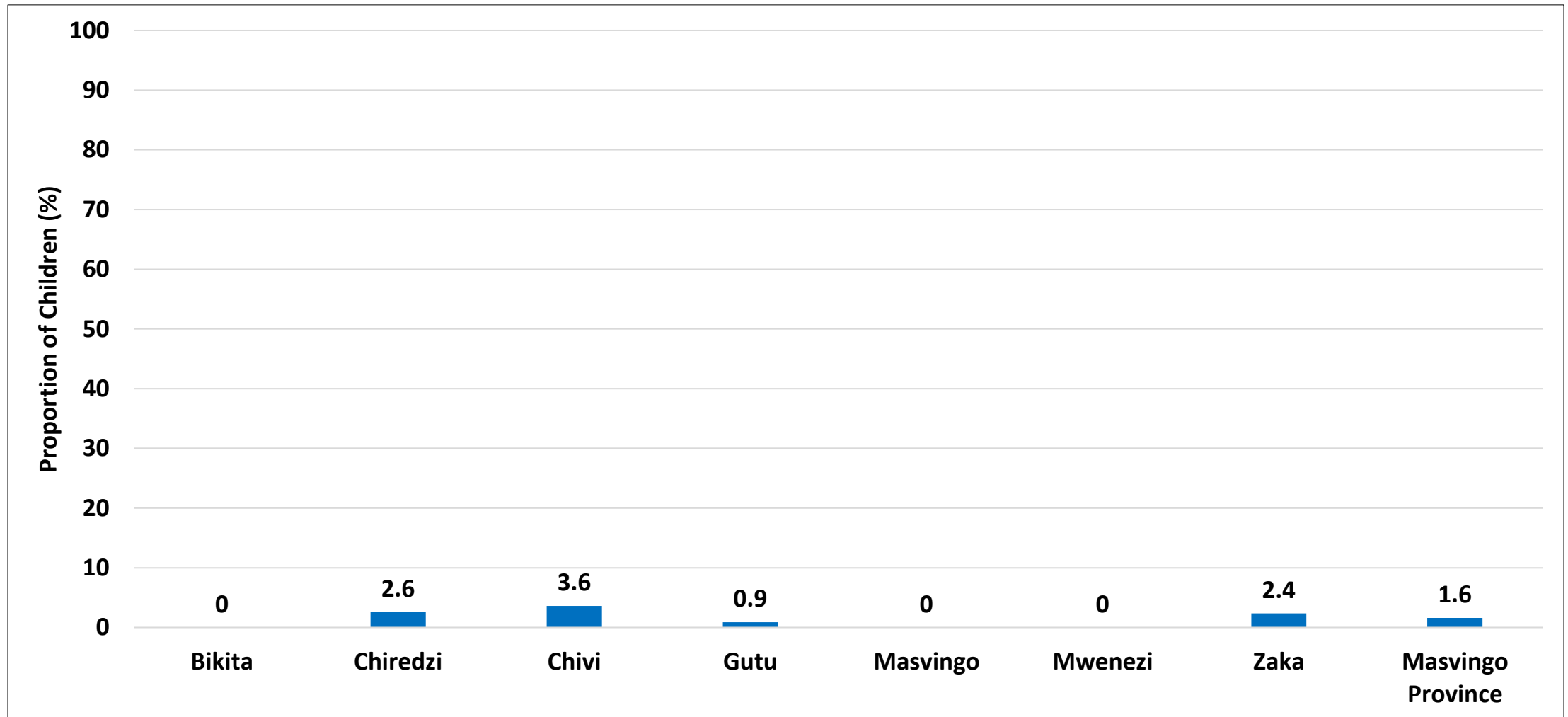
- The proportion of children who were received a hot meal at school in the province was 1.6%.

- The highest proportion of children who received a hot meal was reported in Chivi District (3.6%) .

Social Protection

Households Which Received any Form of Support

- Chivi (70%) had the highest proportion of households receiving support from all the sources whilst G u t u district (23%) had the lowest.

Sources of Support

	Government (%)	UN/NGO (%)	Churches (%)	Urban relatives (%)	Rural relatives (%)	Diaspora relatives (%)	Mutual Groups (%)
Bikita	46.0	0.7	0.3	18.2	2.3	3.6	0.0
Chiredzi	24.0	5.3	0.3	4.7	13.3	6.7	0.0
Chivi	53.0	31.7	0.7	12.7	15.3	2.7	0.3
Gutu	21.3	4.0	0.0	1.0	0.3	0.0	0.3
Masvingo	35.0	8.8	0.0	9.1	1.7	5.4	0.3
Mwenezi	15.7	15.7	1.3	1.0	1.0	3.3	0.7
Zaka	53.3	13.0	0.3	9.7	5.3	10.3	4.7
Masvingo Province	**35.4**	**11.3**	**0.4**	**8.1**	**5.6**	**4.6**	**0.9**

- The Government (35.4%) was the main source of support offered to households in the province.

- The UN/NGOs (11.3%), urban relatives (8.1%) and rural relatives (5.6%) were some of the most reported sources of support.

Forms of Support From Government

District	Food (%)	Cash transfers (%)	Vouchers (%)	Crop inputs (%)	Livestock (%)	Other livestock (%)	WASH hardware (%)	WASH software (%)	Education (%)	Health (%)	Other (%)
Bikita	20.5	0.7	0.0	37.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.3	0.0	0.0
Chiredzi	15.7	0.0	0.0	8.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.7	0.3	0.7
Chivi	17.3	0.7	0.0	35.0	1.0	3.3	0.7	0.7	4.3	2.3	6.3
Gutu	2.7	0.3	0.3	20.7	7.0	6.3	2.3	1.0	1.0	0.3	0.0
Masvingo	27.9	0.3	0.0	8.4	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.3	4.4	0.3	0.0
Mwenezi	5.0	0.3	0.3	10.3	0.3	0.0	1.0	1.0	1.3	1.3	0.0
Zaka	3.3	0.3	0.0	48.0	0.0	3.3	0.0	0.0	11.0	0.3	0.0
Masvingo Province	**13.2**	**0.4**	**0.1**	**24.0**	**1.2**	**1.9**	**0.6**	**0.4**	**3.7**	**0.7**	**1.0**

- Crop inputs (24.0%) and food (13.2%) were the major forms of support received from the Government.

- Masvingo district had the highest proportion of households receiving food assistance (27.9%), with Gutu having the least (2.7%).

- The proportion of households which had received crop inputs was highest in Bikita (37.1%) and lowest in Chiredzi (8%).
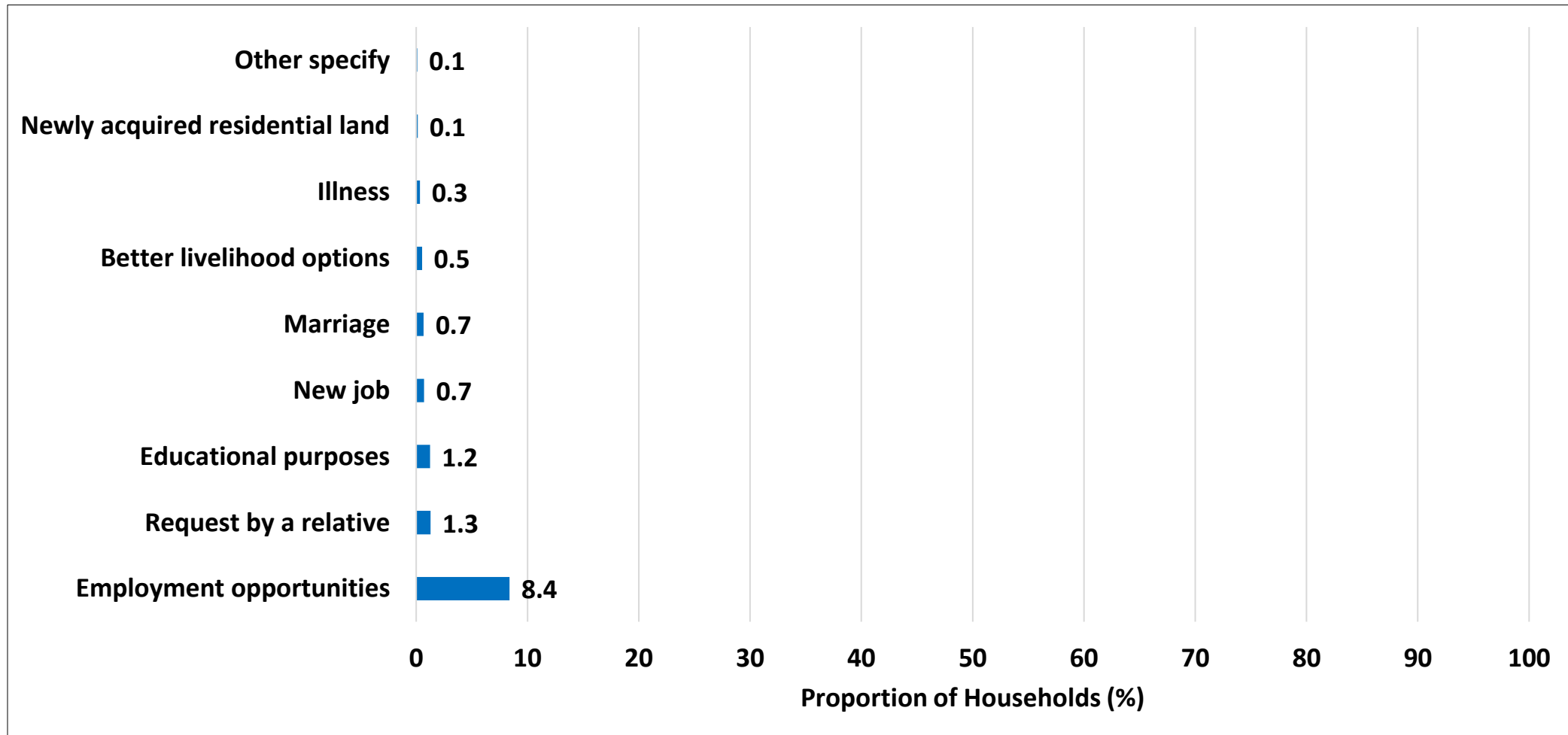
Migration

Types of Migration
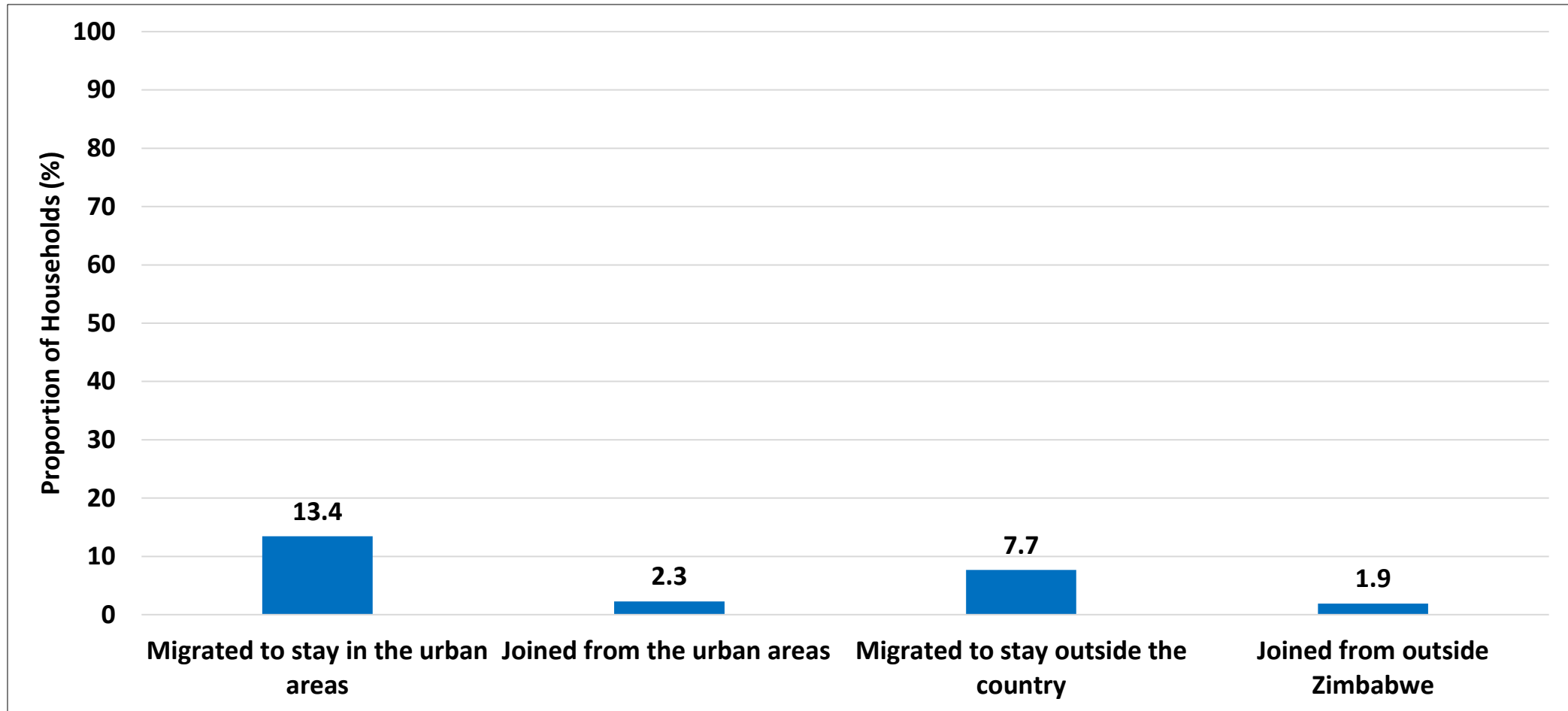
- In Masvingo province rural to urban migration (13.4%) was the most prevalent type of migration followed by migration to outside the country (7.7%).
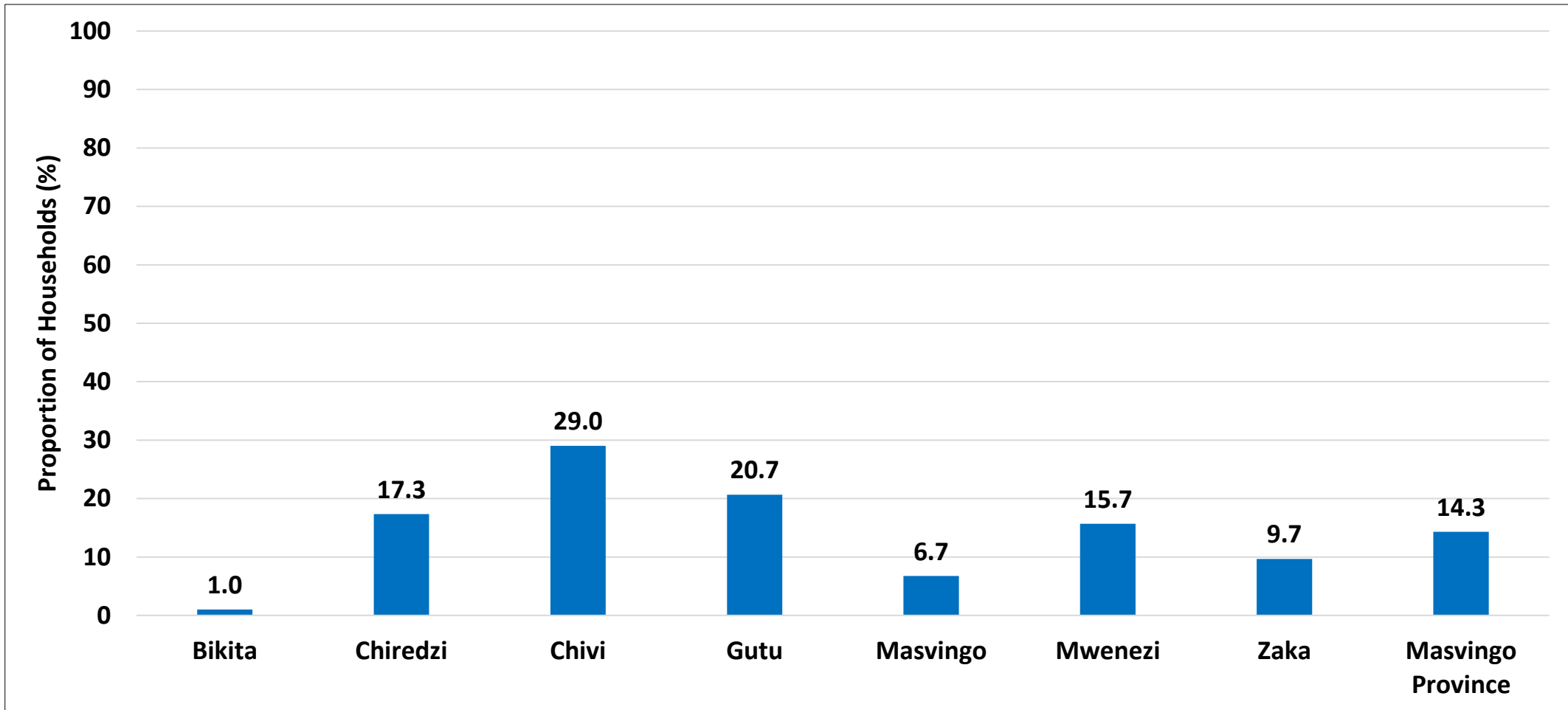
Reasons for Migration to Urban Areas

- The main reason for migrating to urban areas in the province was to seek employment opportunities (8.4%).
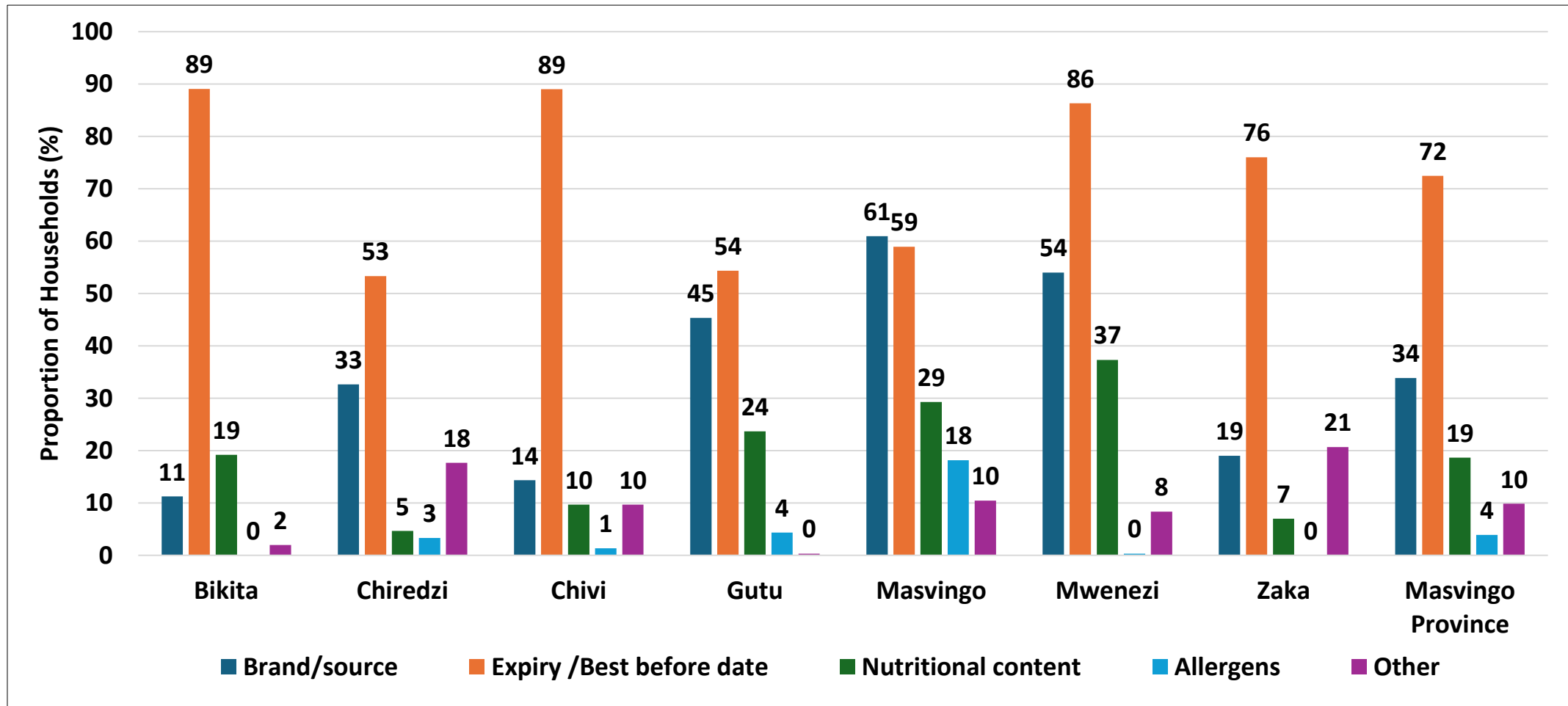
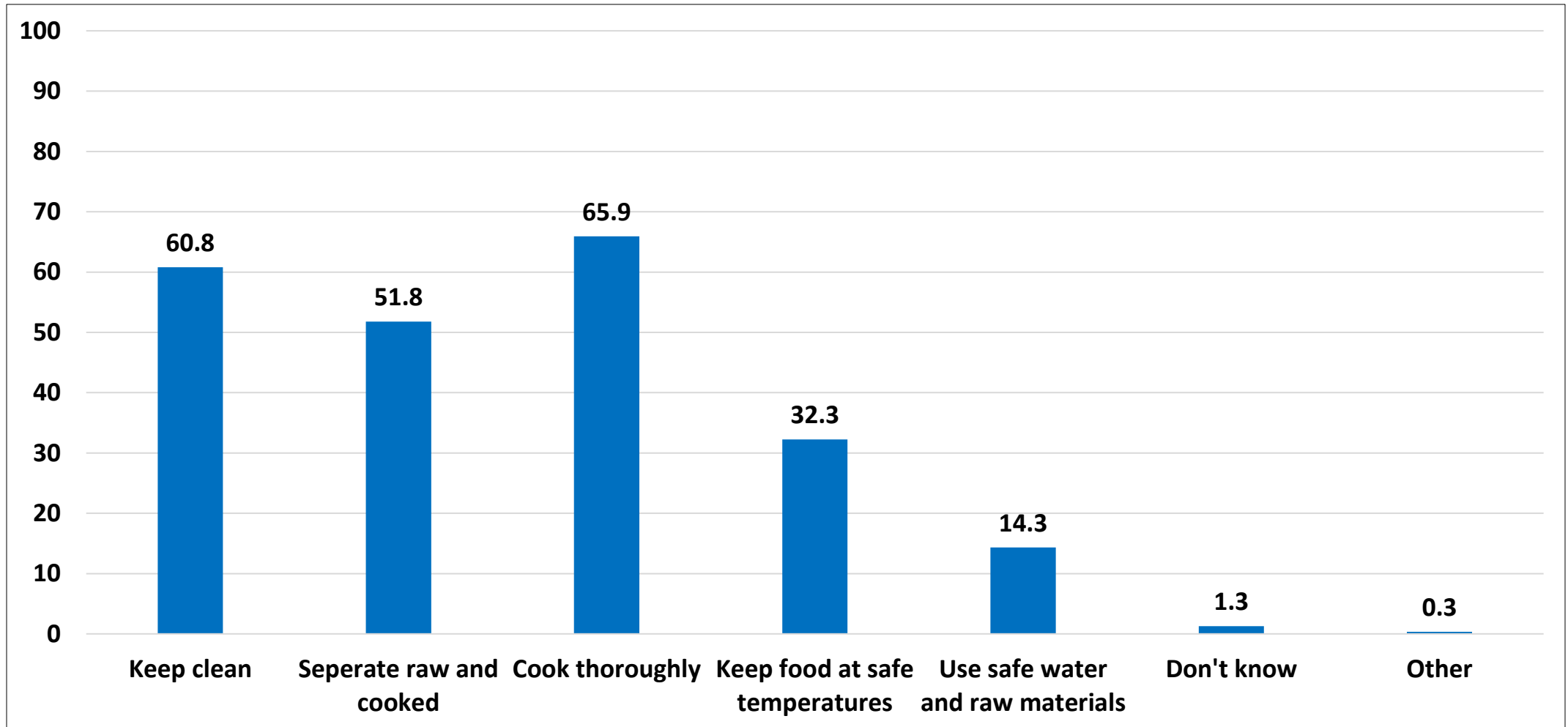# Food Safety

Information on Food Safety

- In the twelve months preceding the survey, 14.3% of the households received information on food safety.

- Chivi had the greatest proportion of households which received information on food safety (29%).

Household Considerations when Purchasing Food

- Holding price constant, most households in the province considered expiry date (72%) when purchasing food followed by brand/ source (34%).

- Mwenezi district had the highest proportion of households which considered nutritional content when purchasing food (37%), whilst Chiredzi had the least (5%).
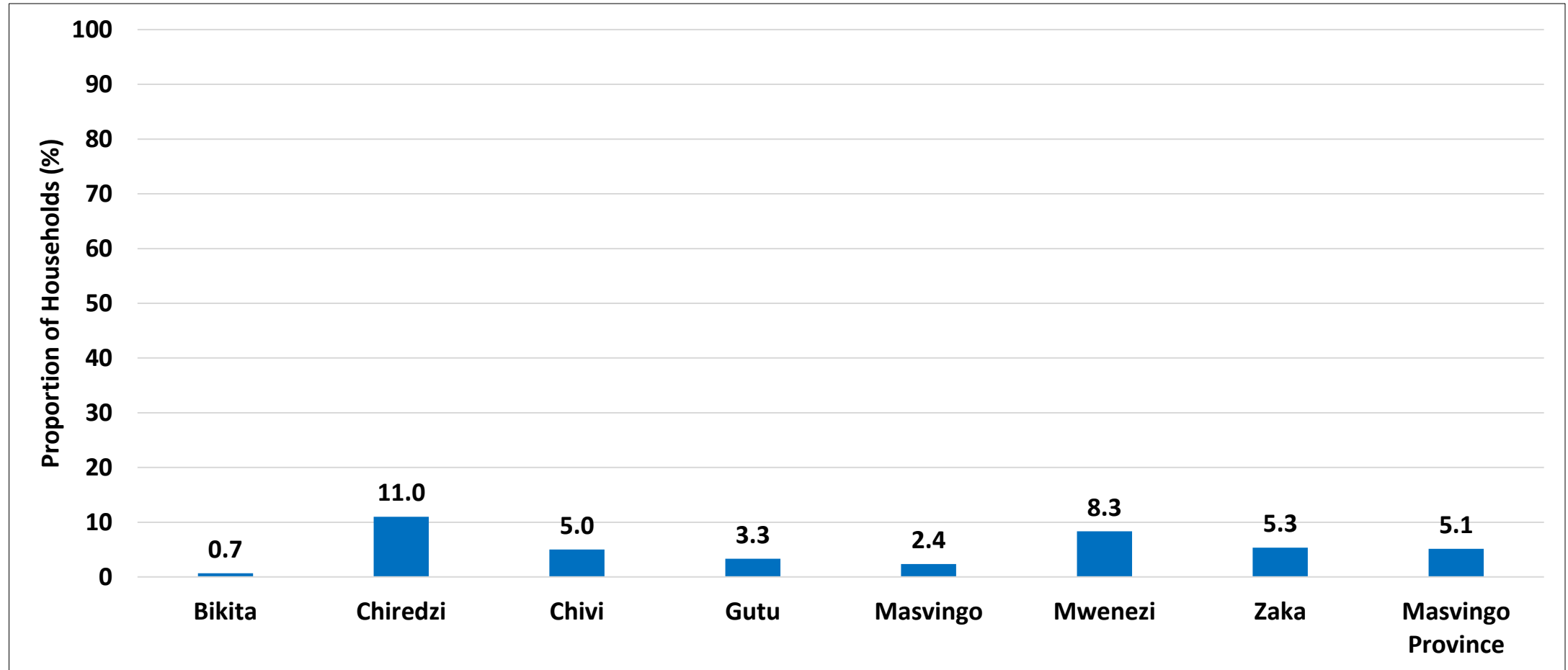
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Ways to Keep Food Safe

- Cooking food thoroughly (65.9%) was the most known method to keep food safe in the household followed by keeping the food clean (60.8%).

Safe Preparation of Food
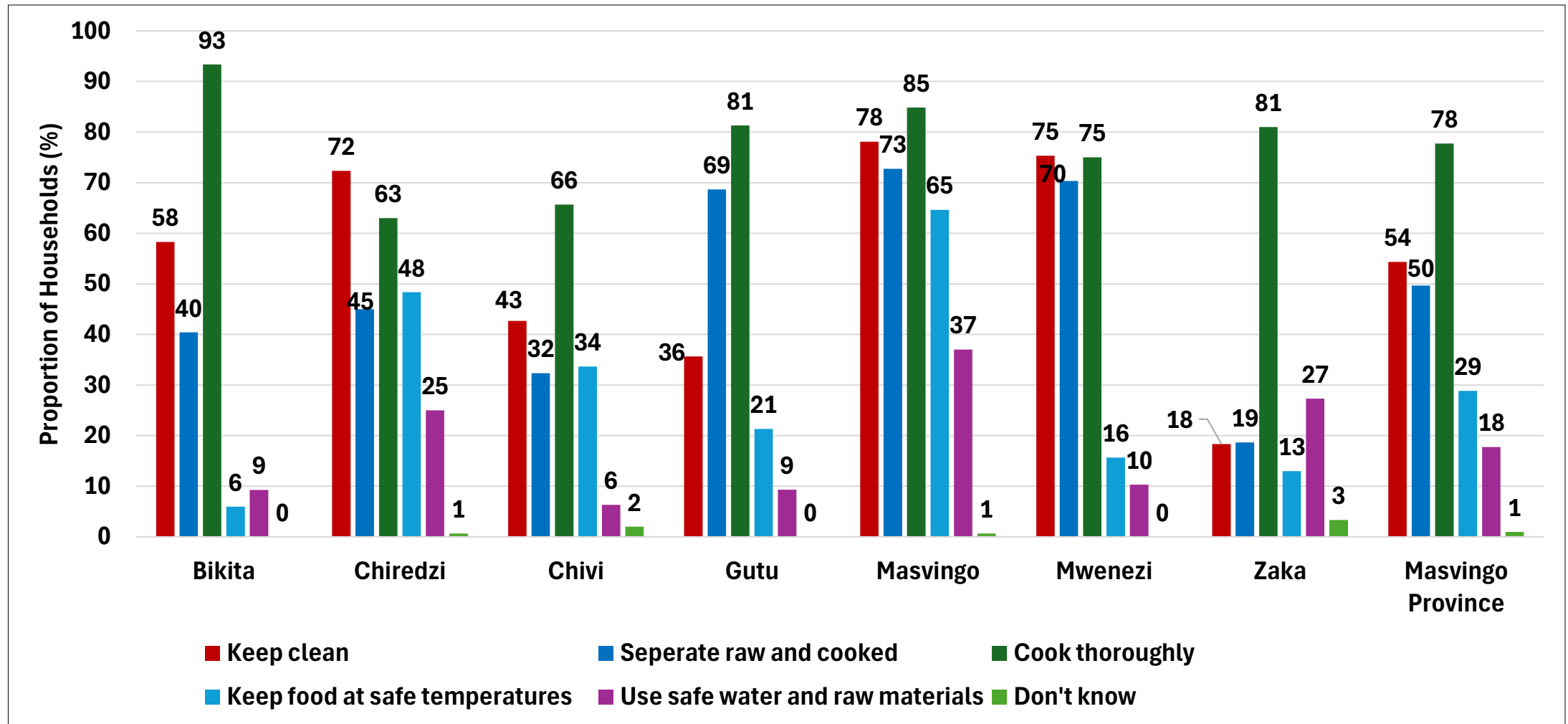
- Most households (78%) reported that they cooked food thoroughly to ensure that it was safe followed by keeping it clean (54%).

Purchase of Expired or Spoiled Food

- At provincial level, 5.1% of households reported purchasing food which had expired due to its reduced price.

- Chiredzi (11%) had the greatest proportion of households which purchased expired food due to its reduced price.

Household Consumption and Livelihoods Based Coping Strategies
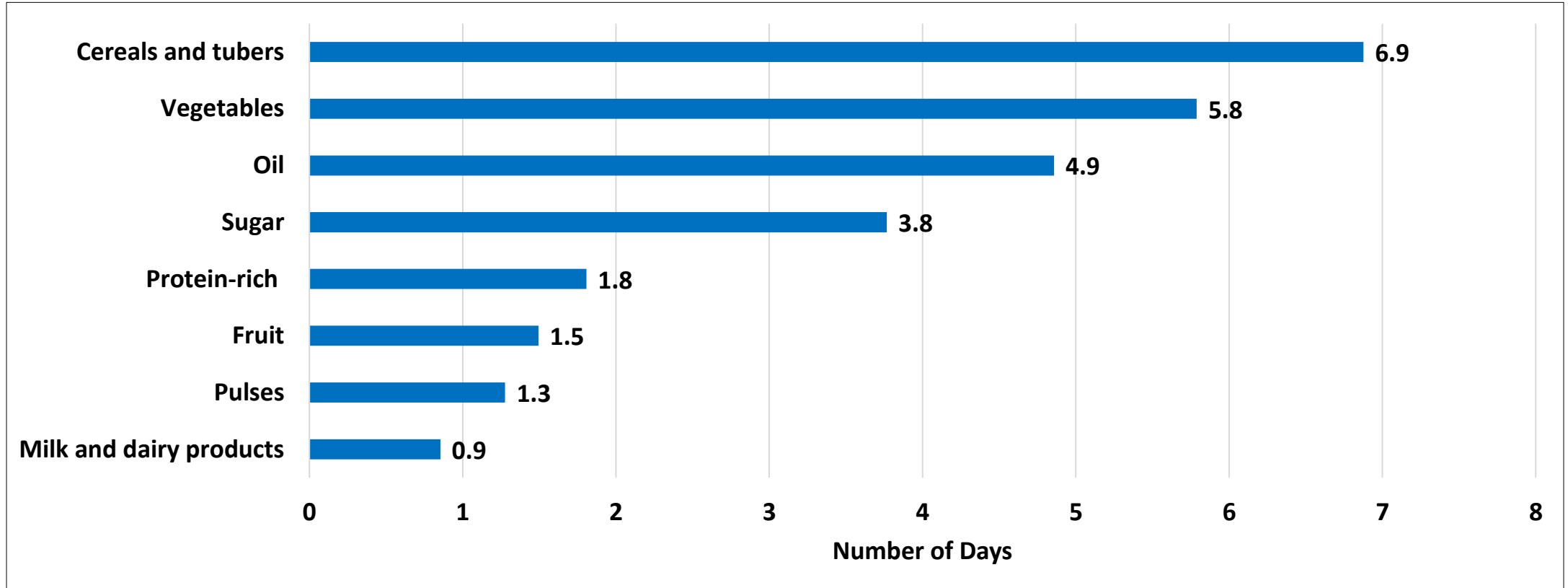
Food Consumption Patterns Trend
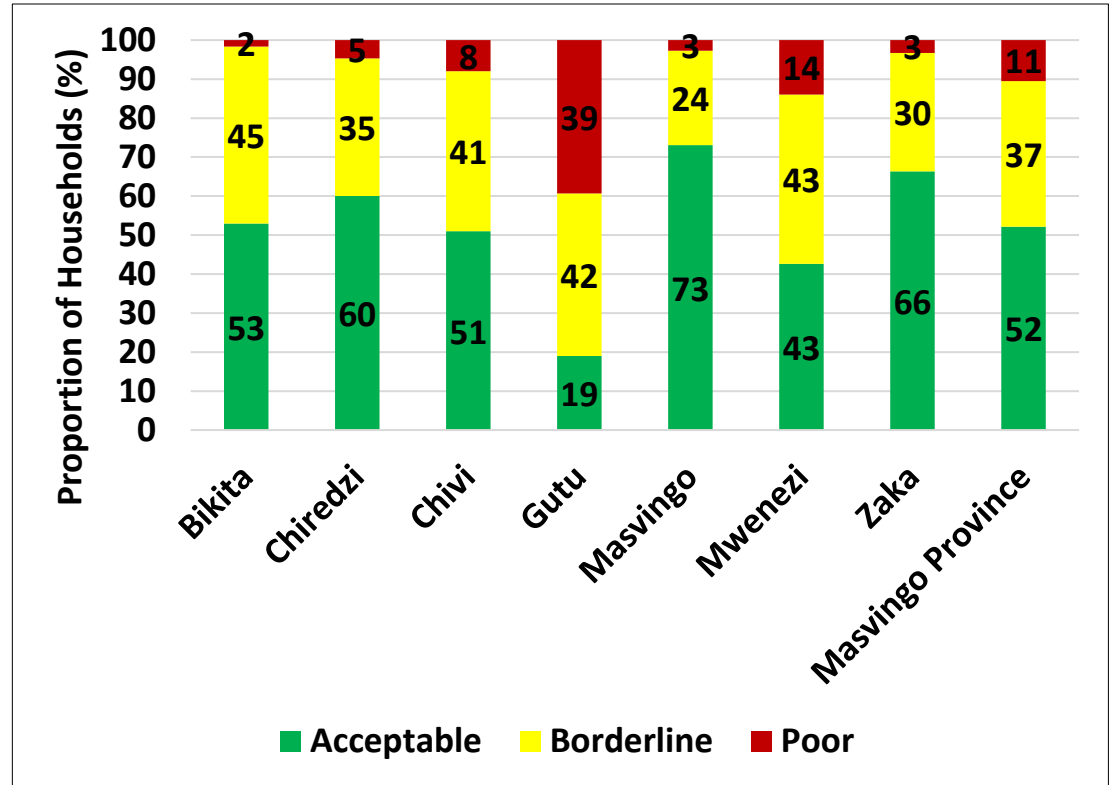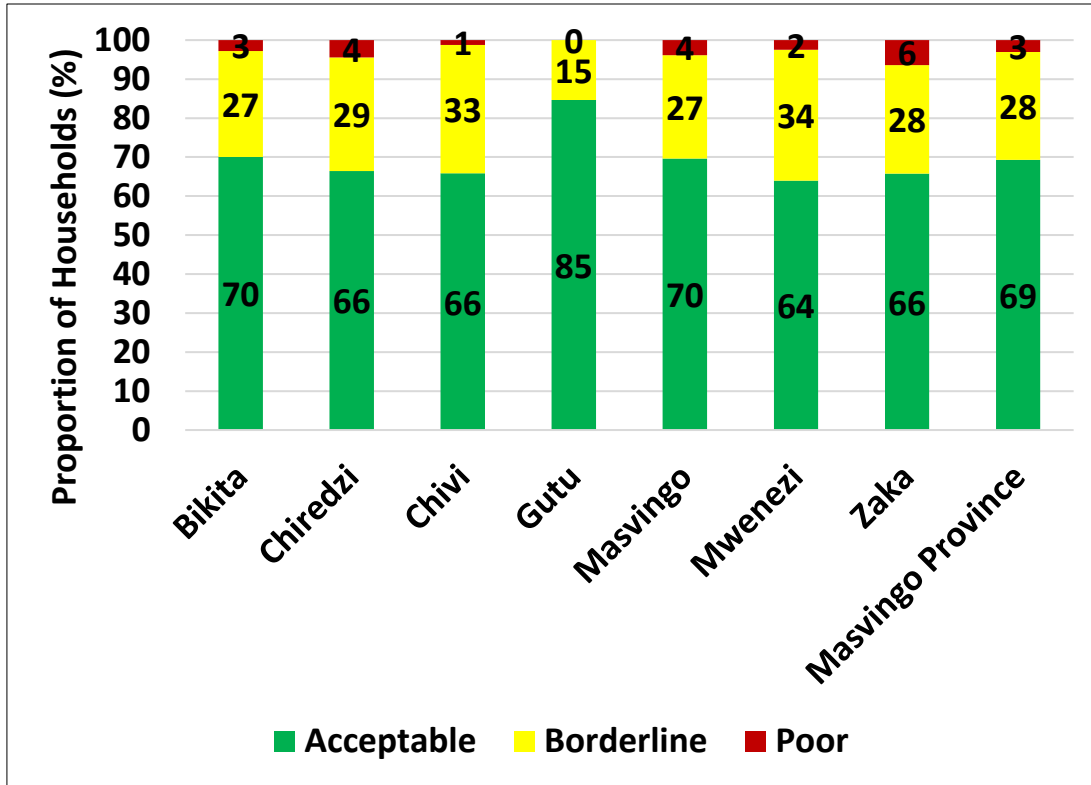
- The proportion of households with acceptable food consumption patterns in the province decreased from 69% in 2023 to 52% in 2024.

- Masvingo district (73%) had the highest proportion of households with acceptable consumption patterns.

- Gutu (39%) had the highest proportion of households with poor consumption patterns.

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

Food Group	Number of Days
Cereals and tubers	6.9
Vegetables	5.8
Oil	4.9
Sugar	3.8
Protein-rich	1.8
Fruit	1.5
Pulses	1.3
Milk and dairy products	0.9

- Cereals and tubers (6.9 days), vegetables (5.8 days) and oil (4.9 days) were the most frequently consumed foods by households in the 7 days preceding the survey.

- Milk and dairy products (0.9 days) were the least consumed foods.

Household Hunger Scale
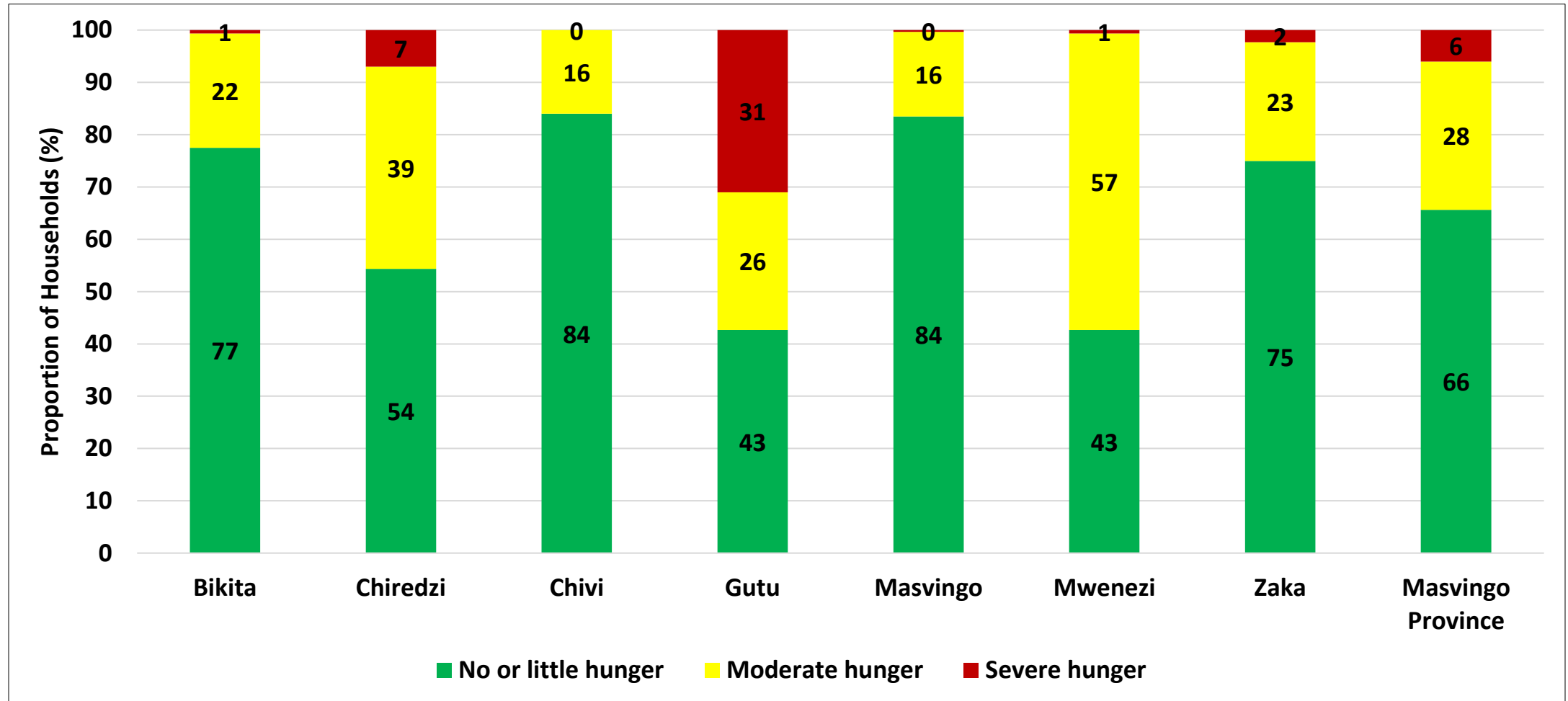
- About 66% of households in the province reported to have experienced little to no hunger while 28% were facing moderate hunger.

- Gutu (31%) had the highest proportion of households which experienced severe hunger.

Household Dietary Diversity Score
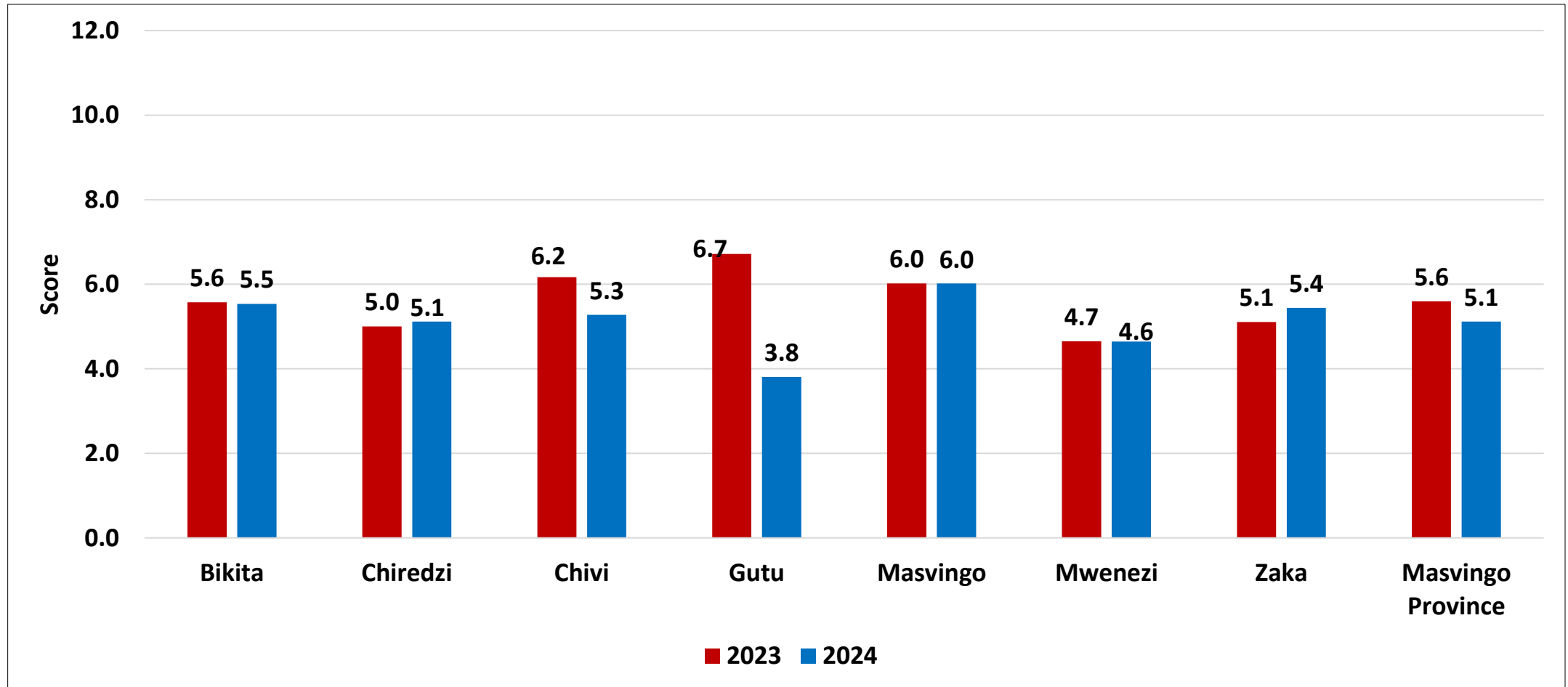
- The dietary diversity score for Masvingo province decreased from 5.6 in 2023 to 5.1 in 2024.

- Masvingo district (6.0) had the highest dietary diversity score whilst Gutu district (3.8) had the lowest.

Household Consumption Coping Strategy Index (rCSI)
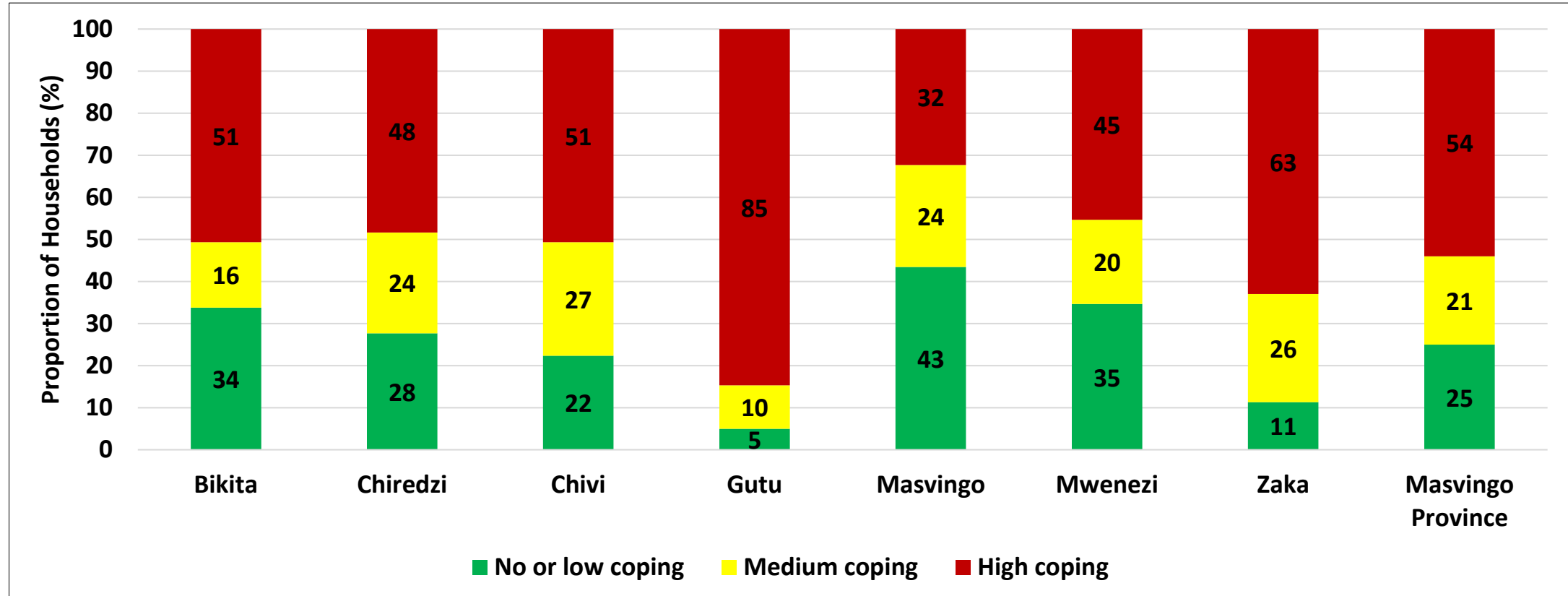
- At provincial level, 75% of households were employing some form of consumption coping strategy with 54% employing high coping strategies.

- Gutu (85%) had the highest proportion of households that employed high consumption coping strategies whilst Masvingo district (32%) had the least.

Households' Maximum Livelihoods Coping Strategies
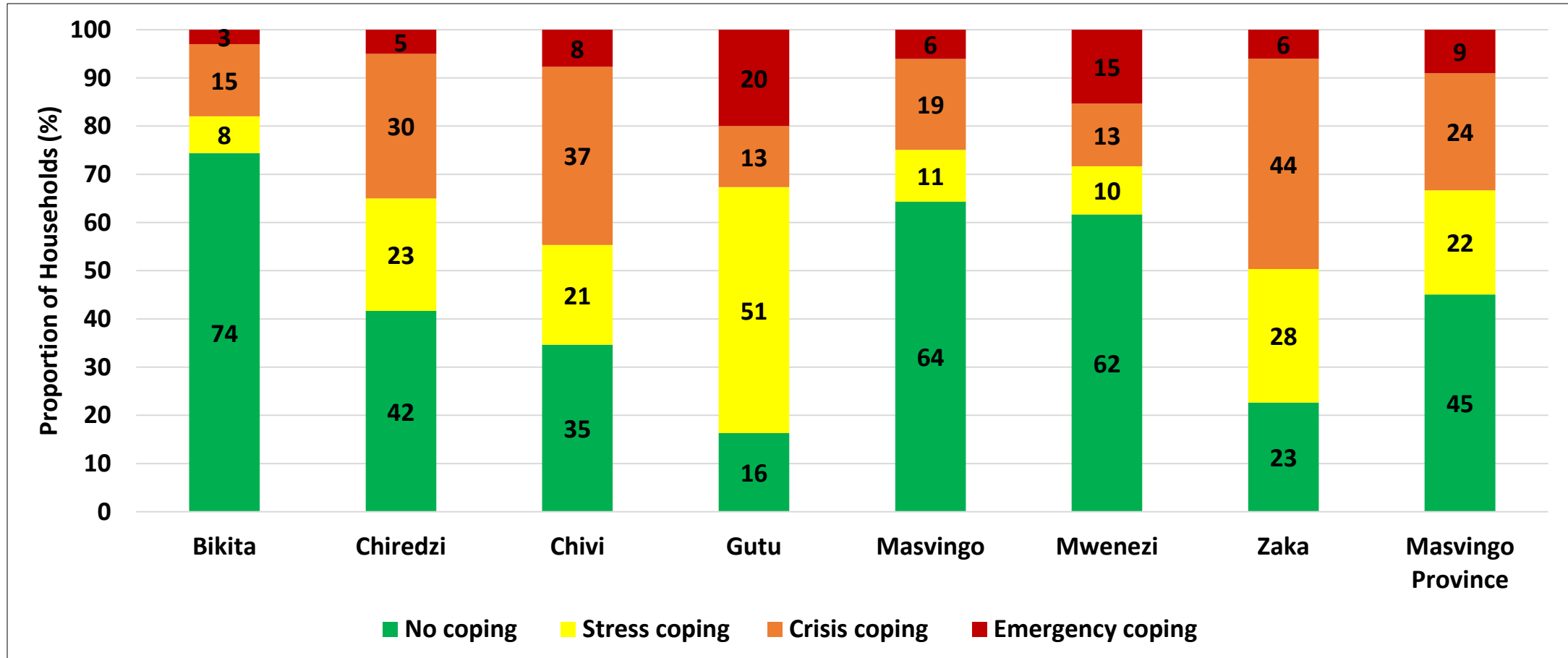
- Provincially, 55% of households employed some livelihood coping strategy with stress coping at 22%, crisis coping at 24% and emergency coping at 9%.

- Gutu had the highest proportion of households employing emergency livelihood coping strategies (20%).

Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)

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 by District
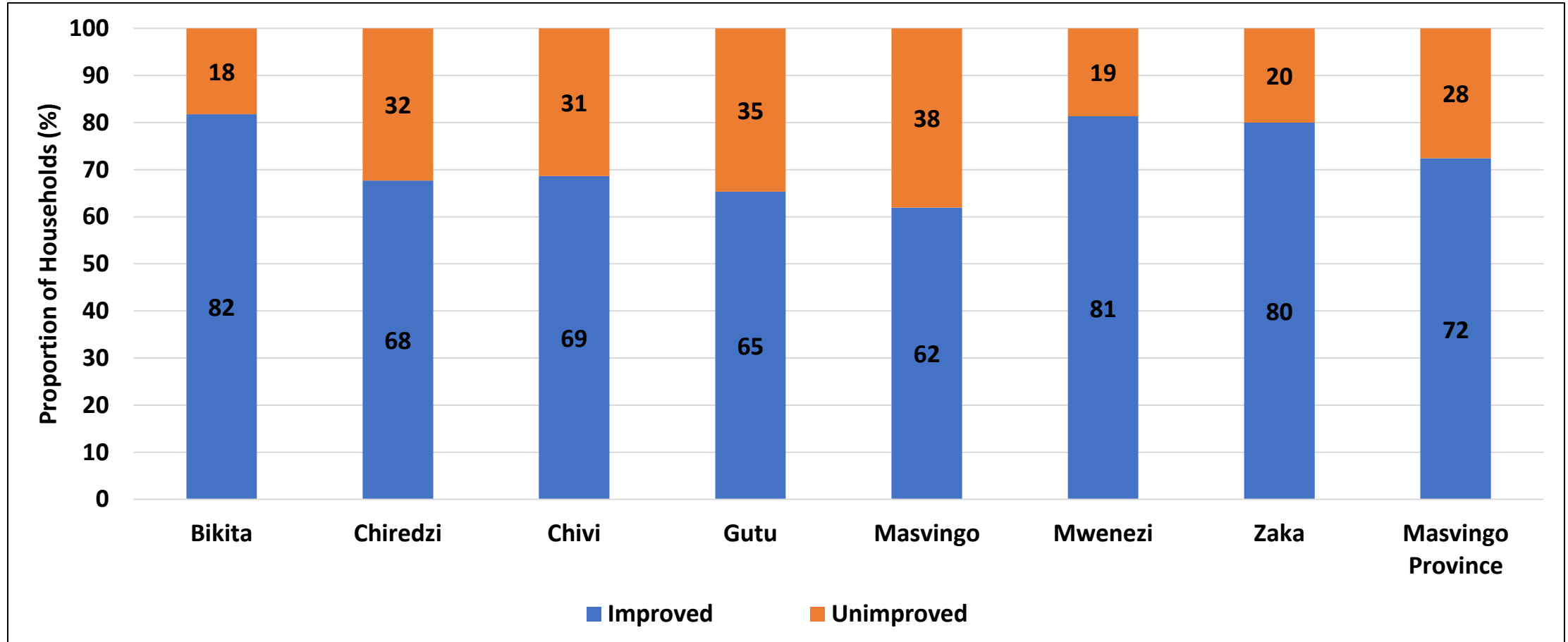
- Provincially, 28% of households were using unimproved water sources.
- Masvingo district (38%) had the highest proportion of households using unimproved water sources.

Access to Improved Water Source
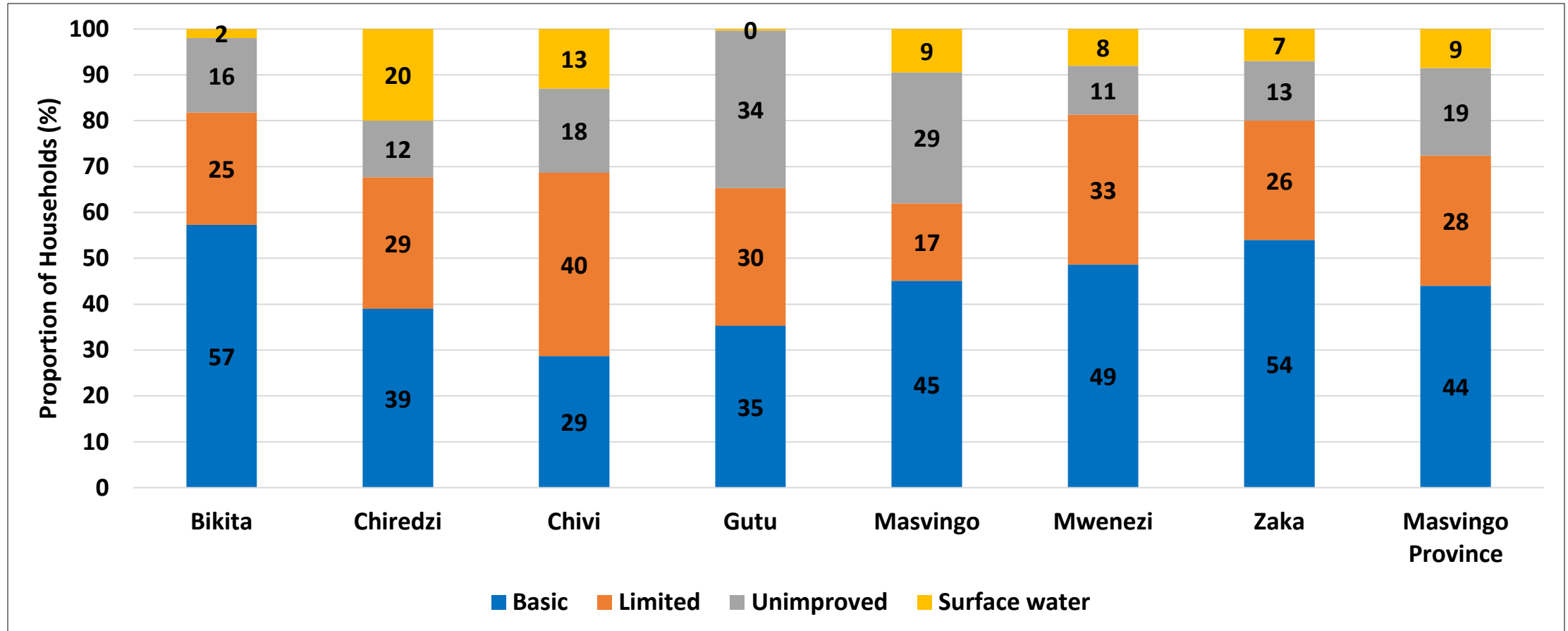
- The highest proportion of households were reported to be using basic water sources (44%) followed by limited water sources (28%) in the province.
- Chiredzi (20%) had the highest proportion of households using surface water followed by Chivi (13%).

Distance Travelled to Main Drinking Water Source
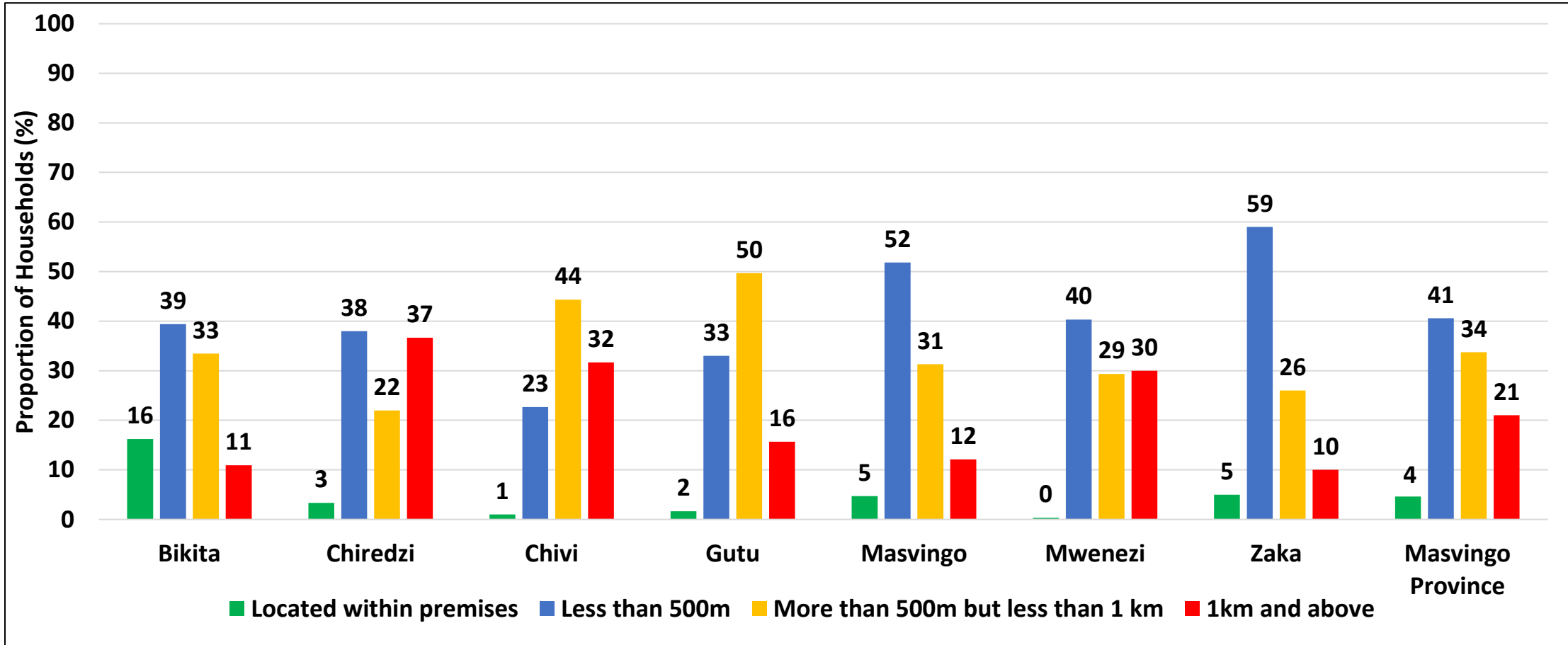
- At provincial level, 21% of the households were travelling 1 kilometre and above to their main drinking water source.
- Chiredzi (37%), Chivi (32%) and Mwenezi (30%) had the highest proportion of households travelling 1 kilometre and above to their main drinking water source.

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Time Taken to and from Main Drinking Water Source
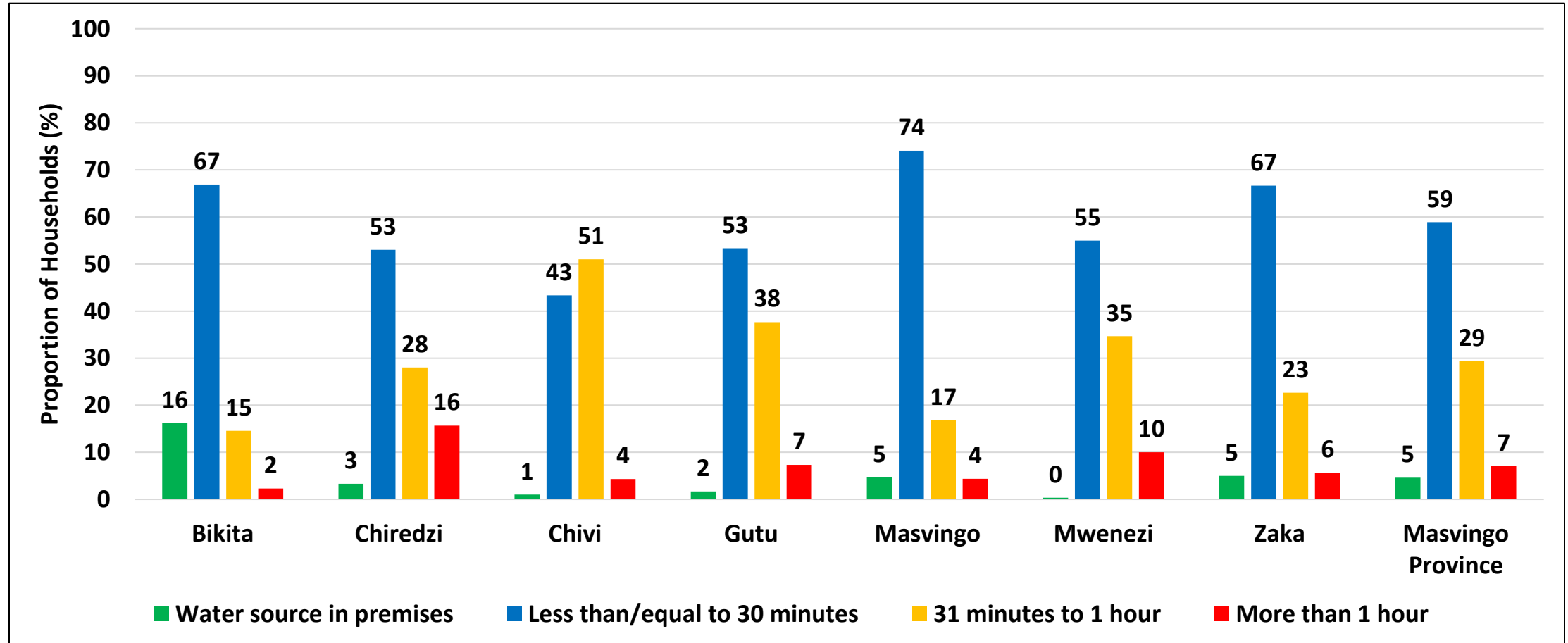
- Provincially, 7% of the households took more than an hour to travel to and from the main drinking water source.
- Chiredzi (16%) had the highest proportion of households travelling for more than 1 hour to and from the main drinking water source whilst Bikita (2%) had the lowest.

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.

Access to Improved Sanitation and Open Defecation
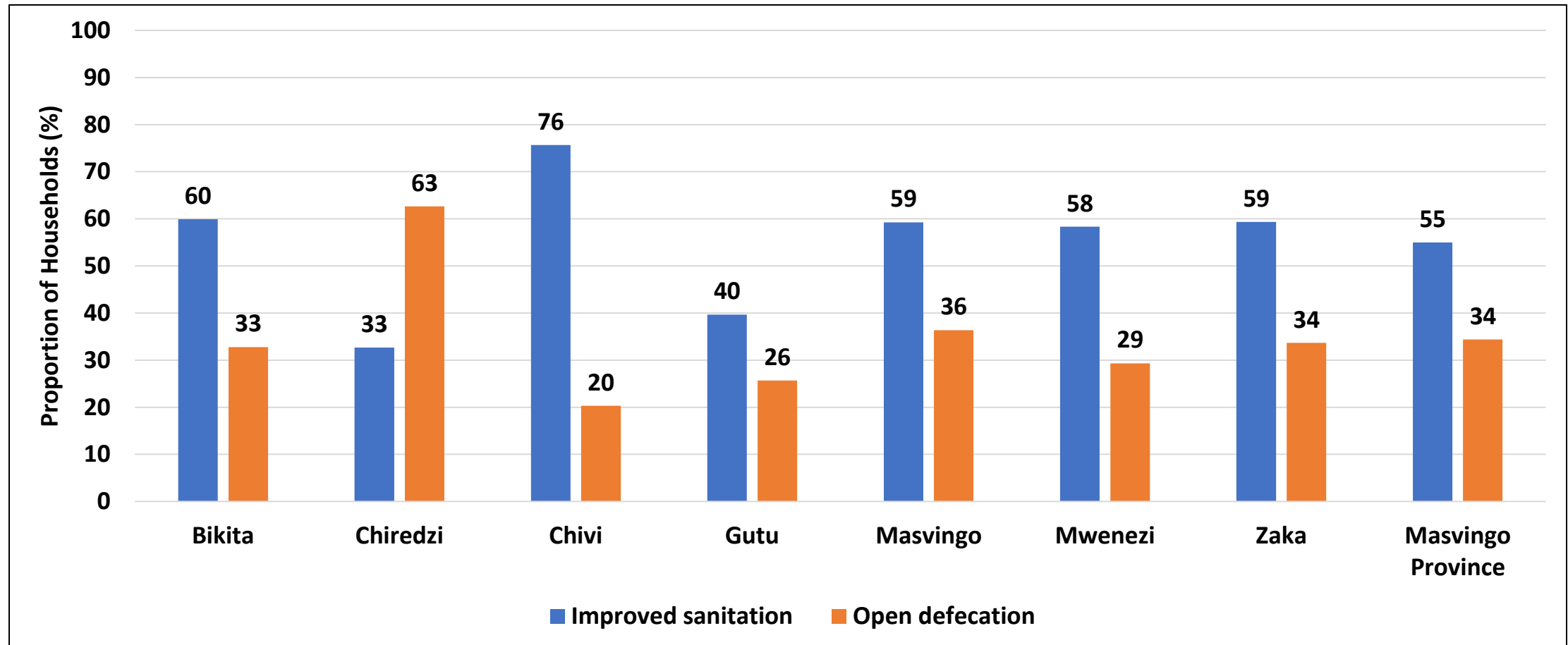
- Provincially, 55% of the households had access to improved sanitation whilst 34% of households were practicing open defecation.
- Chiredzi (63%) had the highest proportion of households practising open defecation whilst Chivi (20%) had the lowest proportion.

Household Sanitation Services
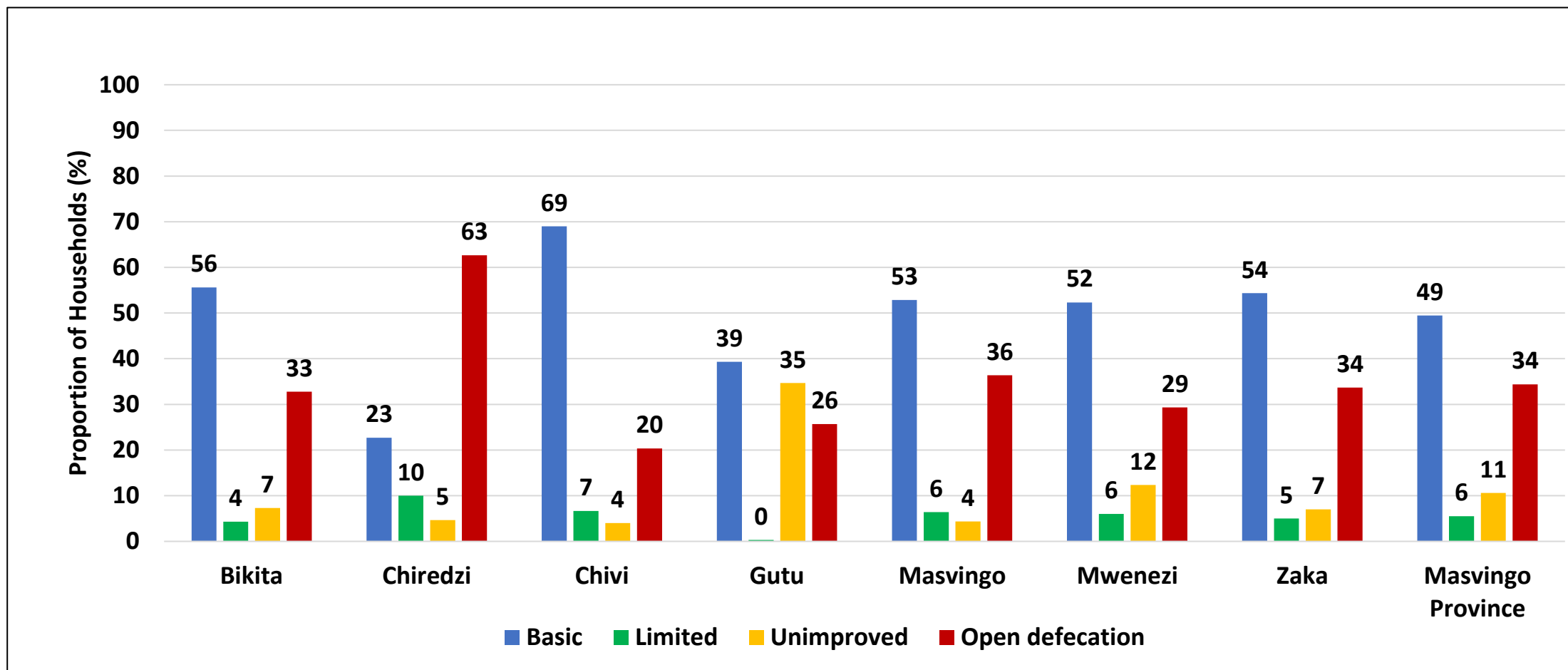
- Most households in the province were using basic sanitation services (49%).

- Chivi (69%) had the highest proportion of households using basic sanitation services whilst Chiredzi (23%) had the lowest.

- Gutu (35%) had the highest proportion of households using unimproved sanitation services.

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.
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.

Access to Hand Washing Facilities
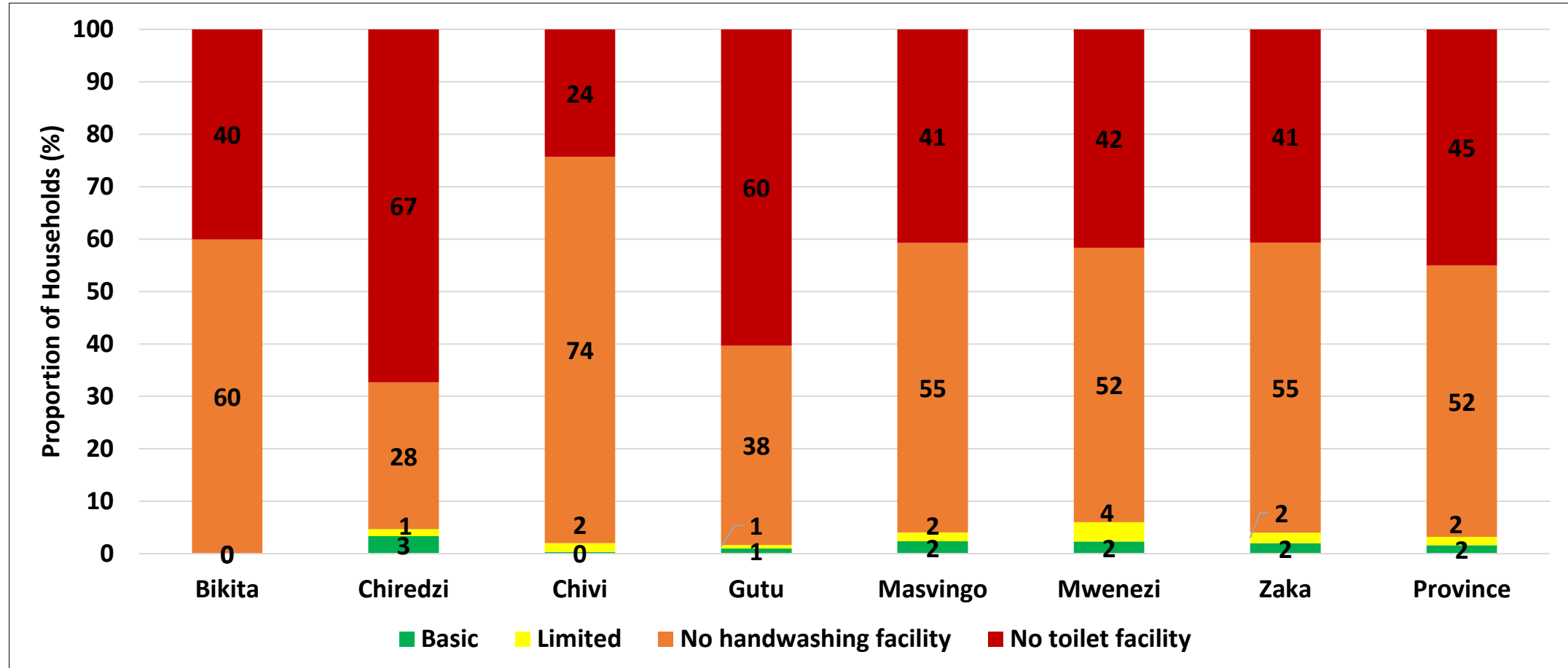
- Access to handwashing facilities was low with only 2% of households having access to basic hand washing facilities in the province.

- Bikita had no access to basic or limited hand washing facilities.

Handwashing at Critical Times
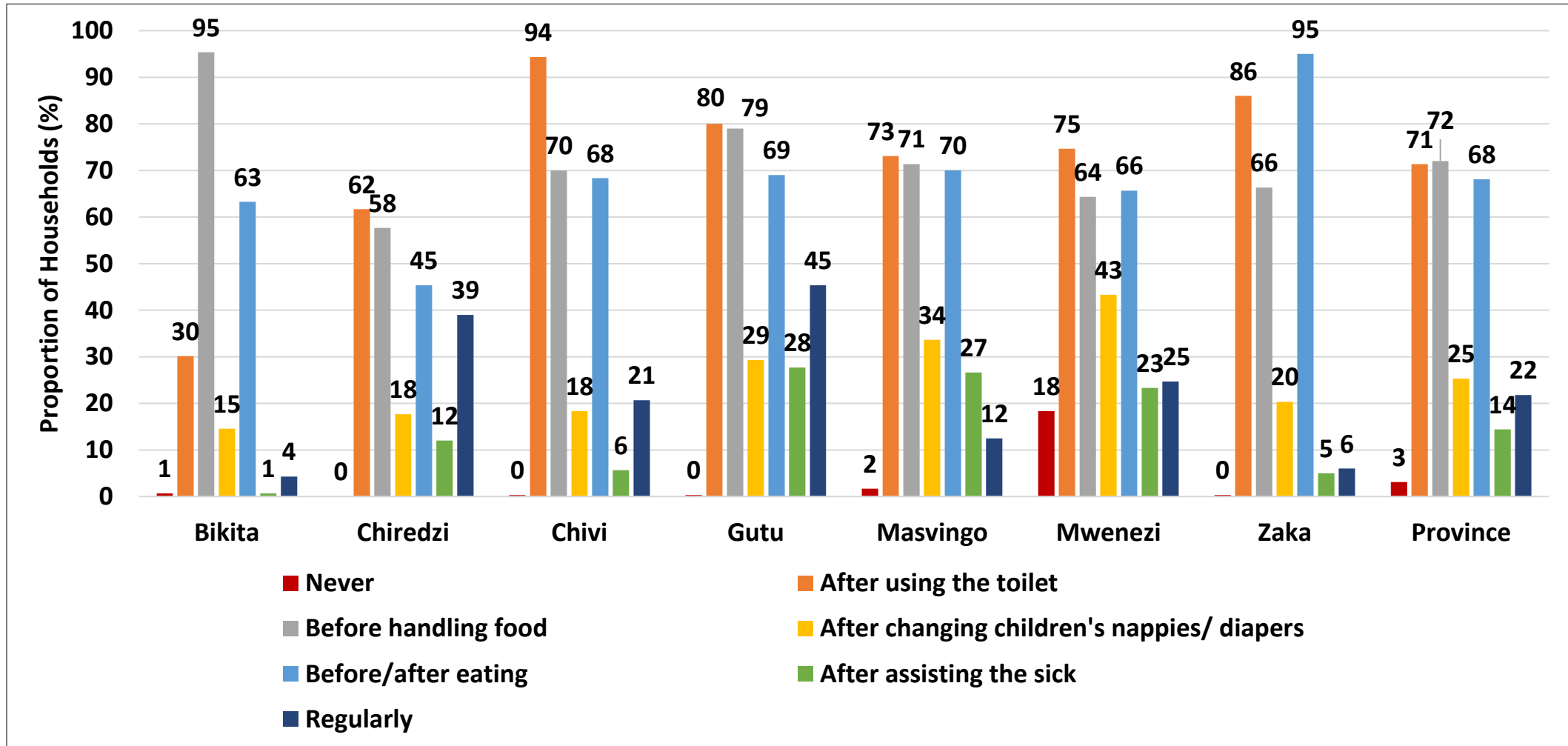
- Most households in the province identified washing hands before handling food (72%), washing hands after using the toilet (71%) and before and after eating (68%) as critical times for hand washing.

Shocks and Hazards

Households Experiencing Shocks

Shock	Proportion of households (%)
Floods	0.2
Waterlogging	0.7
Drug and substance abuse	1.1
Veld fires	1.5
Death of main income earner in the household	1.6
Loss of employment by key household member	1.7
Other Health related (malaria, measles, etc.)	2.0
Gender Based Violence (GBV)	2.3
Stock theft	3.3
Hailstorm	3.7
Divorce/separation	3.8
Diarrhoea related (Diarrhoea, cholera, typhoid,etc.)	3.9
Human wildlife conflict	14.2
Chronic illness (e.g., HIV/AIDS, Cancer, TB, BP, etc.)	15.3
Sharp Drop in livestock price	16.9
Livestock diseases	27.6
Livestock deaths	28.0
Crop pests	31.1
Being charged more for using mobile money or swipe	34.1
Sharp Increase in cereal price	64.6
Cash shortage	75.7
Prolonged mid-season dry spell	88.5

- Prolonged mid-season dry spells (88.5%), cash shortage (75.7%) and sharp increase in cereal prices (64.6%) were the most prevalent shocks experienced by households.

Proportion of Households Experiencing Shocks

| District	Prolonged mid-season dry spell / (%)	Cash shortage (%)	Sharp Increase in cereal price (%)	Livestock deaths (%)	Crop pests (%)	Livestock diseases (%)	Being charged more for using mobile money or swipe/ (%)	Sharp Drop in livestock price /(%)	Diarrhoea related (Diarrhoea, cholera, typhoid, etc.) / (%)	Other Health related (malaria, measles, etc.) / (%)
Bikita	92.1	71.2	76.5	30.5	1.3	30.8	44.0	14.9	2.3	0.0
Chiredzi	82.3	77.7	45.0	24.7	21.7	22.3	5.0	10.0	4.3	6.7
Chivi	96.7	57.0	59.0	23.3	50.0	21.7	21.0	11.3	5.3	1.0
Gutu	92.0	75.7	93.3	34.0	48.7	36.3	73.7	42.7	1.3	1.3
Masvingo	96.0	89.2	60.3	29.6	41.8	27.9	51.5	10.8	1.7	0.3
Mwenezi	64.3	72.3	55.0	8.7	8.3	8.0	29.7	14.0	5.3	1.3
Zaka	96.3	87.0	63.3	45.3	46.3	46.0	13.7	14.3	7.0	3.3
Masvingo Province	88.5	75.7	64.6	34.1	31.1	28.0	27.6	16.9	3.9	2.0

- Prolonged mid- season dry spells were most reported in Chivi (96.7%), cash shortages in Masvingo district (89.2%) and sharp increase in cereal prices in Gutu (93.3%).

- In Gutu, most households (73.7%) were also being charged more for using mobile money or swipe.

Number of Shocks Experienced by Households
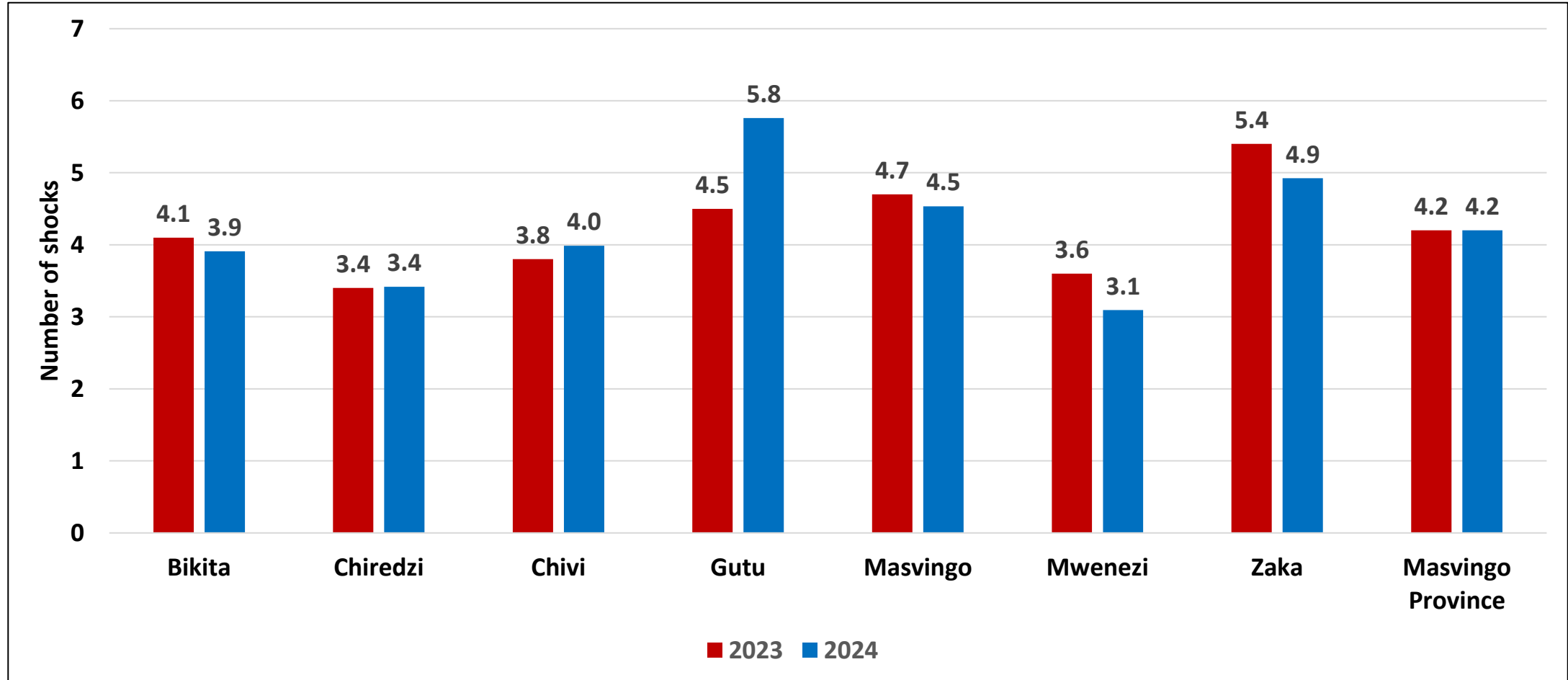
- The number of shocks that were experienced at provincial level remained the same as in the previous year at an average of 4.2.

Severity of Shocks/Stressors
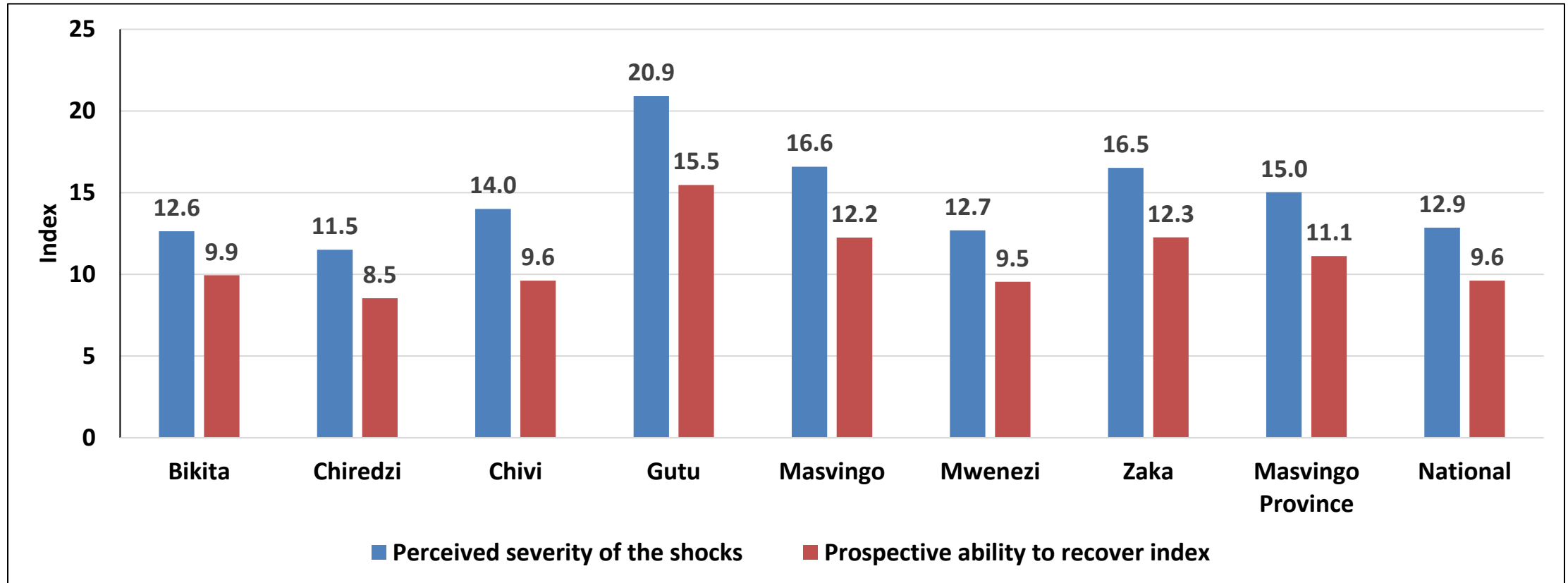
- For Masvingo province, the perceived severity of the shocks was 15.0 and the prospective ability to recover was 11.1 in the province.

Average Shock Exposure Index
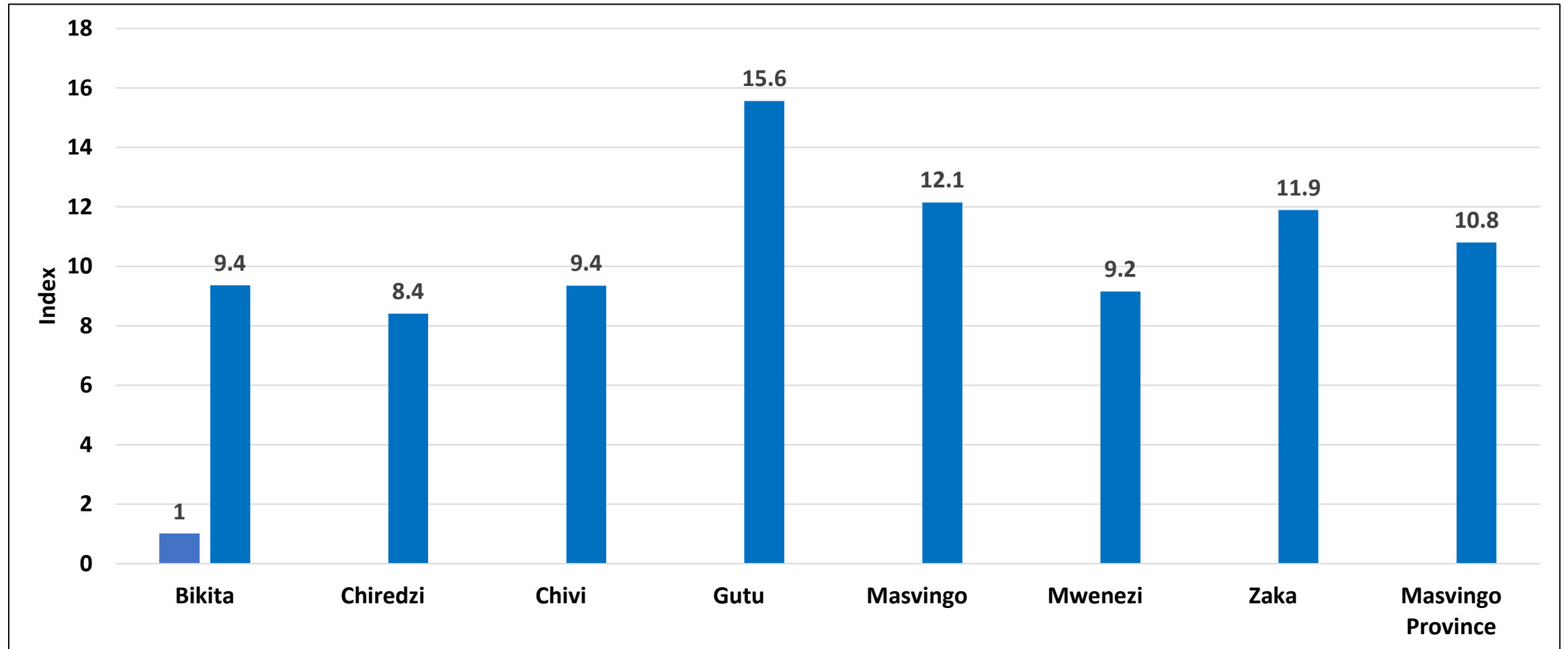
- Shock exposure index was calculated by multiplying the number of shocks experienced with impact severity of the shock to the household.
- Gutu (15.6) had the highest shock exposure index in the province followed by Masvingo district (12.1).

Comparison Between Shock Exposure and Ability to Cope Indices
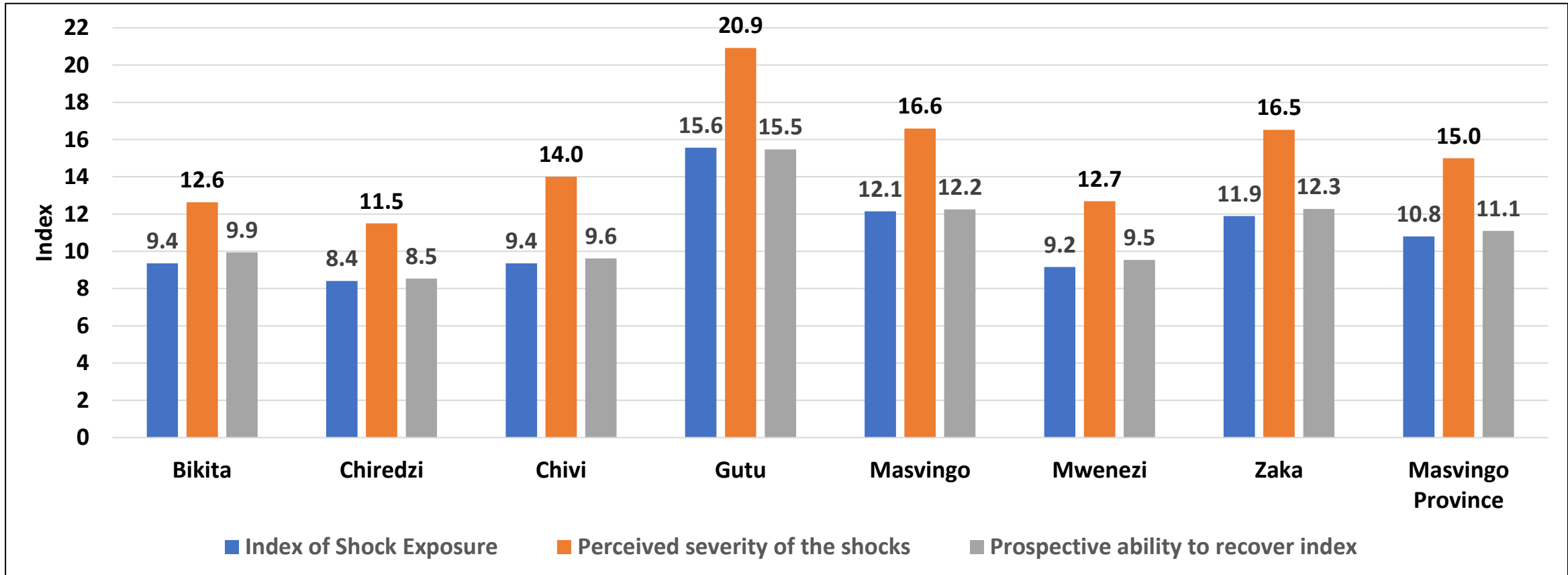
- The average Shock Exposure Index was 10.8, Shock Severity Index was 15.0 and average Shock Recovery Index was 11.1.

Agriculture

Sources of Inputs for Maize
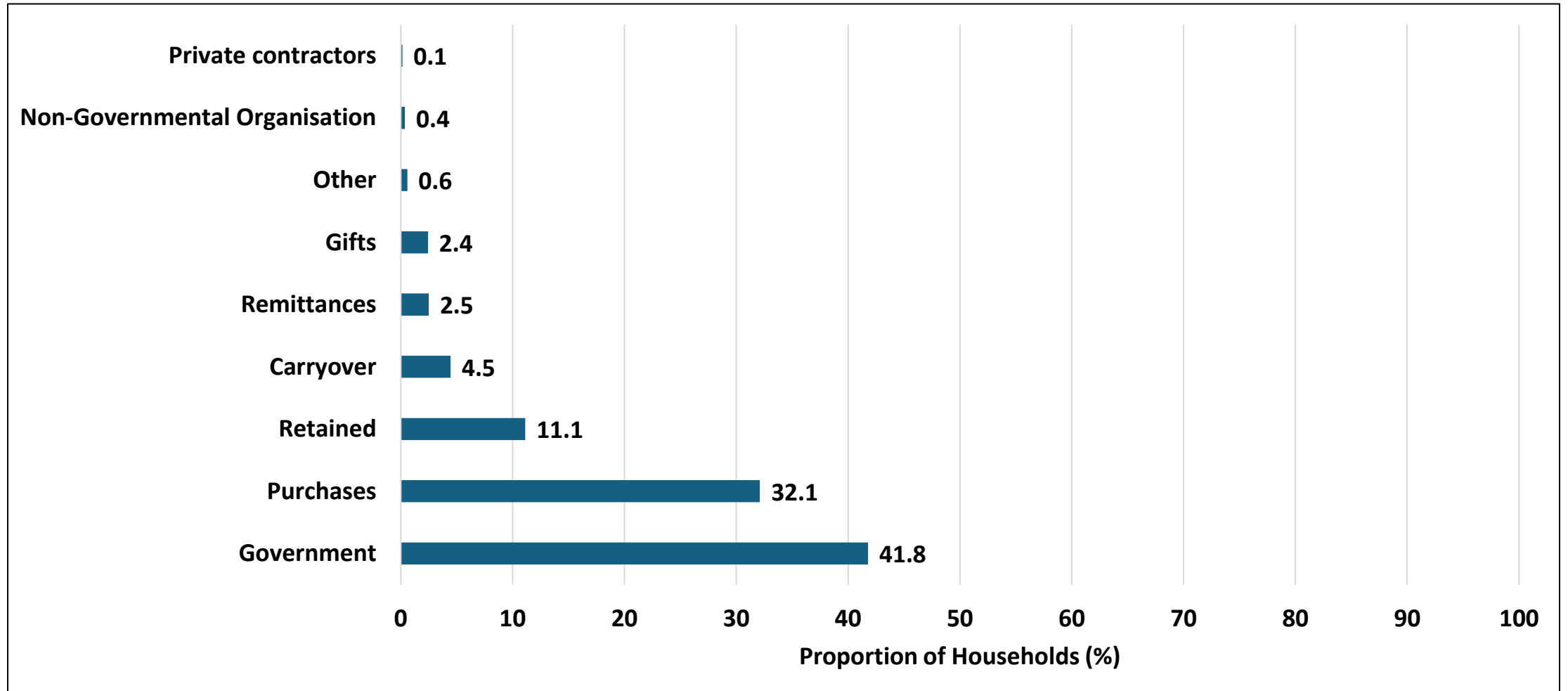
- The main source for maize inputs in the province was Government (41.8%), followed by purchases (32.1%).

Season Harvest

	Maize (kgs)		Sorghum (kgs)	
	Expected	**Actual**	**Expected**	**Actual**
Bikita	373	27.8	128	4.1
Chiredzi	669	87.9	983	140.9
Chivi	653	26.4	219	15.0
Gutu	843	36.0	103	10.0
Masvingo	997	155.7	56	12.2
Mwenezi	215	14.3	202	15.1
Zaka	816	80.2	22	2.1
Masvingo Province	**651**	**61**	**245**	**28**

- Provincially, the average actual production for maize was 61kgs against the expected 651kgs.

- Masvingo District had the highest average maize production per household (155.7kgs) followed by Chiredzi (87.9kgs).

Maize From Casual Labour and Remittances

	Maize from casual labour (in kgs)	Maize from remittances (in kgs)
Bikita	26.0	4.1
Chiredzi	17.3	0.0
Chivi	14.0	3.2
Gutu	13.4	0.0
Masvingo	21.6	0.8
Mwenezi	13.7	0.0
Zaka	16.2	2.1
Masvingo Province	**16.4**	**0.9**

- Provincially, households had received an average of 16.4kgs from casual labour and 0.9kgs from remittances.

- Bikita (26.0kgs) and Masvingo (21.6kgs) had received the largest amount of maize from casual labour.

Household Stocks as at 1 April 2024

	Maize (Kgs)	Mealie Meal (Kgs)	Sorghum (kgs)
Bikita	24.9	7.3	0.0
Chiredzi	3.7	8.6	15.6
Chivi	6.5	9.5	3.6
Gutu	0.0	4.6	0.0
Masvingo	34.5	16.1	0.0
Mwenezi	2.1	10.4	0.0
Zaka	23.8	7.8	0.0
Masvingo Province	**8.3**	**7.4**	**2.7**

- Provincially, the average maize stocks was 8.3kgs per household and 7.4kg for mealie meal.

- Masvingo (34.5kgs) and Bikita (24.9kgs) had the largest stocks of maize.

Measures to Close the Cereal Gap
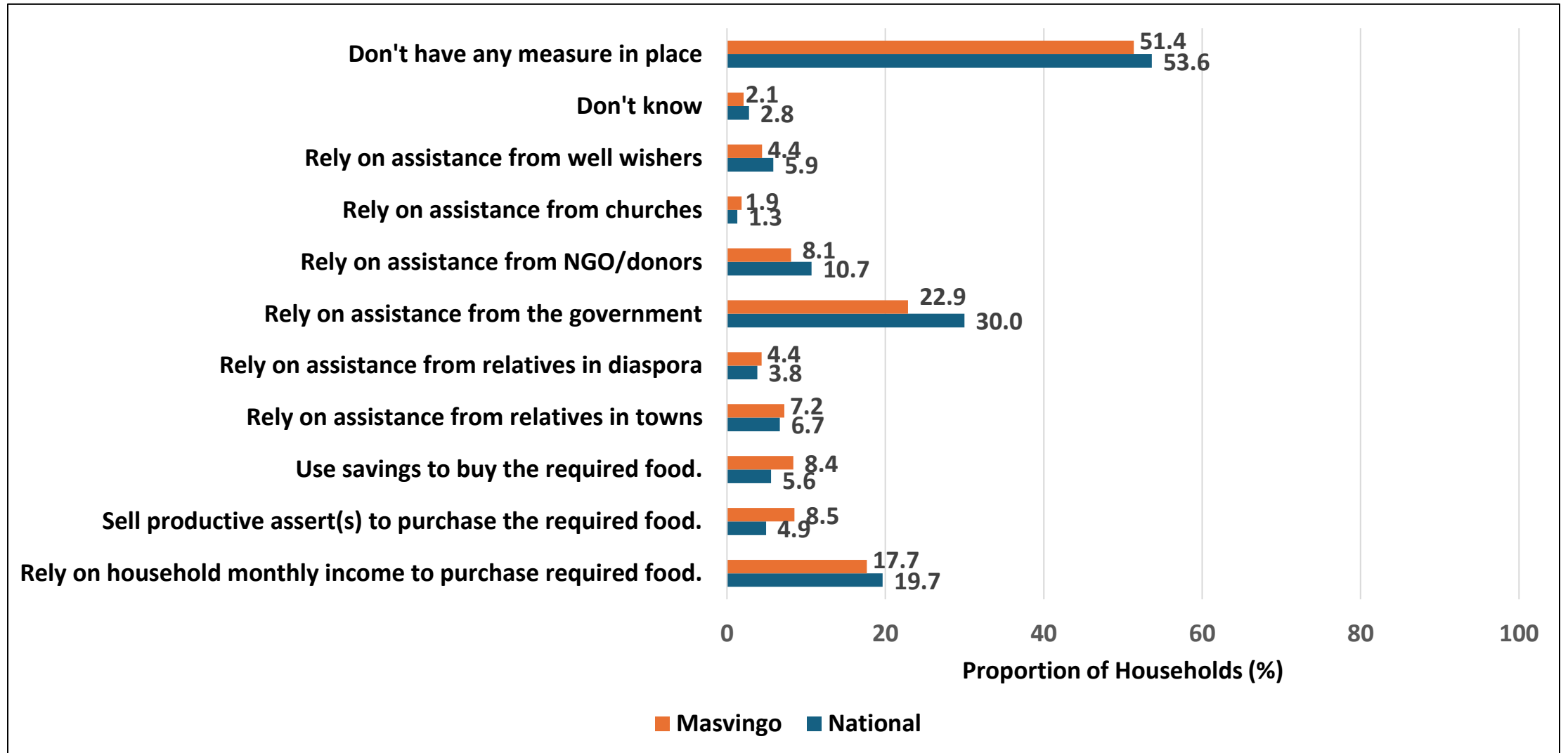
- About 51.4% of the households in the province did not have any measures in place to close the cereal gap.

Maize Grain and Mealie Meal Prices

Maize grain
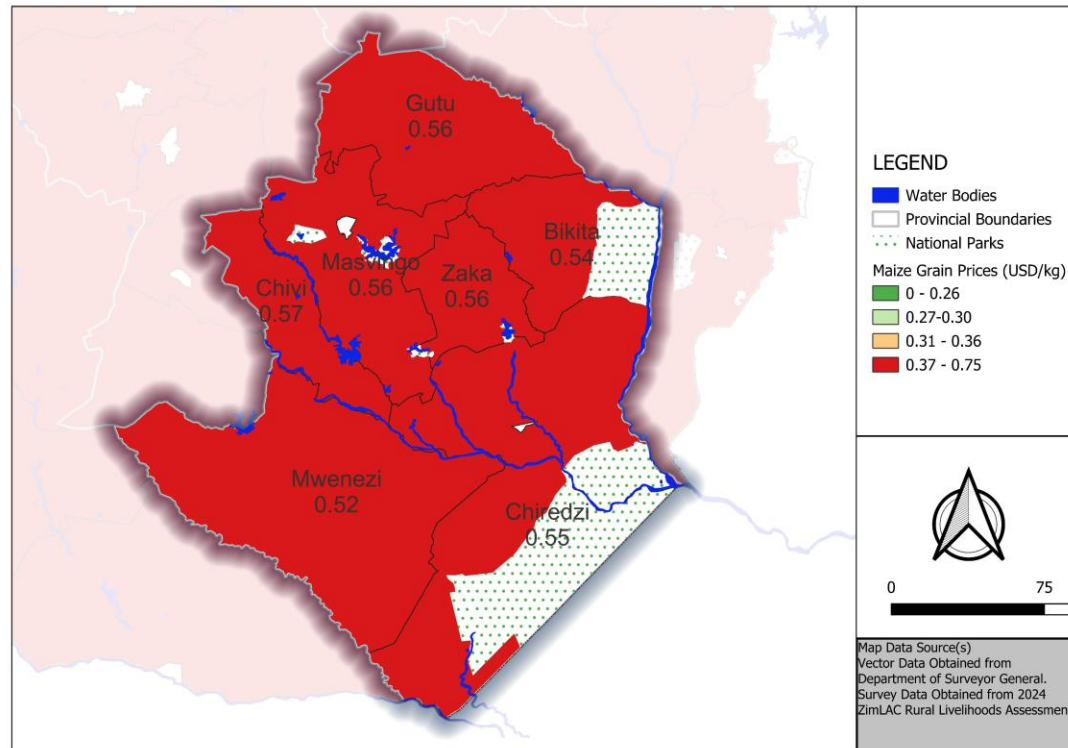
Mealie Meal
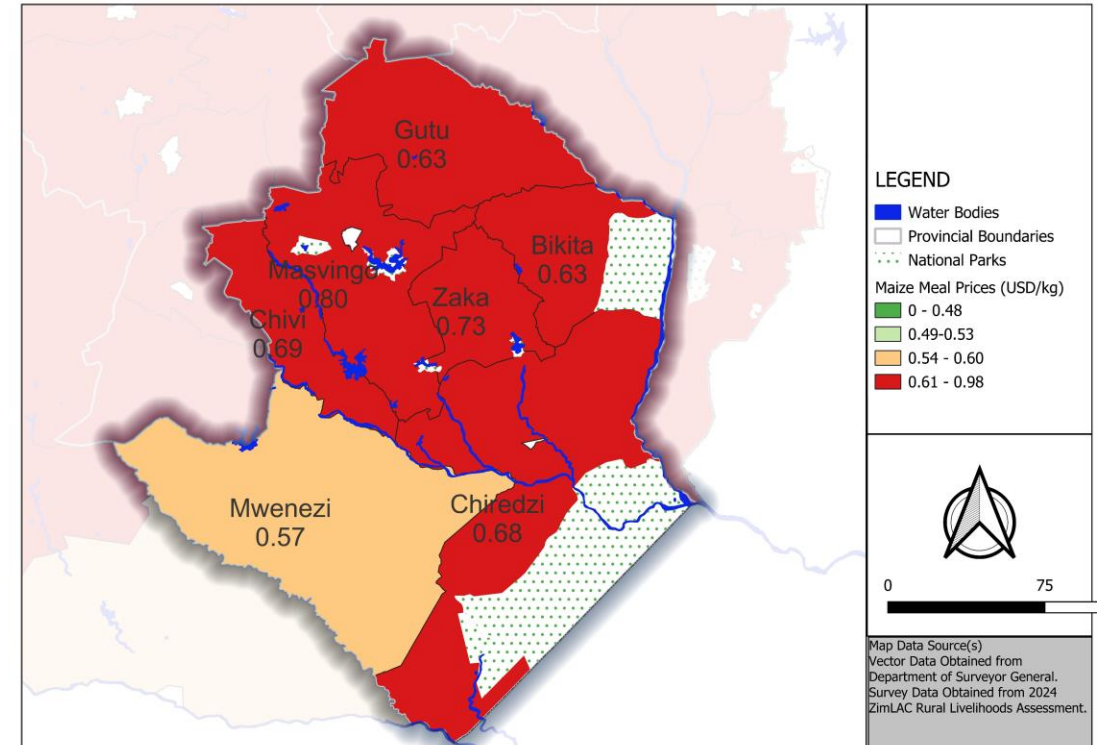
- Chivi (USD$0.57 /kg) had the highest prices for maize grain, while Mwenezi at USD$0.52/kg had the lowest.

- Masvingo district (USD$0.80 /kg) had the highest prices for mealie meal, while Mwenezi at USD$0.57/kg had the lowest.

Livestock

Proportion of Households which owned Livestock

Province	Cattle (%)	Donkeys (%)	Sheep (%)	Goats (%)	Pigs (%)	Poultry (chicken, ducks, guinea fowls, etc) (%)	Rabbits (%)
Bikita	40.7	0.7	1.7	41.7	2.3	83.4	3.0
Chiredzi	51.3	15.0	6.0	50.3	2.0	63.7	3.0
Chivi	54.3	20.0	2.7	62.3	0.7	84.0	4.3
Gutu	31.3	0.3	1.0	34.7	1.0	72.0	3.0
Masvingo	45.8	7.7	1.3	36.0	3.7	70.0	2.0
Mwenezi	41.7	15.7	3.0	31.0	3.0	50.0	1.3
Zaka	53.0	5.0	6.3	48.0	6.3	83.0	4.3
Masvingo Province	**45.5**	**9.2**	**3.1**	**43.4**	**2.7**	**72.3**	**3.0**

- The most commonly owned livestock in the province were poultry (72.3%), goats (43.4%) and cattle (45.5%).

Livestock Condition
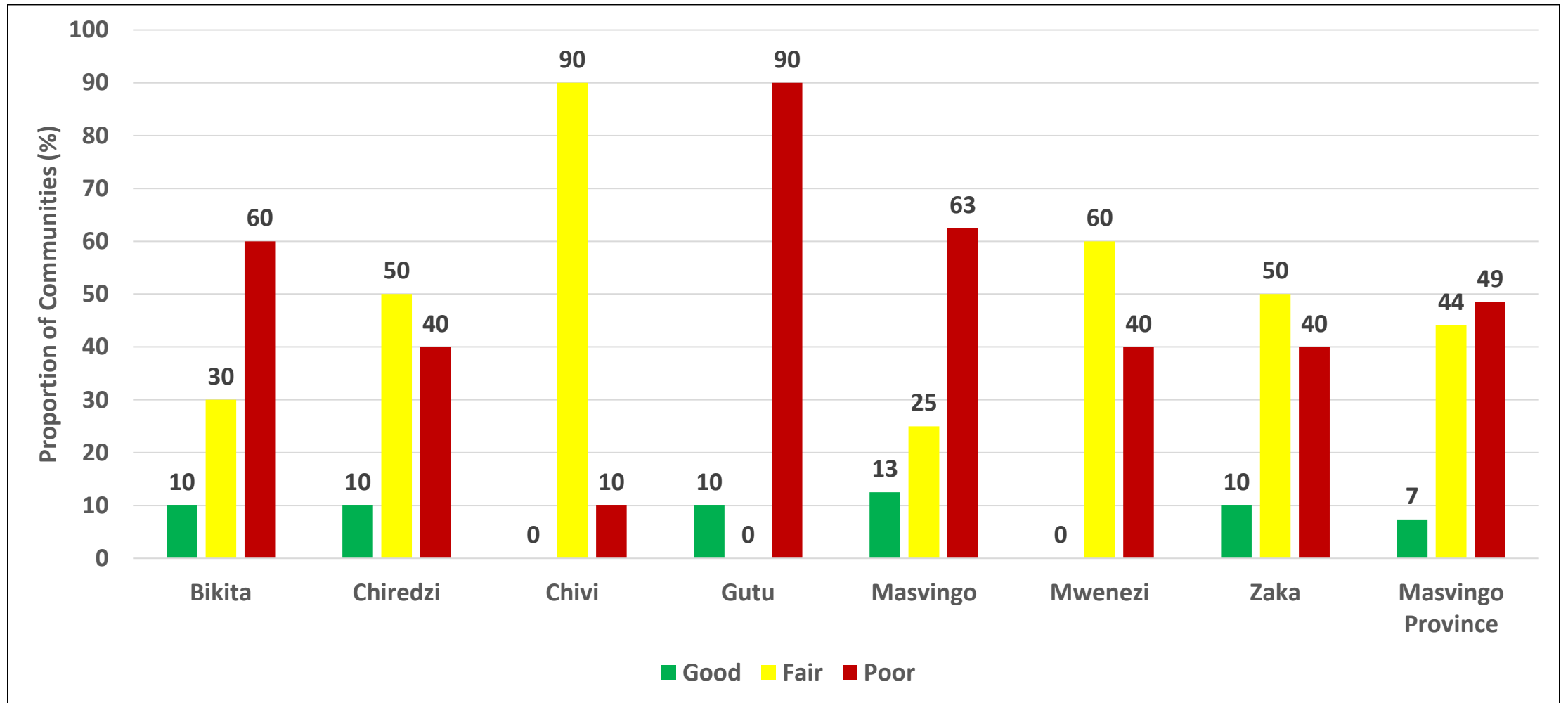
- About 49% of the communities indicated that the livestock condition was poor.

Pasture Availability and Quantity
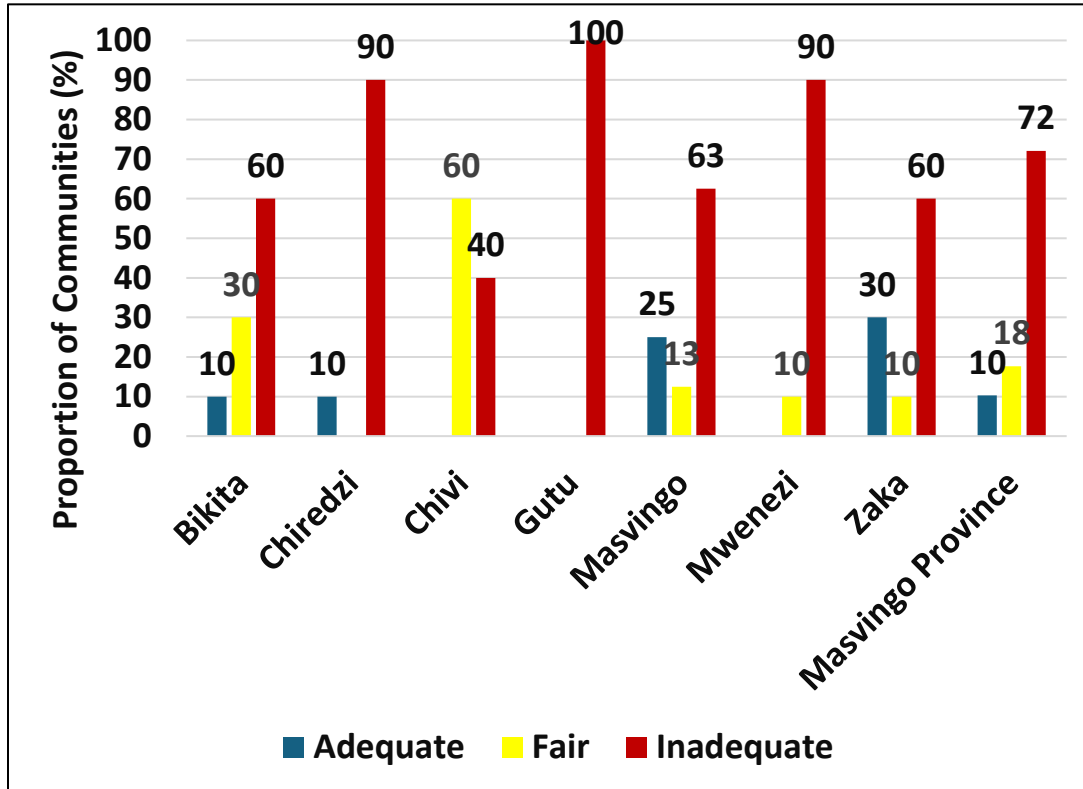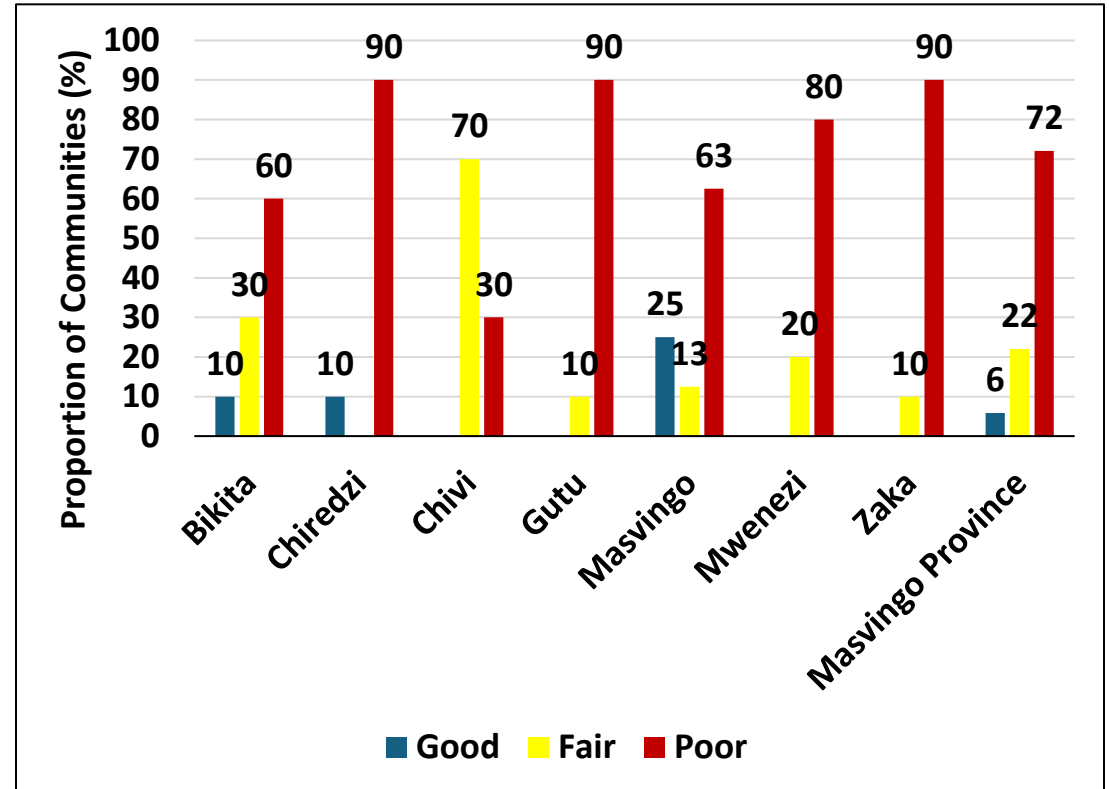
- About 72% of the communities in Masvingo Province indicated that their pastures were of poor quality and inadequate

Livestock Prices

Cattle Prices
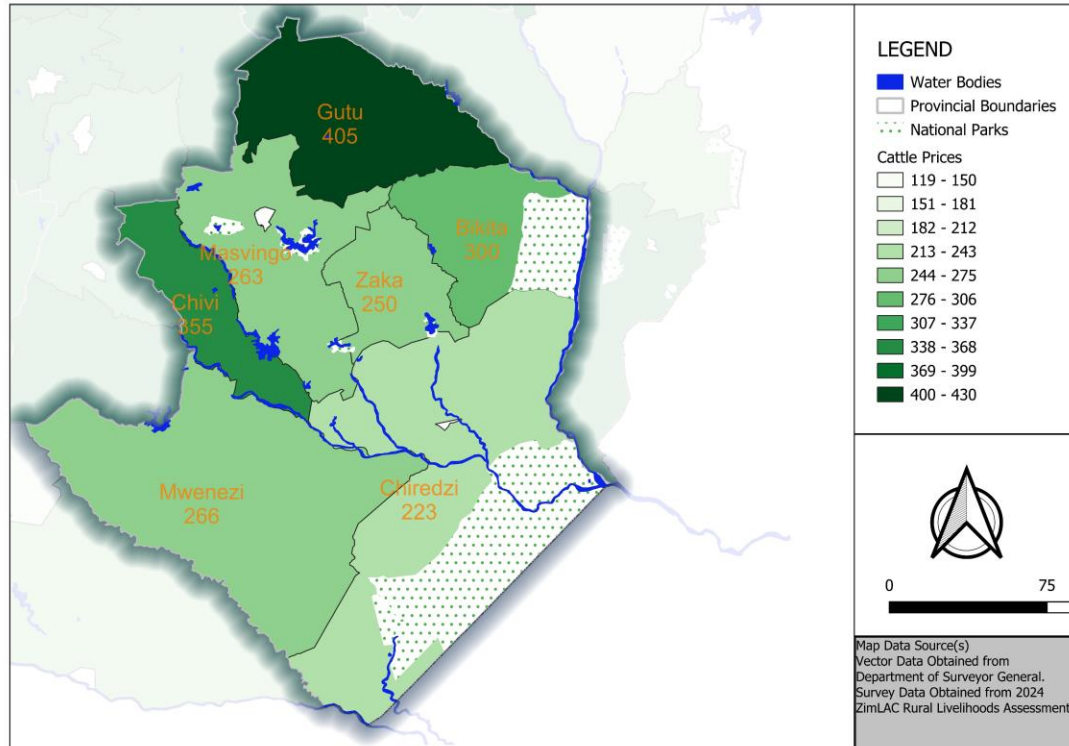
Goat Prices
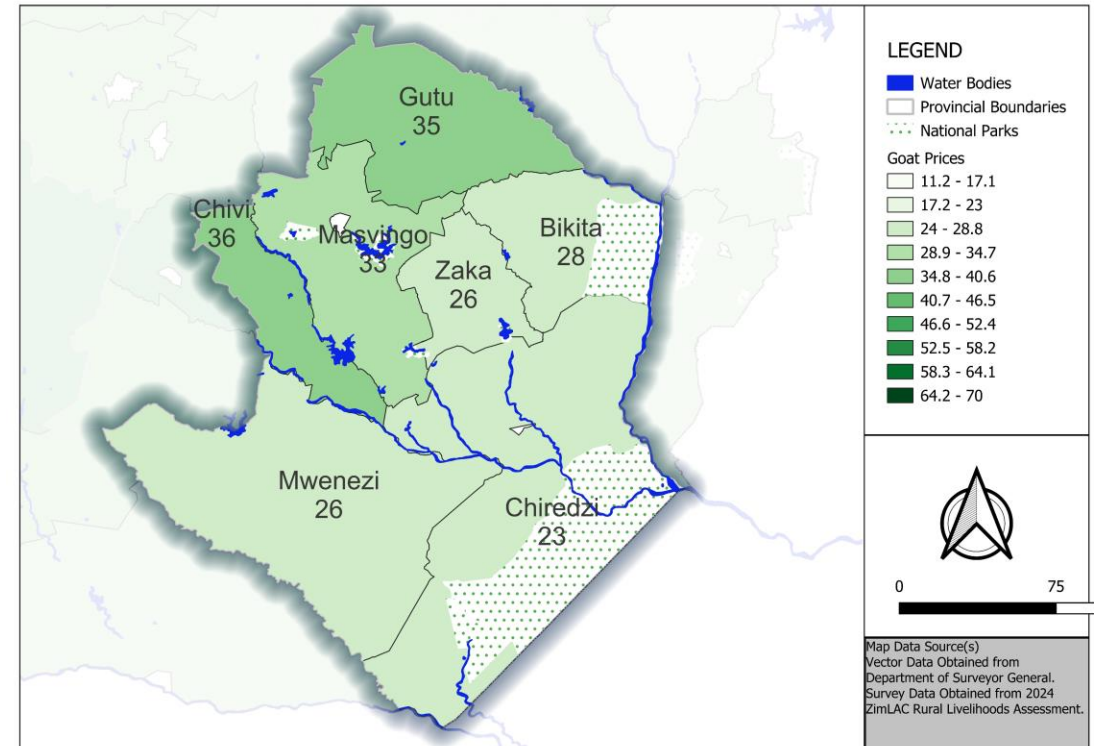
- Cattle prices ranged from USD 223 to USD 405 per average beast.

- The highest cattle prices were reported in Gutu (USD405) and Chivi (USD 355) whilst the lowest prices were recorded in Chiredzi (USD 223.

- Goat prices ranged from USD 23 to USD 36.

- The highest goat prices were reported in Chivi (USD36) and the lowest prices were reported in Chiredzi (USD 23).

Households Practicing Climate Smart Agriculture

District	Quality certified seeds (%)	Community seed banks (%)	Adapted, suitable Improved Varieties (%)	Growing traditional grains (%)	Crop rotation (%)	Intercropping (%)	Cover cropping (%)	Mulching (%)	Integrated Pest Management (%)	Compost / Organic fertilizer (%)	Drip/ Micro Irrigation (%)	Plant Density (%)	Pfumvudza /Intwasa (%)
Bikita	31.8	7.6	49.0	37.1	32.1	20.9	0.0	1.0	4.0	13.2	0.0	0.3	44.4
Chiredzi	20.7	1.0	27.7	52.3	7.3	19.3	0.3	2.3	0.3	5.3	1.3	0.7	42.0
Chivi	17.3	0.7	25.7	47.7	34.7	12.0	1.7	26.3	2.0	17.7	5.7	0.7	65.3
Gutu	49.7	13.7	11.7	5.0	54.0	30.0	3.3	10.7	2.3	3.0	1.0	0.3	35.0
Masvingo	40.1	4.4	19.5	7.1	38.4	25.9	9.1	21.9	0.0	17.5	5.7	0.3	80.1
Mwenezi	41.3	8.7	16.3	39.0	40.7	29.7	9.7	23.0	11.0	22.0	3.7	1.0	18.3
Zaka	66.3	16.0	28.0	10.7	39.0	17.0	5.3	7.7	5.3	42.7	1.3	4.0	69.3
Masvingo Province	**38.2**	**7.4**	**25.4**	**28.4**	**35.2**	**22.1**	**4.2**	**13.2**	**3.6**	**17.3**	**2.7**	**1.0**	**50.6**

- The most prevalent climate smart agriculture practices were Pfumvudza/Intwasa (50.6%), use of quality certified seeds (38.2%) and crop rotation (35.2%).

Households Using Quality Certified Seeds
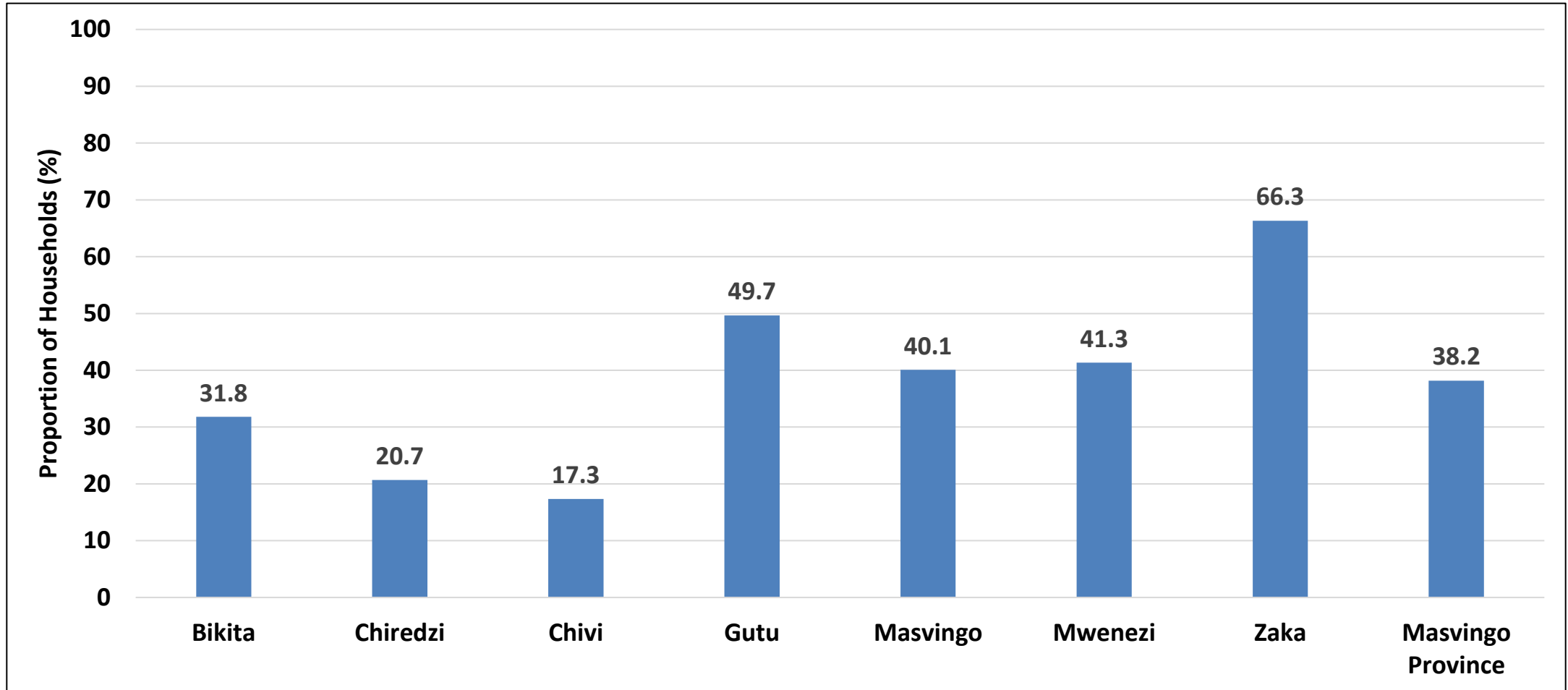
- About 38.2% of households used quality certified seeds.
- Use of quality certified seeds was most prevalent in Zaka (66.3%), and least in Chivi (17.3%).

Proportion of Households Using Pfumvudza/Intwasa
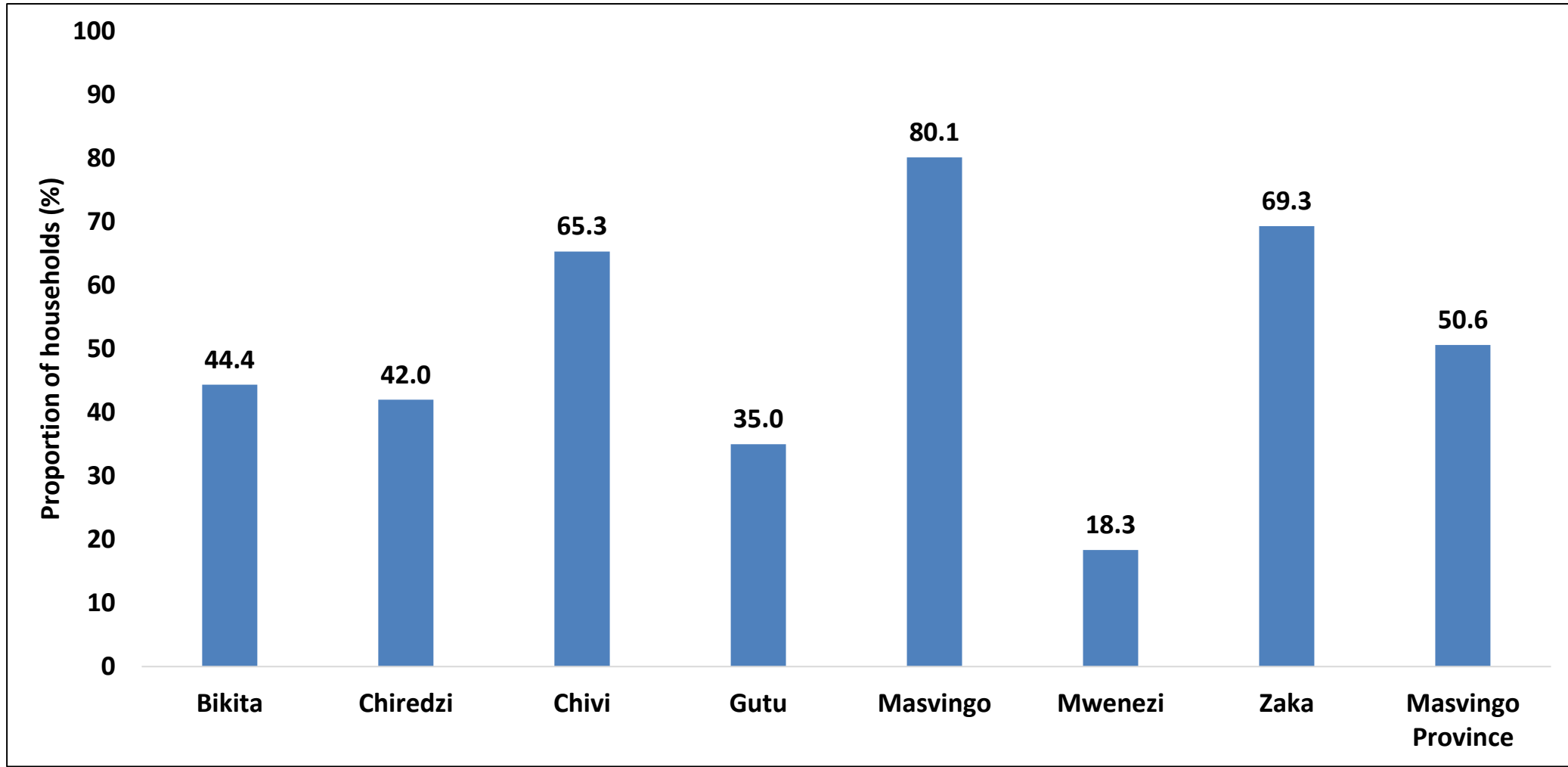
- About 50.6% of households practiced Pfumvudza/Intwasa.

- Masvingo district (80.1%) had the highest proportion of households practicing Pfumvudza/Intwasa while Mwenezi (18.3%) had the lowest.

Livestock Vaccinations

Routine Vaccinations by Vet Officer/Paravet
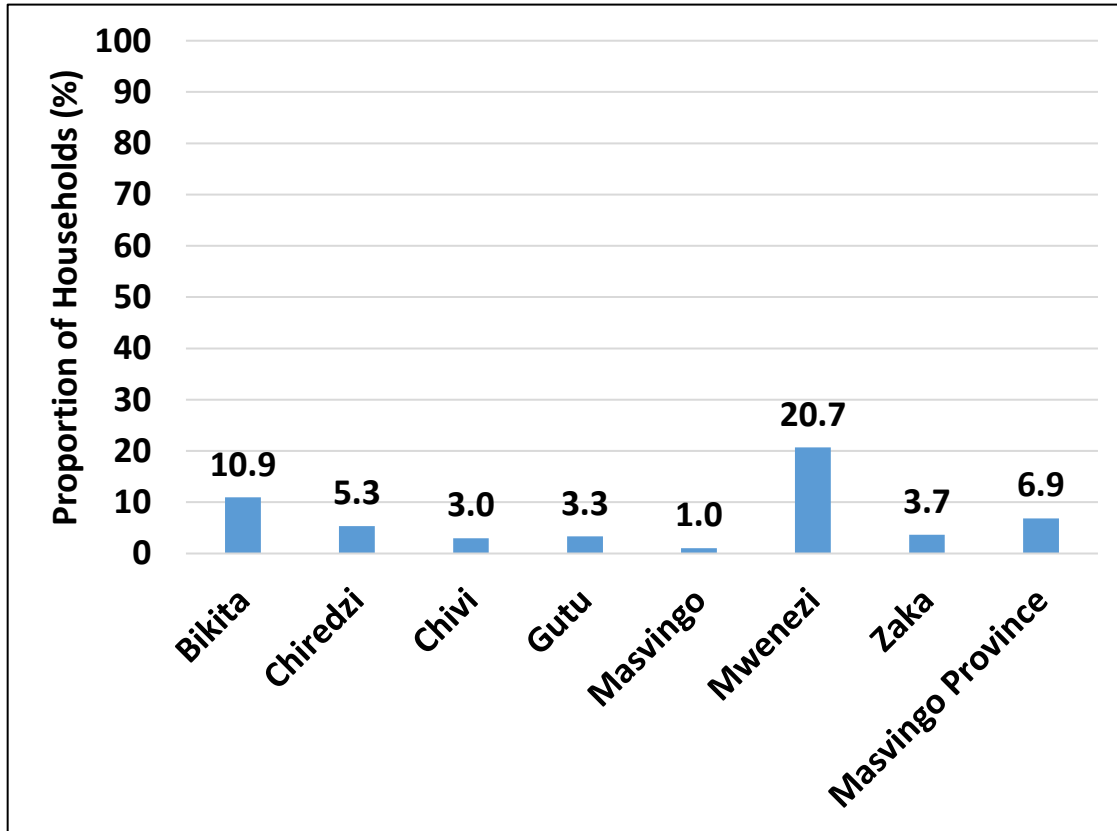
Home Vaccinations
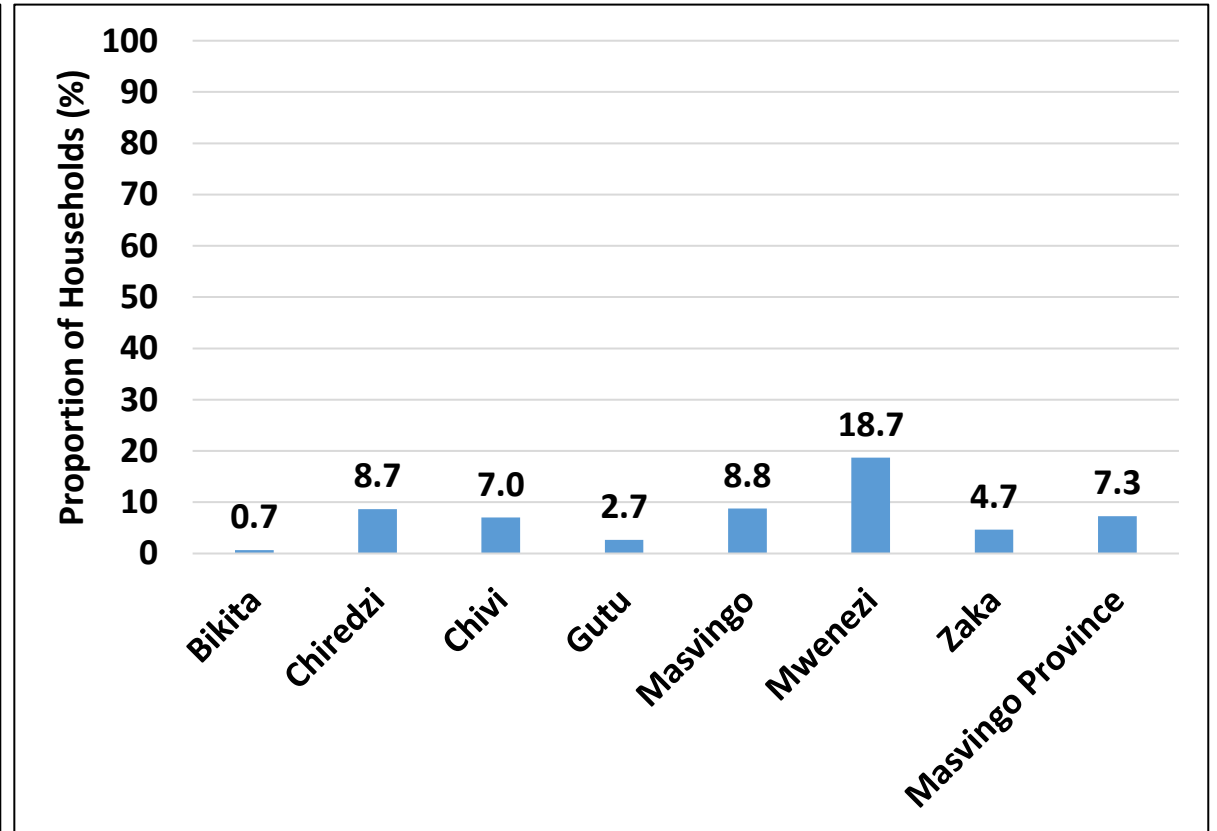
- In Masvingo province, an average of 6.9% of the households indicated that they had used vaccinations carried out by a Veterinary Officer/Paravet.

- On the other hand, 7.3% of the households indicated that they conducted home vaccinations.

Livestock Deworming and Dipping
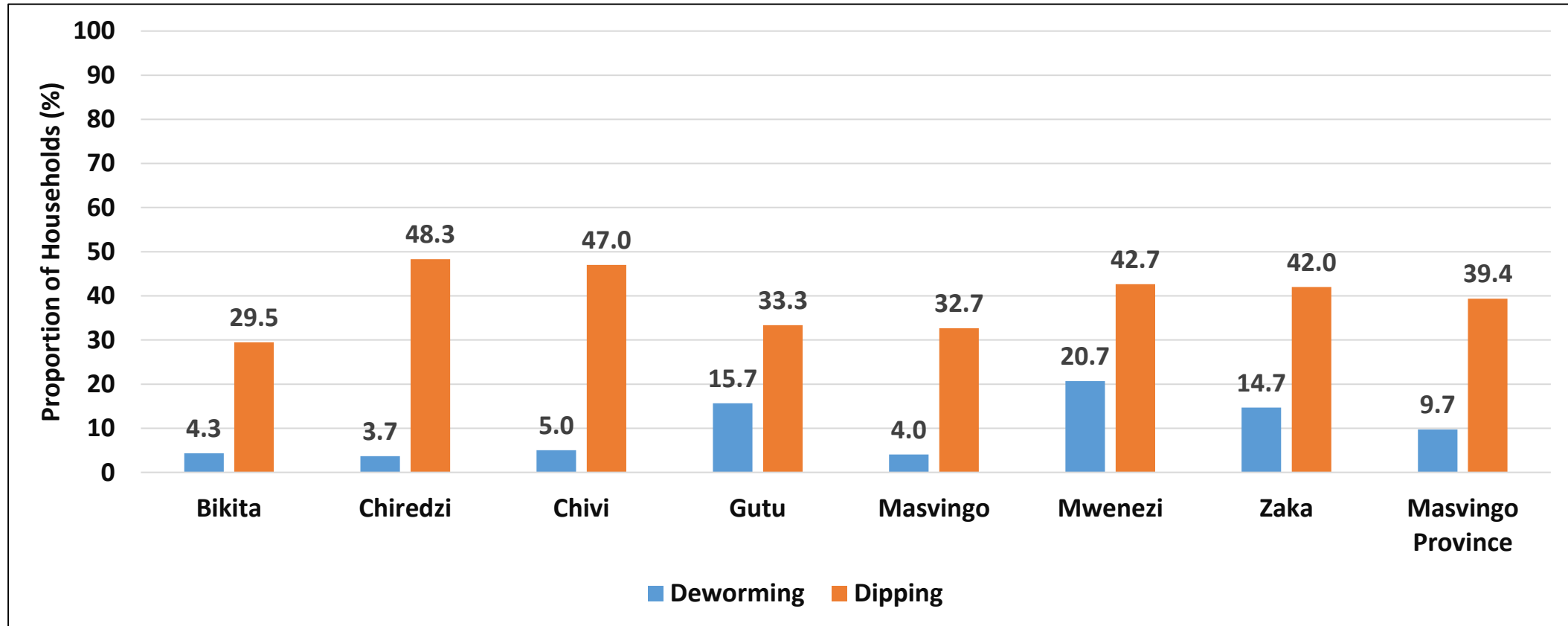
- About 39.4% of the households in the province indicated that they dipped their livestock. Chiredzi (48.3%) had the highest proportion of households dipping their livestock.

- The proportion of households that had dewormed their livestock in the province was 9.7%.

Improved Livestock Breeds
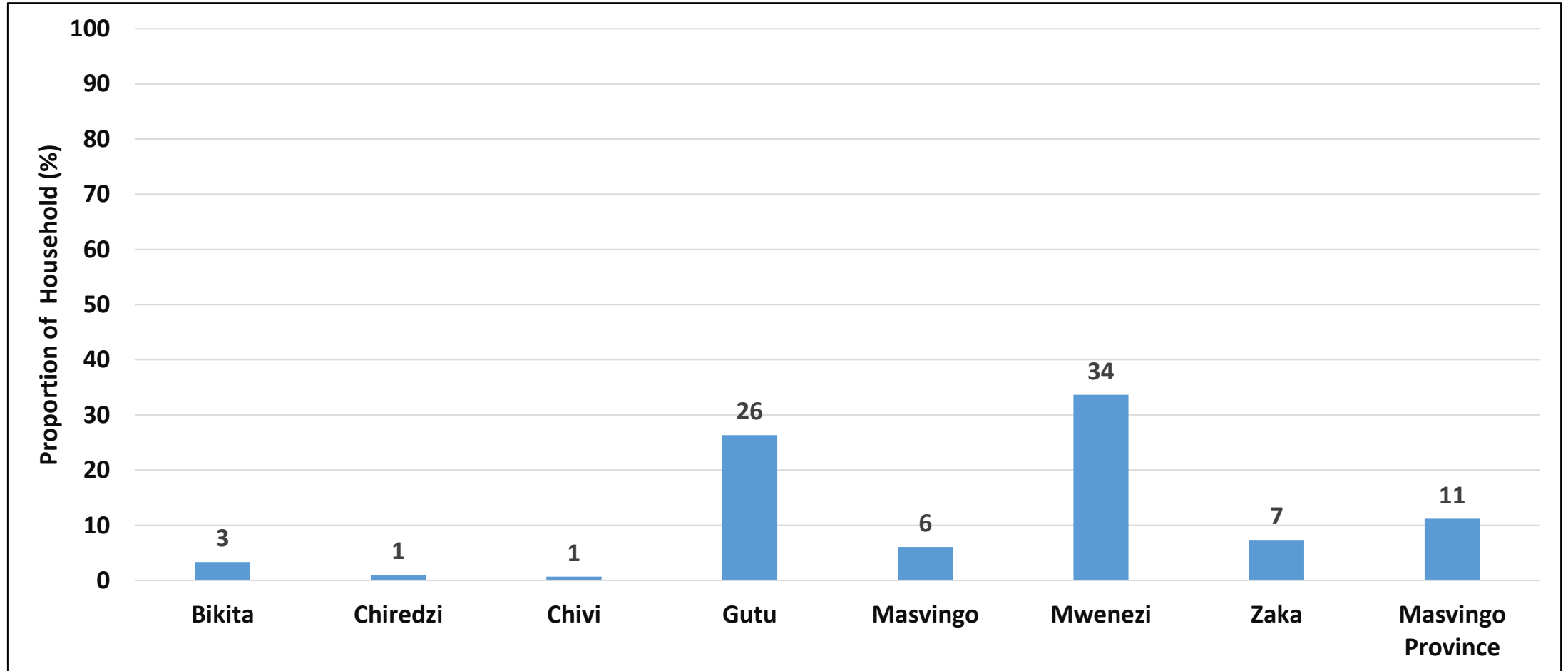
- Only 11% of the households indicated that they were using improved livestock breeds.

- Mwenezi (34%) had the highest proportion of households using improved livestock breeds.

Improved Livestock Shelters
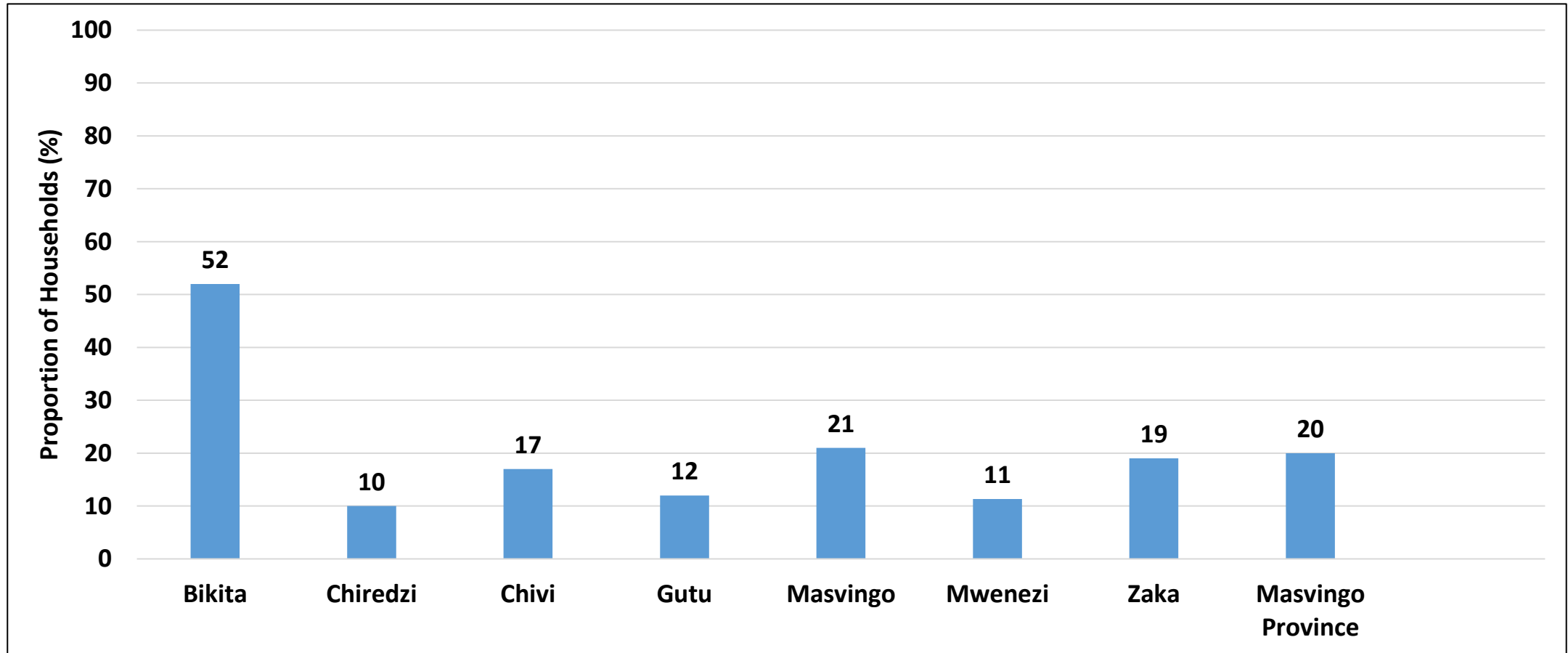
- The proportion of households using improved livestock shelters was 20%.
- Bikita (52%) had the highest proportion of households using improved livestock shelters while Chiredzi (10%) had the lowest.

Access to Information and Services

Distance to the Nearest Health Facility
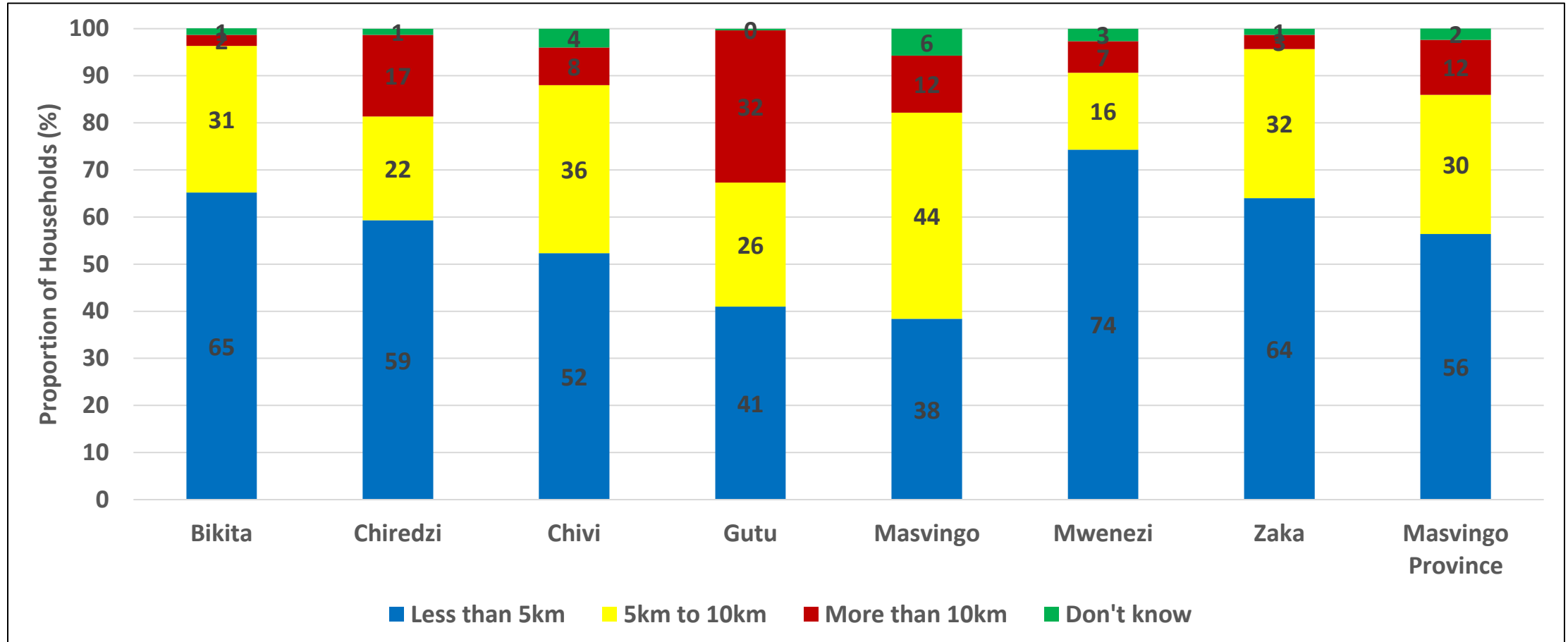
- About 56% of households in the province reported that the approximate distance to the nearest health facility/clinic is less than 5km.

Distance to the Nearest Primary School
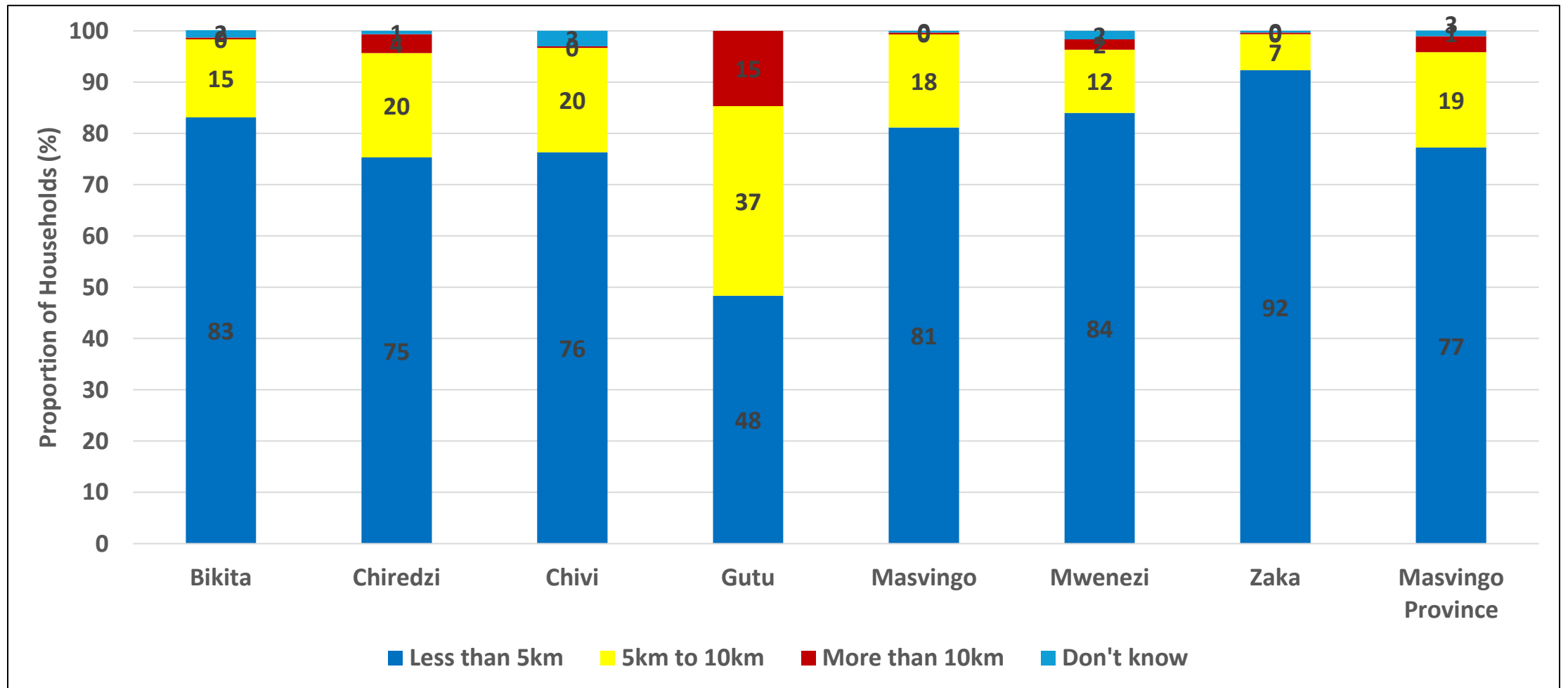
- About 77% of households reported that the approximate distance to the nearest primary school was less than 5km.

Households with Police Service Reachable within One Hour
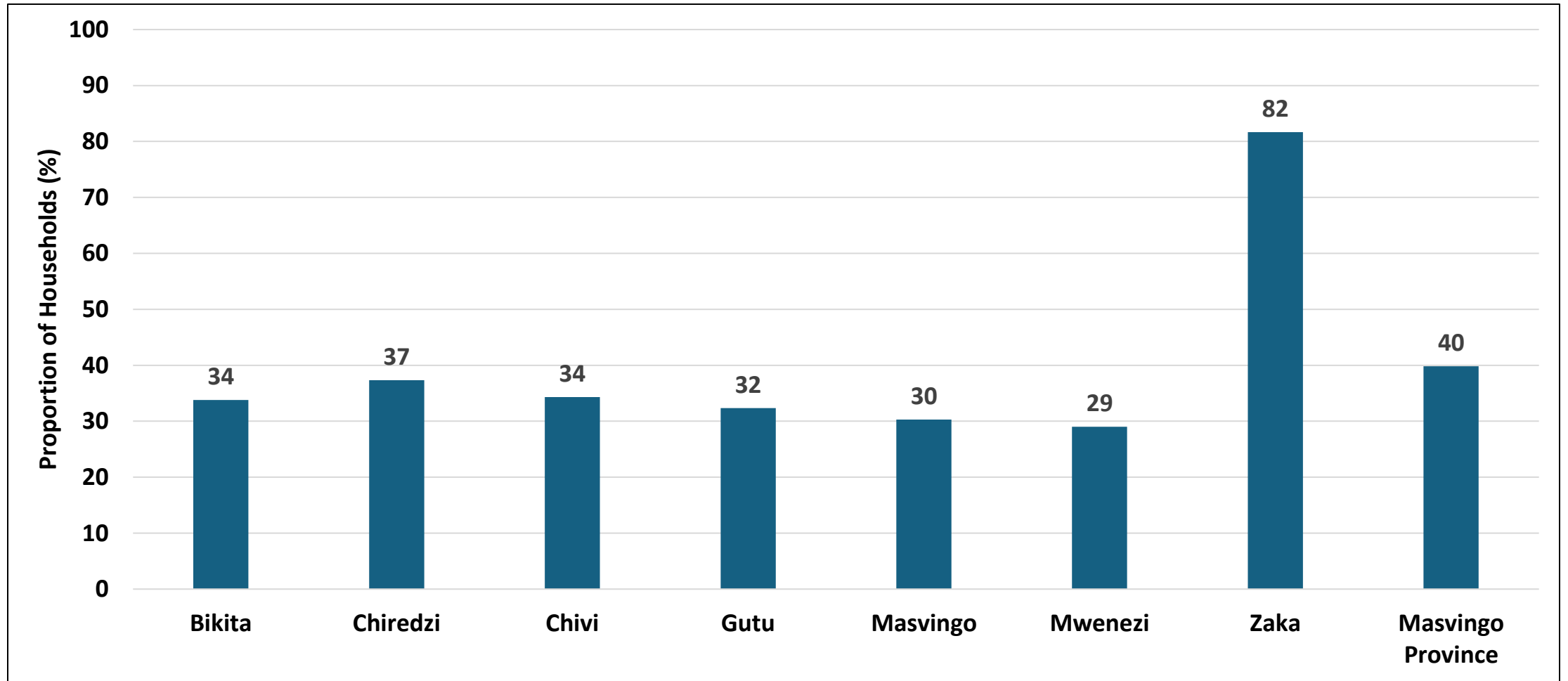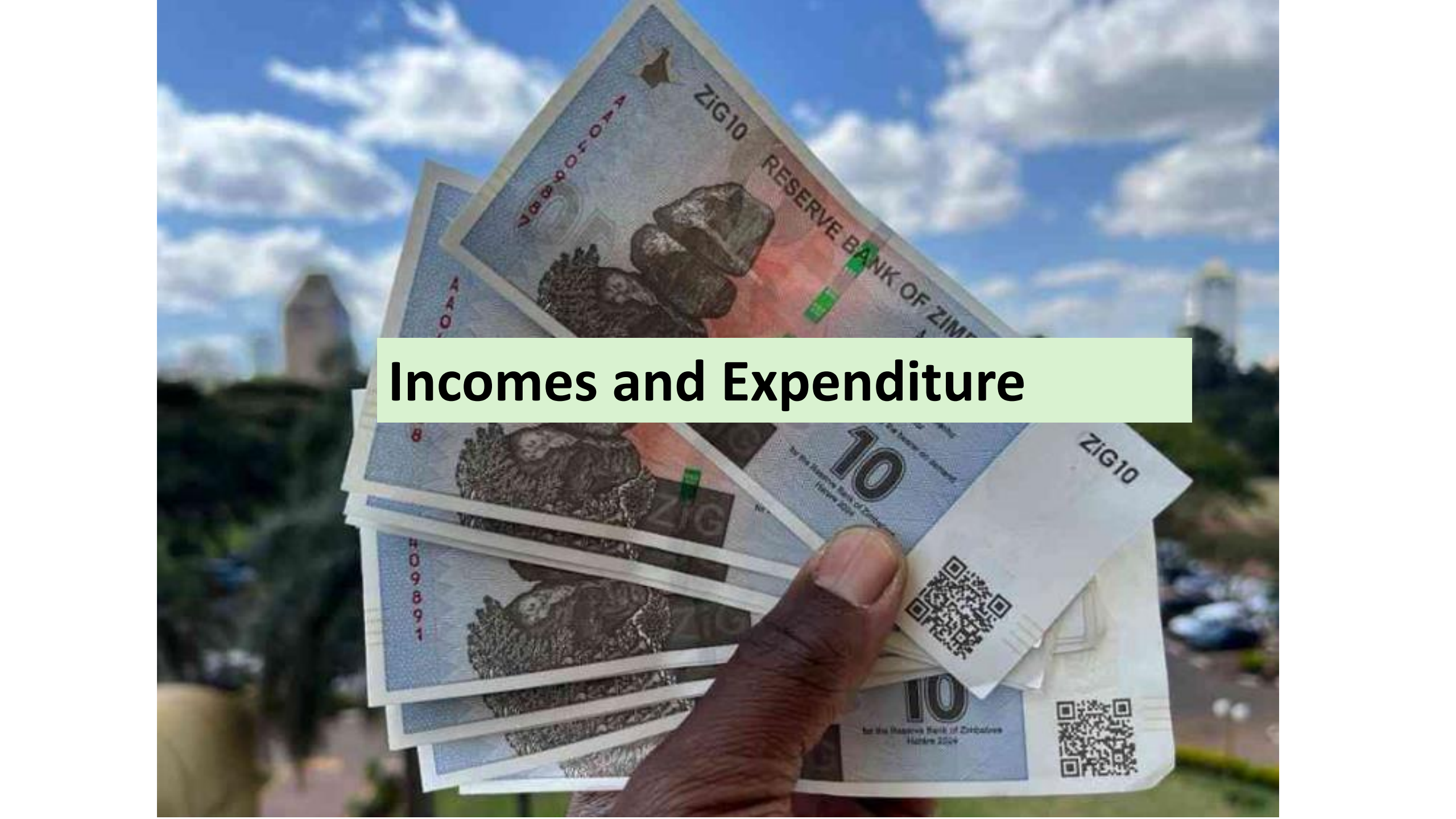
- Approximately 40% of households in Masvingo province reported that they had police service reachable with in 1 hour

Access to Agricultural Produce Markets

District	Access Agriculture inputs through agro-dealers and/or agriculture cooperatives (%)	Receiving market information on prices, through collection centers, traders (%)	Use of formal organised marketing systems for crops/livestock (%)	Marketing produces through commodity associations/farmer organisation (%)
Bikita	54.6	40.1	1.7	0.3
Chiredzi	19.3	13.3	2.3	0.3
Chivi	29.7	6.0	1.0	0.7
Gutu	33.3	20.0	3.0	0.7
Masvingo	11.8	15.2	6.7	0.7
Mwenezi	38.7	25.0	23.3	18.3
Zaka	23.7	5.0	0.7	1.7
Masvingo Province	30.2	17.8	5.5	3.2

- About 30.2% of households had accessed their inputs through agro-dealers and/or agriculture cooperatives.
- The proportion of households that had access to agriculture inputs through agro-dealers and/or agriculture cooperatives was high in Bikita (54.6%).

Incomes and Expenditure

Main Income Sources
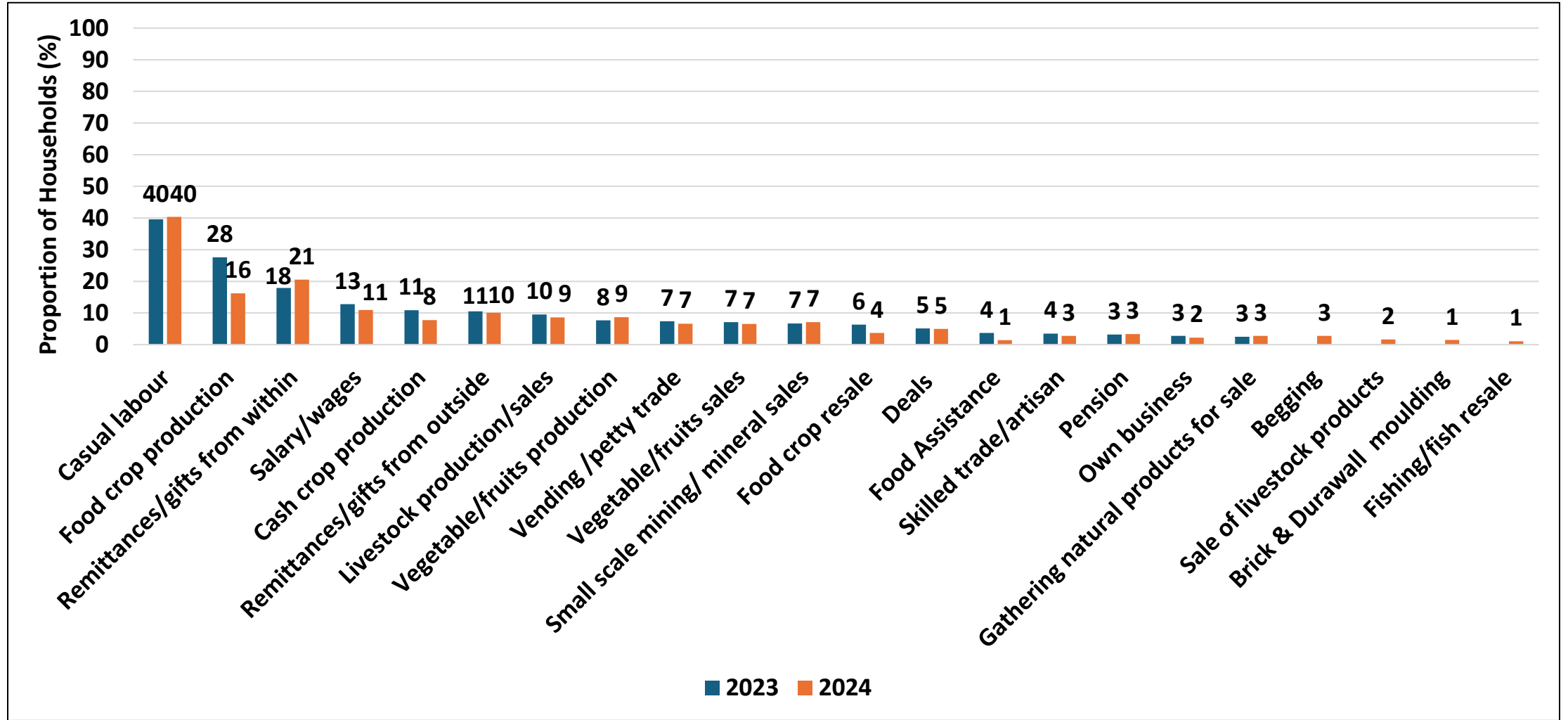
- The main income source for Masvingo Province has remained casual labour (40%).

Income Trend 2020- 2024
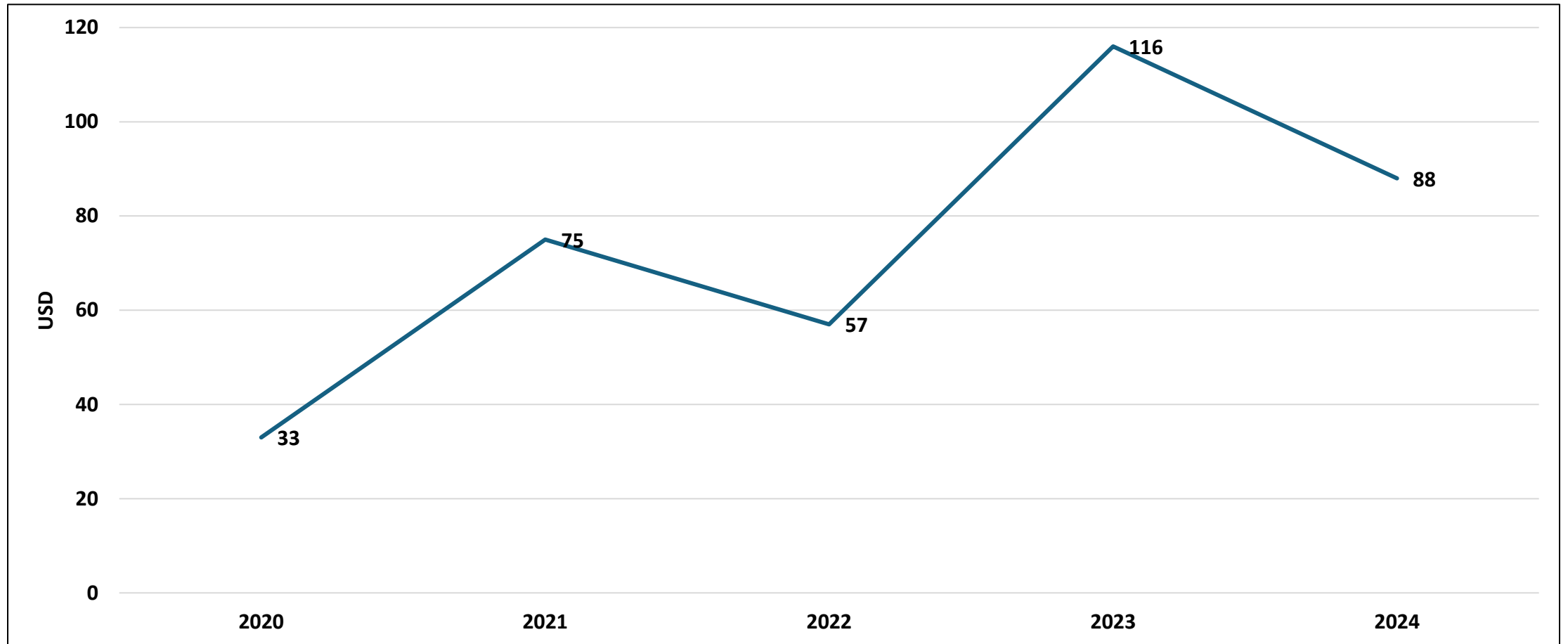
- Nationally , the average income for rural households has been on an increase.

Average Monthly Income and Expenditure

	Monthly income (USD)	Monthly expenditure (USD)	Monthly income (ZIG)	Monthly expenditure (ZIG)
Bikita	79.20	59.30	1064.10	567.40
Chiredzi	84.70	68.80	1138.20	698.60
Chivi	78.70	69.80	1057.50	664.30
Gutu	53.00	47.20	711.70	535.00
Masvingo	115.30	99.70	1548.10	931.80
Mwenezi	81.20	61.70	1090.10	621.00
Zaka	79.30	70.80	1065.20	678.80
Masvingo Province	**81.10**	**67.50**	**1089.30**	**665.30**

- The average monthly income ranged from ZIG 711.70 in Gutu to ZIG 1548.10 in Masvingo district, whilst the average monthly expenditure for the province ranged from ZIG 535.00 in Gutu to ZIG 931.80 in Masvingo district.

Food Expenditure Ratio
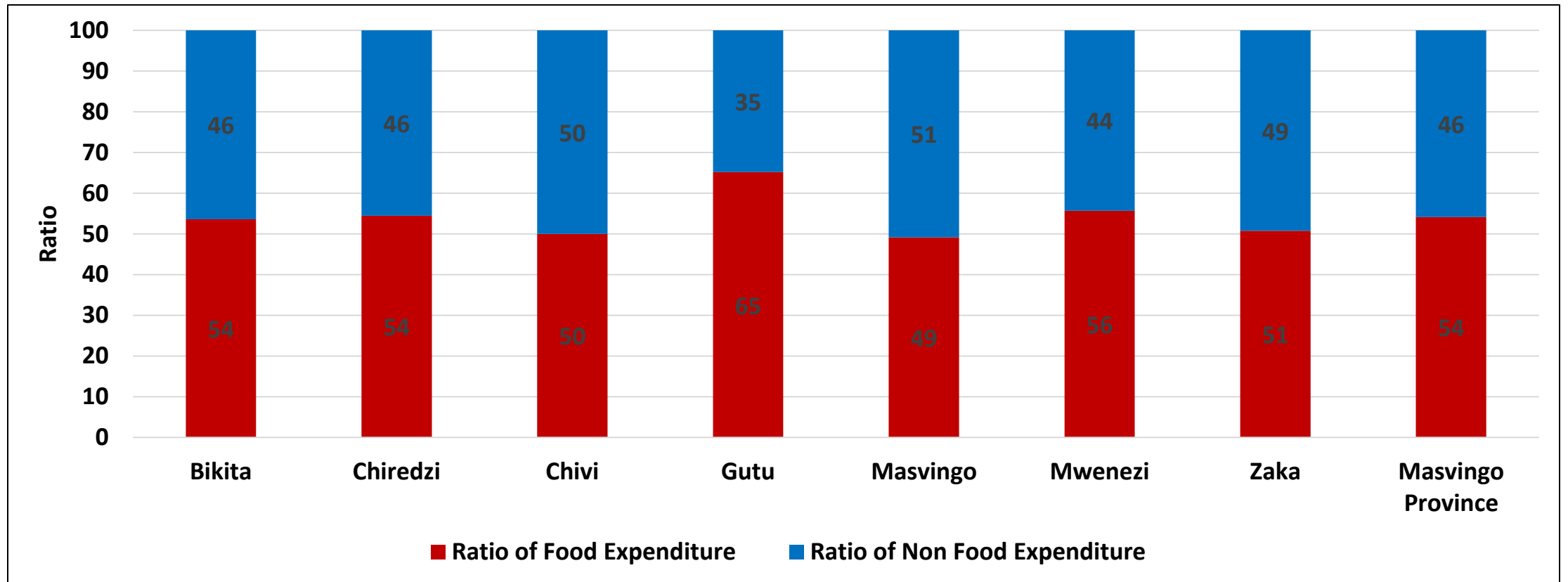
- The food expenditure ratio for the province was 54% while non-food expenditure was 46%.
- Gutu (65%) had the largest expenditure on food and Masvingo district (49%) had the least.

Assets, Loans and Remittances

Assets Masvingo

Asset	Value
Vehicle	1.6
Sewing machine	1.7
Cultivator, ridger, planter	1.8
Water pump	1.9
Pruning/cutting shears	3.9
Television	8.4
Knapsack sprayer	18.3
Bicycle	19.6
Scotch cart	27.3
Solar system (panel, battery, inverter)	27.5
Wheel barrow	30.6
Radio	33.9
Plough (oxen/pulled)	40.9
Pick-axe	42.3
Sickle	51.9
Spade or shovel	57.8
Arable land for agriculture	72.1
Telephone (including Mobile phones)	77.2
Axe	80.3
Hoe	90.9

- The most commonly owned assets in the province were hoes (90.9%), axes (80.3%) and telephones (77.2%).

Households that had Accessed Loans
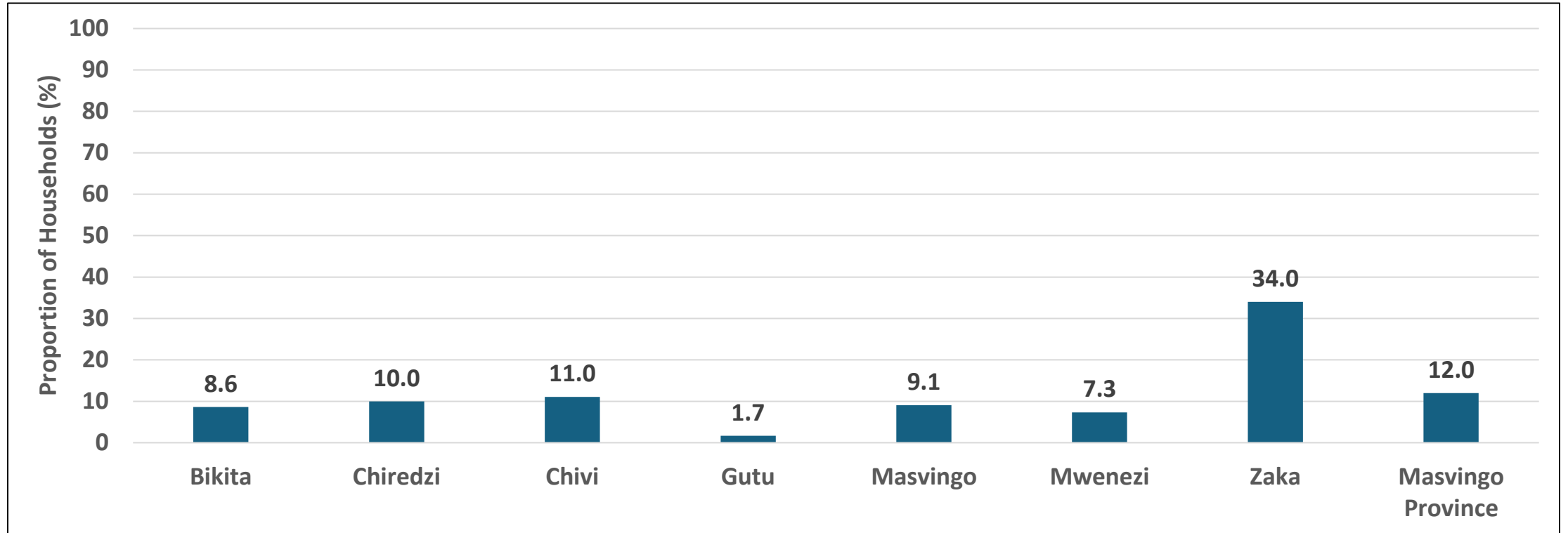
- About 12% of the households had accessed loans.

- Zaka (34%) had the highest proportion of households that had accessed loans, whilst Gutu (1.7%) had the lowest.

Sources of Loans
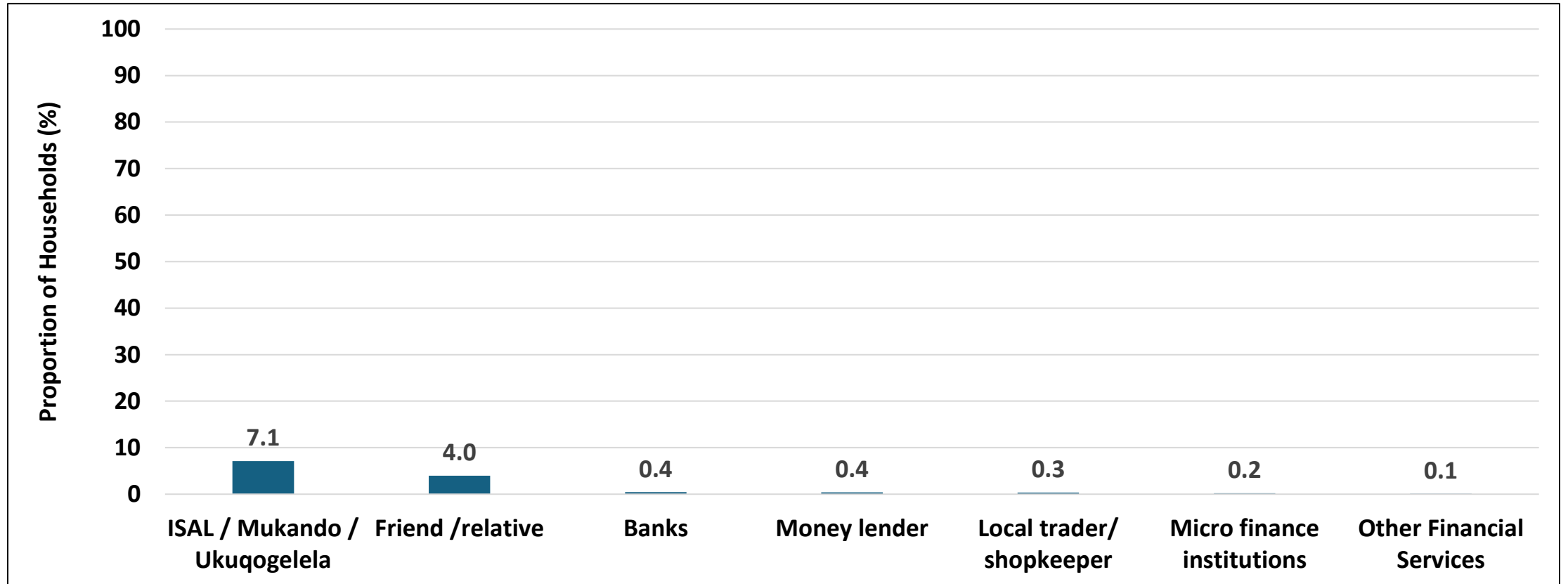
- ISALs / Mukando/ Ukuqogelela (7.1%) was the main source of loans for households in Masvingo Province.

Remittances/Gifts
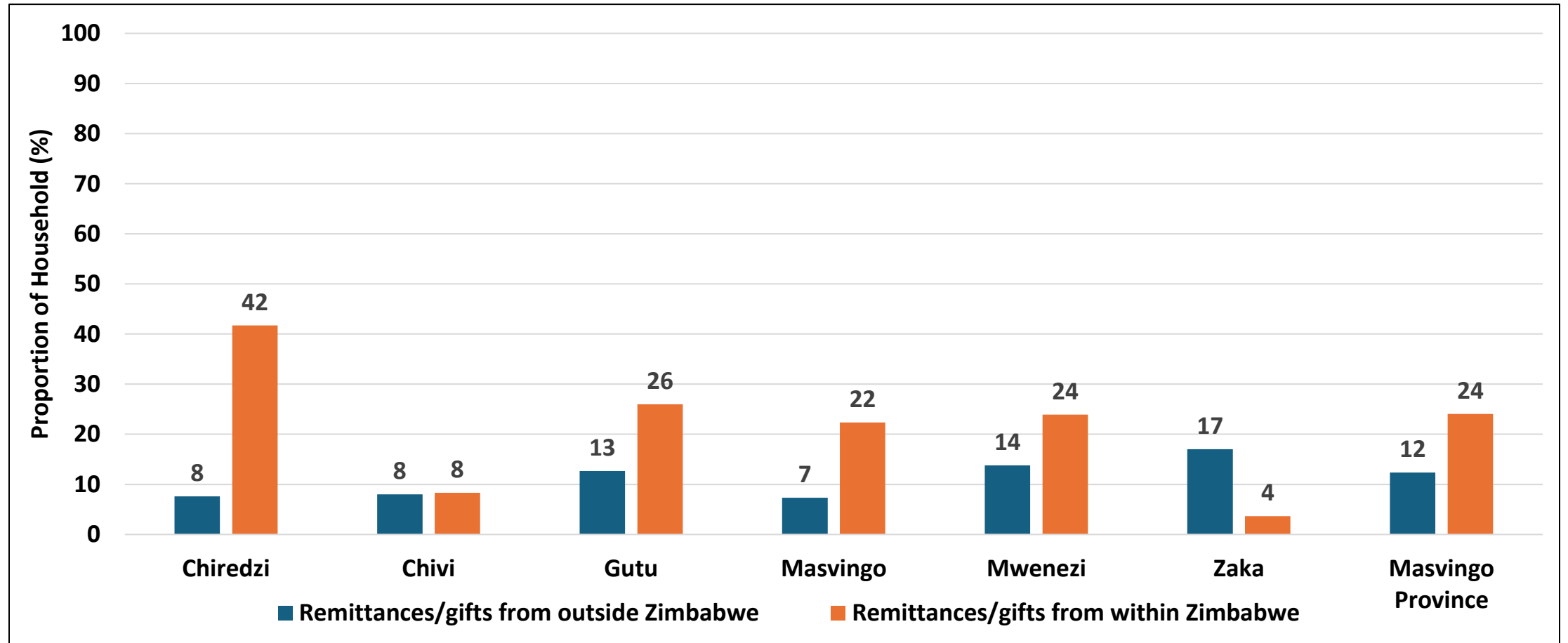
- The majority of households in the province (24%) received remittances/gifts from within Zimbabwe.

Child Nutrition and Consumption Patterns

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).

Child Nutrition Status

Indicator	Indicator definition (WHO standards, 2006)	Provincial 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	3.1	<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	1.0	0% = acceptable >0%: Unacceptable
Underweight	Weight for age <-2SD of the WHO Child Growth Standards median and/oedema	8.1	
Overweight	Weight for height >+2 SD of the WHO Child Growth Standards median	4.8	<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	1.5	

Nutrition Status of Children 6 - 59 months
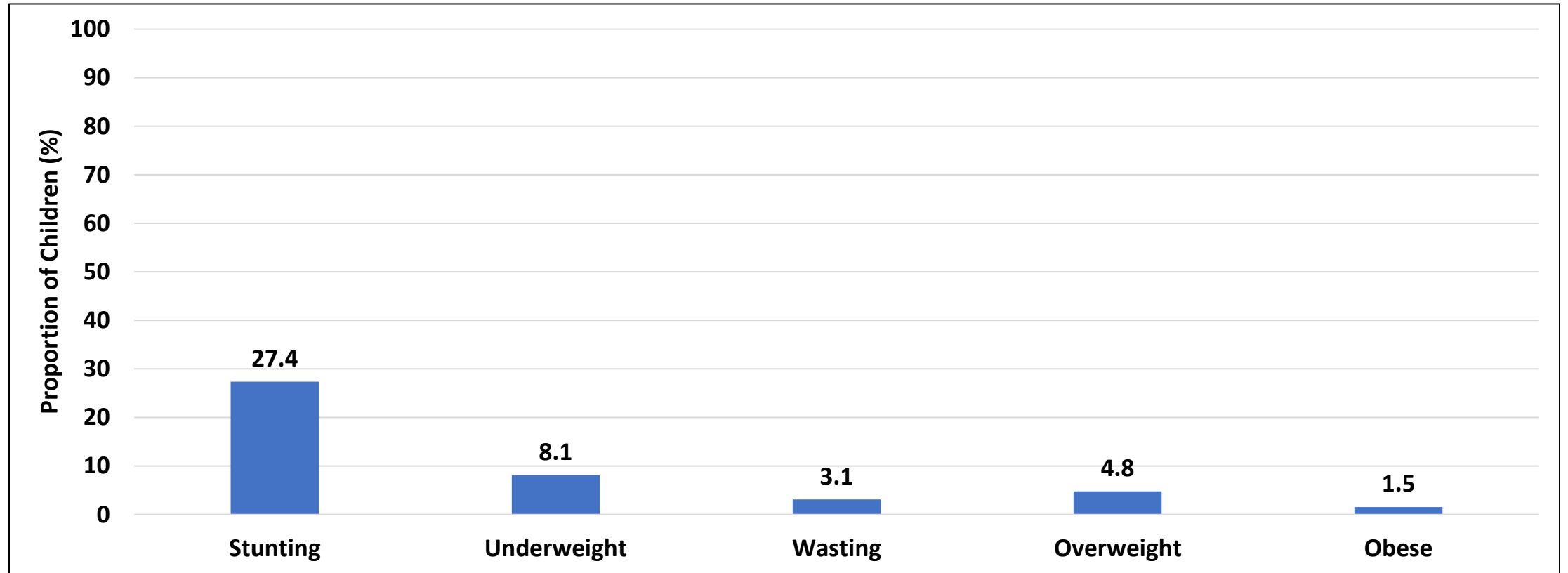
- About 27.4% of children in Masvingo Province were stunted, 8.1% were underweight, 4.8% overweight, 3.1% were wasted and 1.5% obese.

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
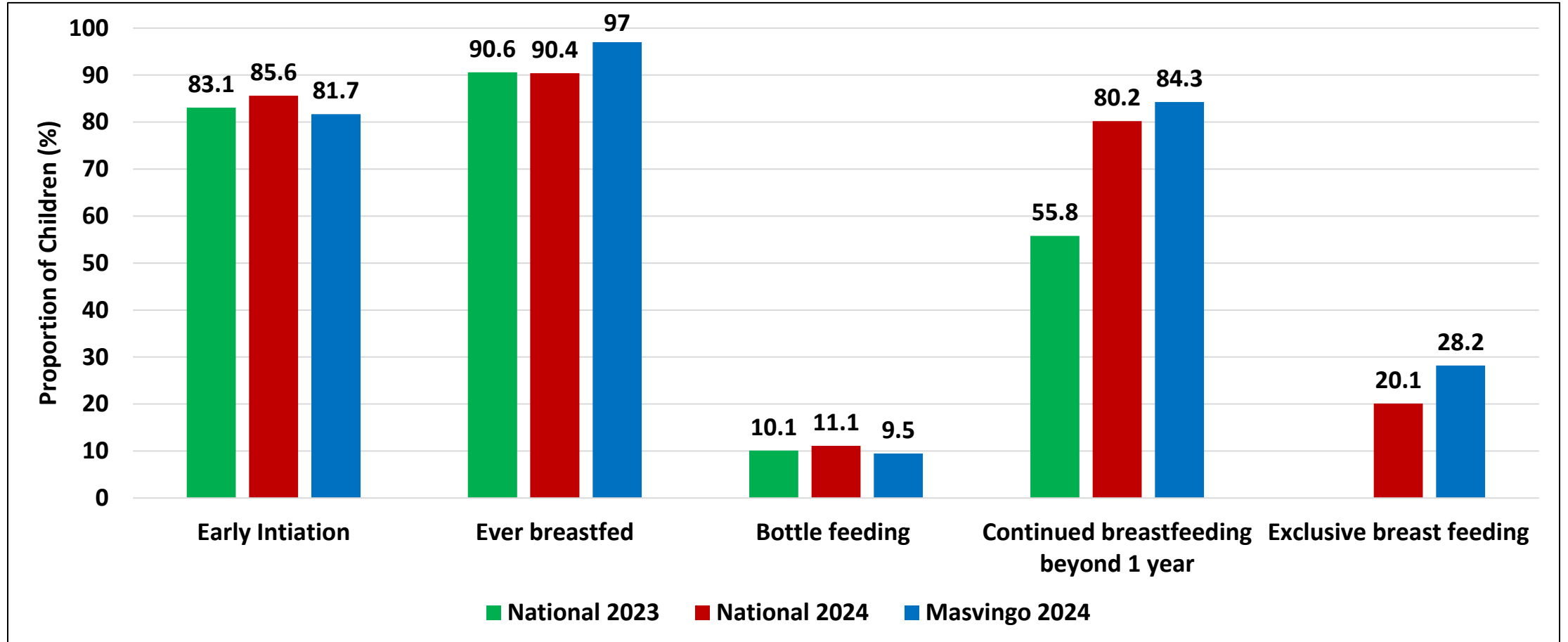
- Exclusive breastfeeding is a low cost, life-saving child survival intervention. The exclusive breastfeeding rate in the province was reported to be 28.2%.

- The proportion of children who were ever breastfed was 97%, and the proportion which continued breastfeeding beyond 1 year was 84.3%.

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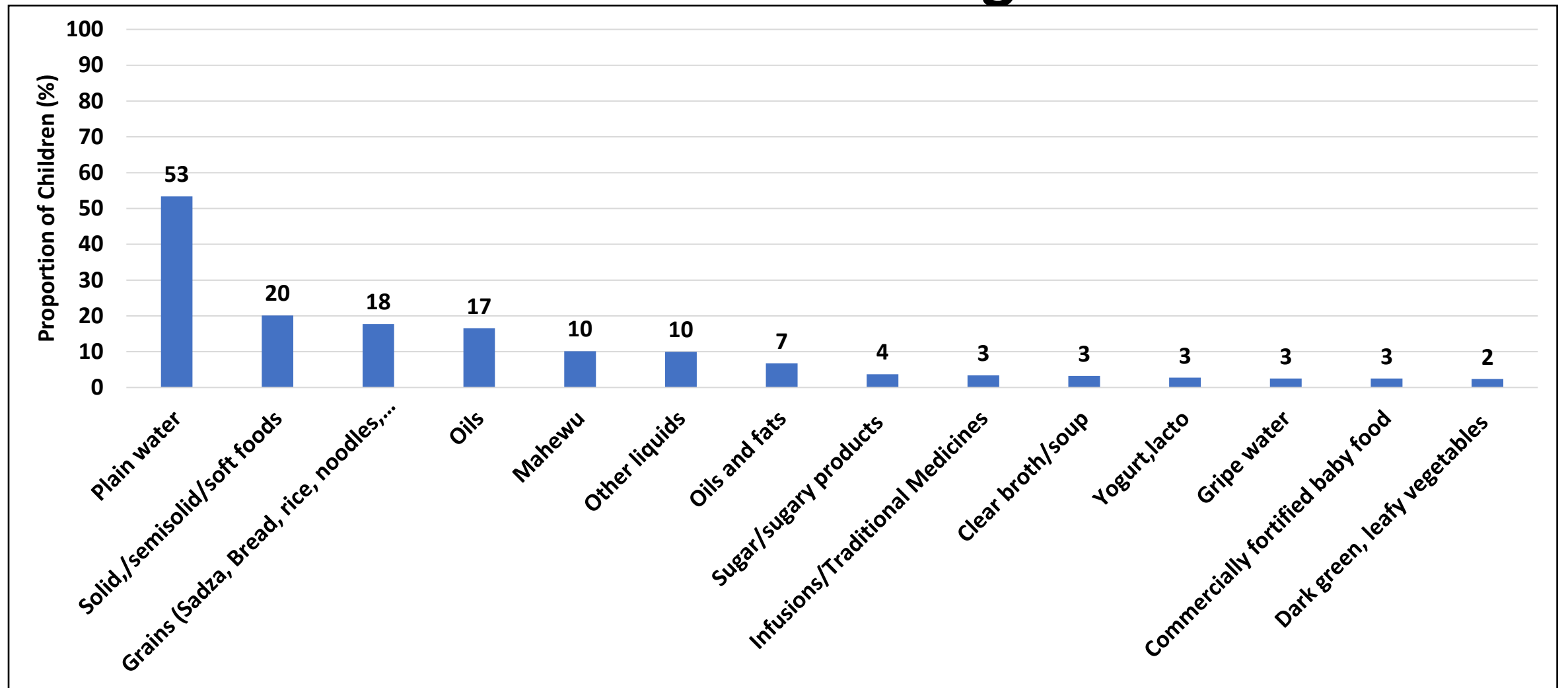
- Plain water (53%), soft foods (20%), grains (18%) and oils (17%) were the most common foods given to children less than 6 months.

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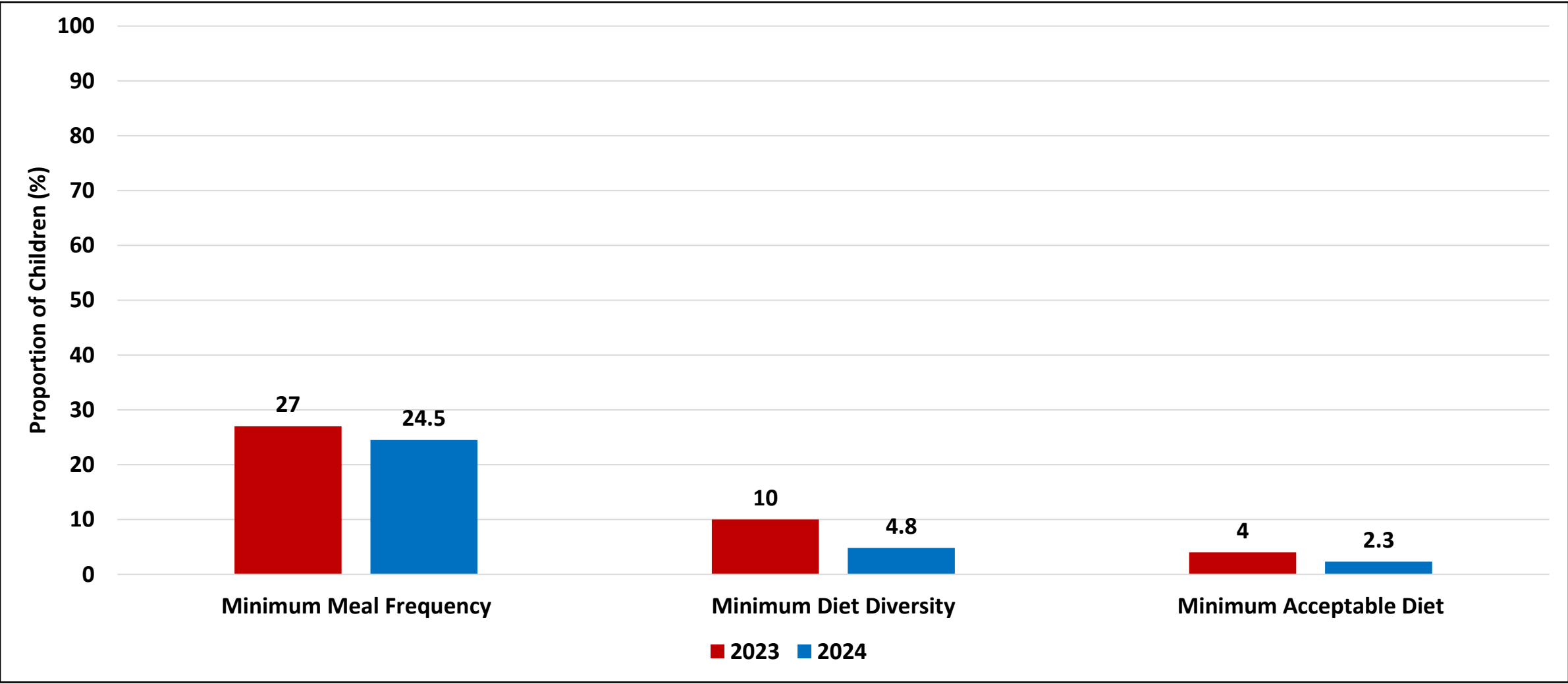
- Nationally, about 2.3% of children achieved a minimum acceptable diet, a decrease from 4% in 2023. This remains below the national target of 25%.

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

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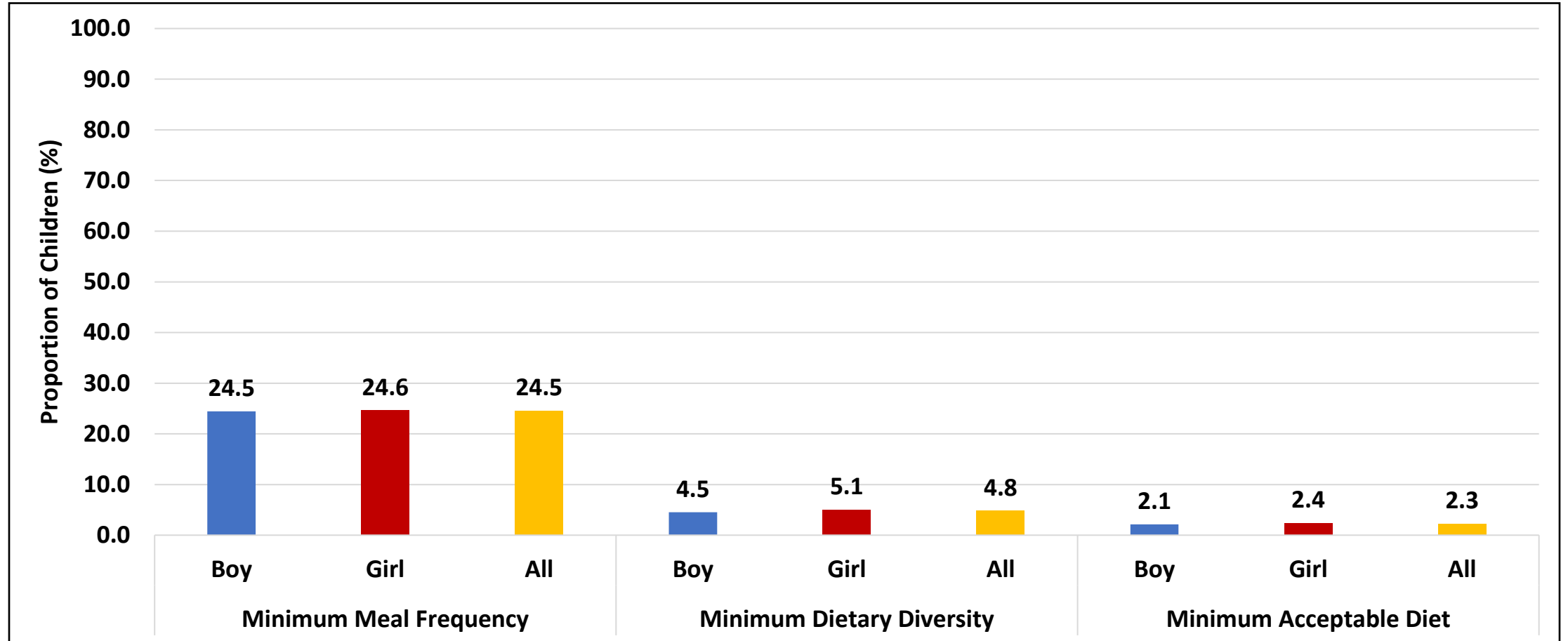
- Nationally, there was no major difference on diet quality by sex.

Infant and Young Child Feeding Diet Quality

2023
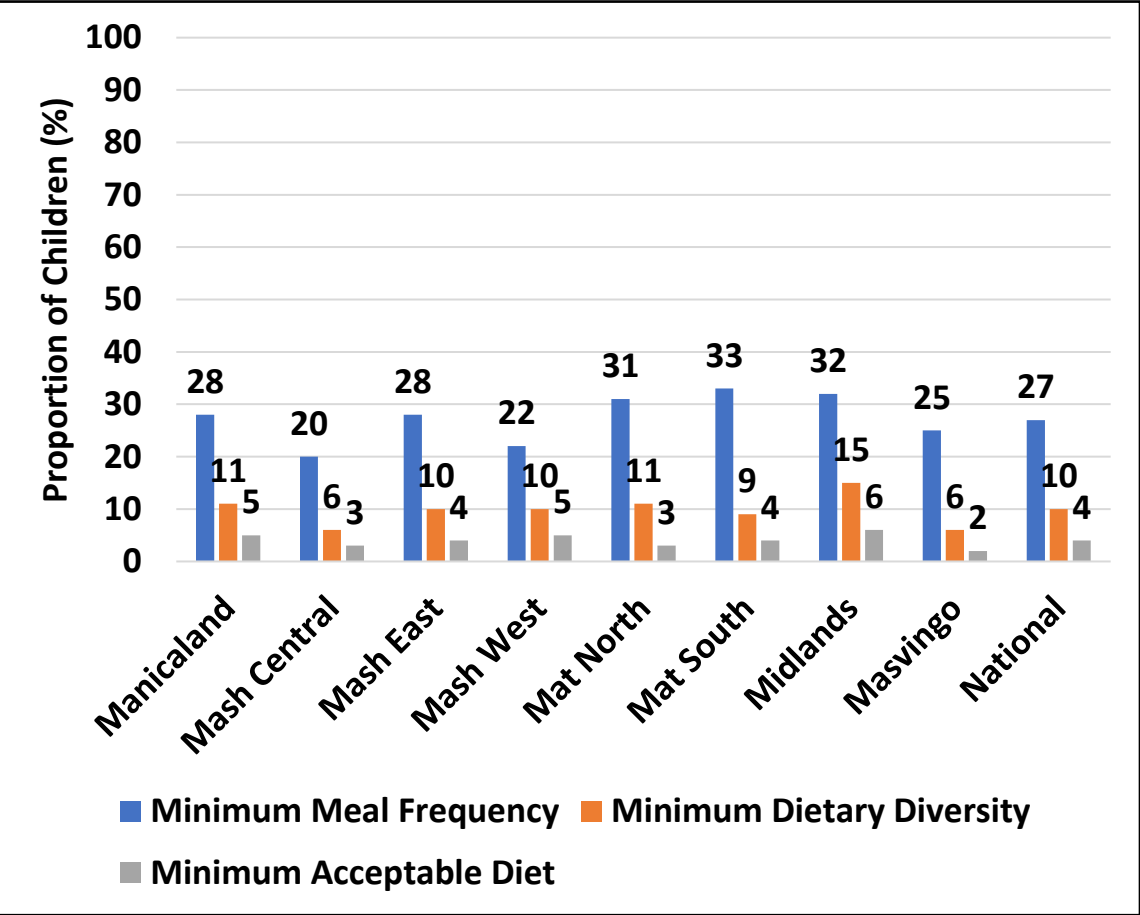
2024
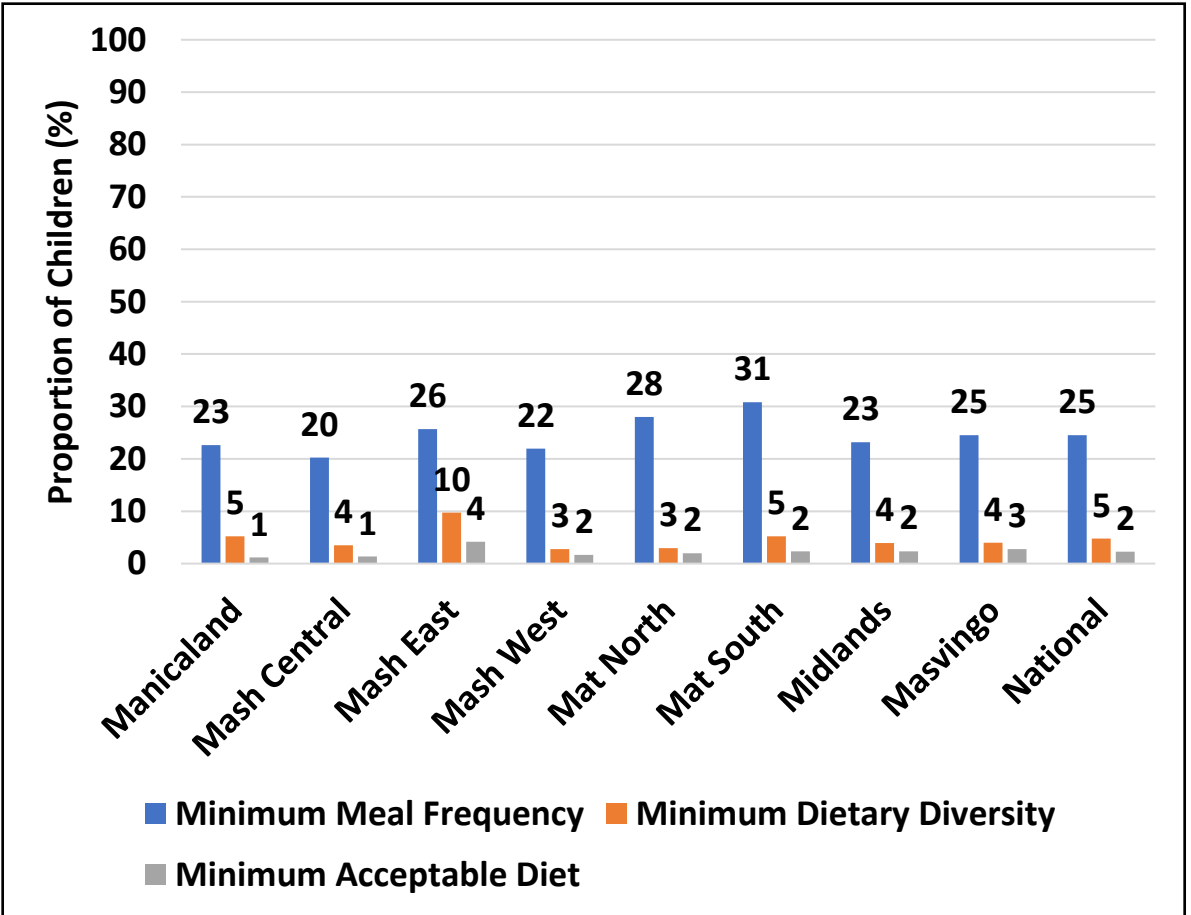
- In Masvingo province, only 3% of children aged 6-23 months received the Minimum Acceptable Diet.

- 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.

Foods Consumed by Children 6-23 Months

	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 Masvingo province consumed grains, roots and tubers (90.8%), followed by breastmilk (47.9%).

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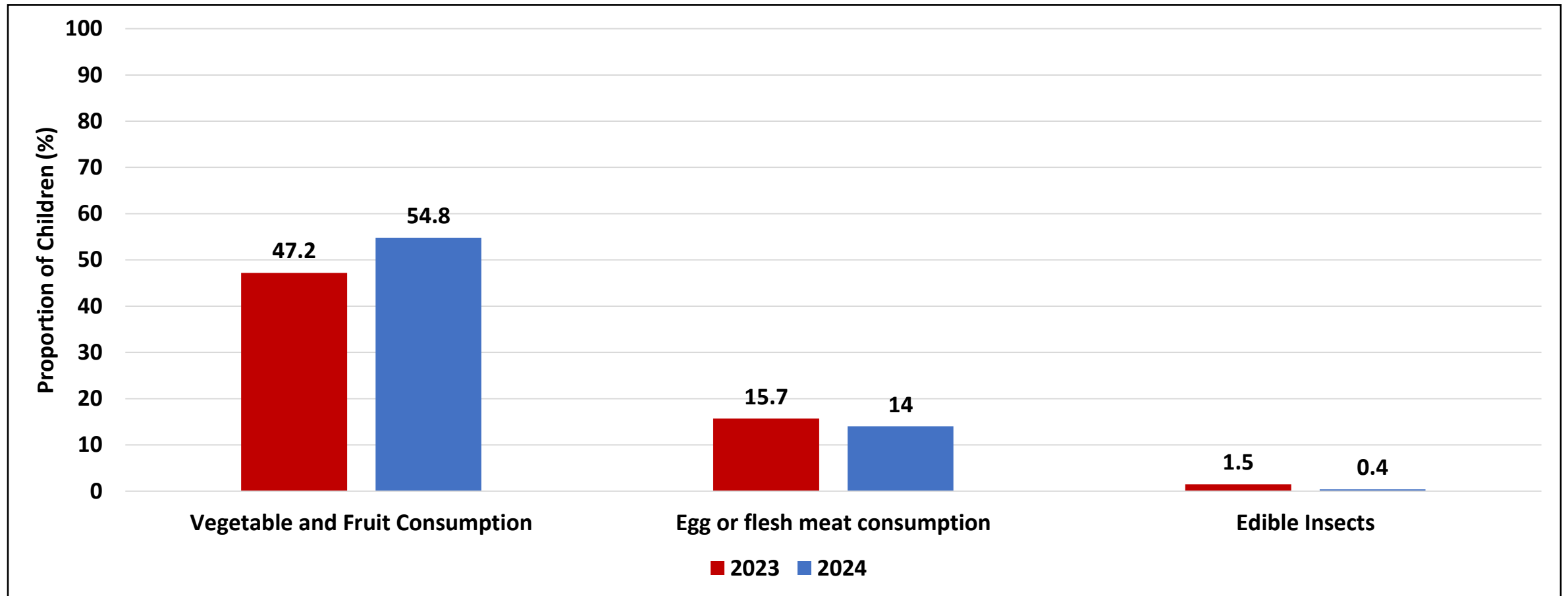
- Vegetable, fruit, egg and flesh meat consumption provides the much-needed nutrients required for optimum growth and development during the window of opportunity (first 1 000 days).

- Nationally, about 54.8% of the children 6 to 23 months consumed vegetables and fruits 24 hours preceding the survey.

- Edible insects were not commonly consumed by children.

Non-Vegetable or Fruit Consumption 6-23 Months (ZVF)
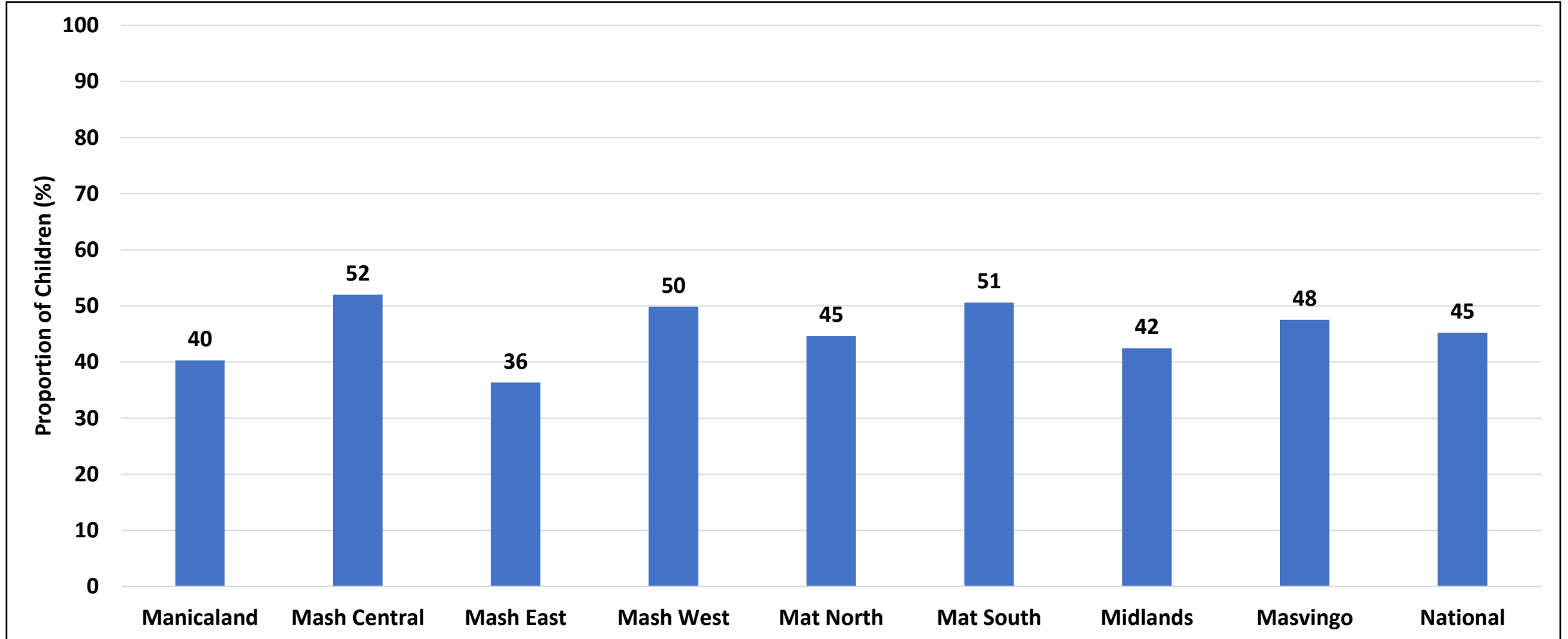
- Nationally, an estimated 45% of children 6-23 months were neither consuming vegetables nor fruits.
- Masvingo province (48%) reported proportions above the national average.

Egg and/Flesh Meat Consumption 6-23 Months (EFF)
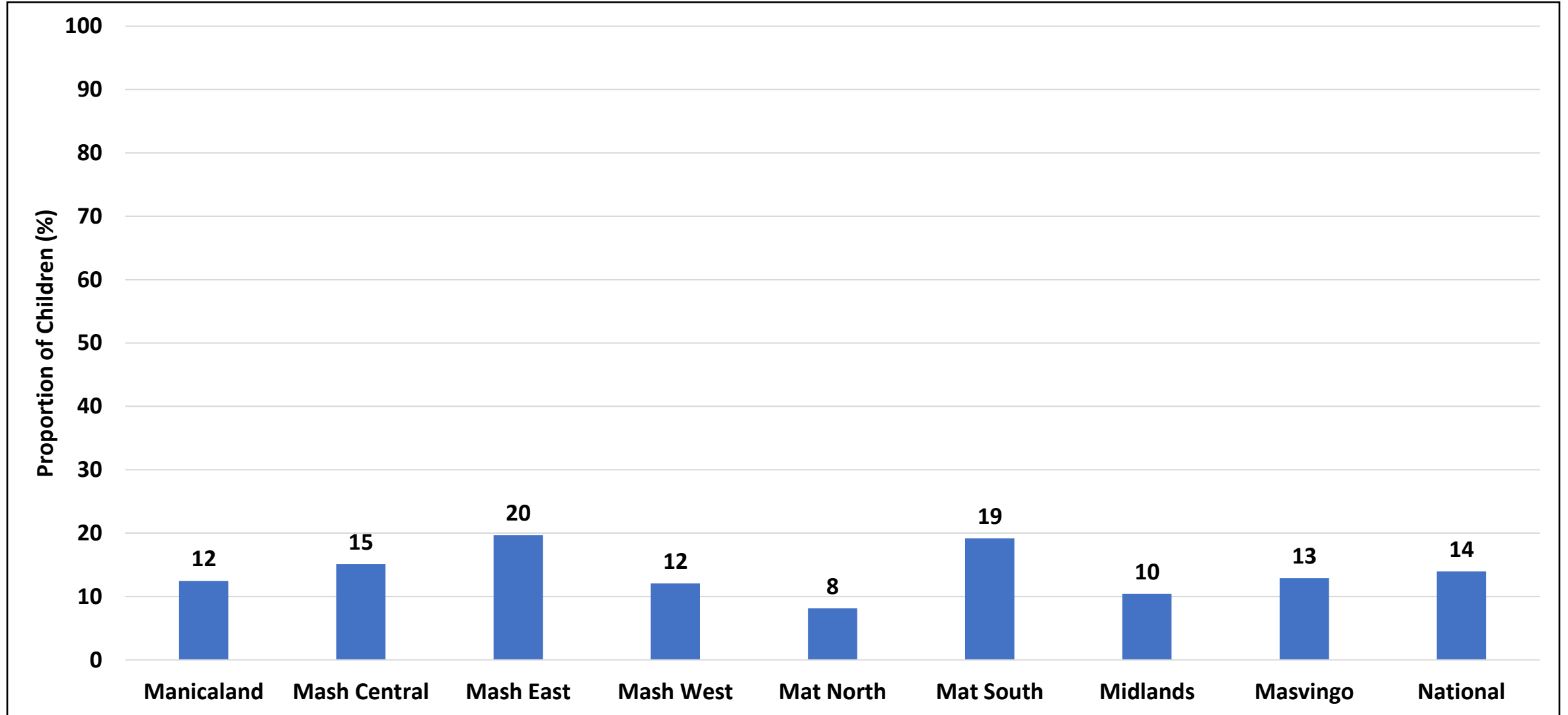
- Nationally, 14% of children 6-23 months were consuming egg and/ flesh meat with Masvingo province reporting (13%).

Unhealthy Food Consumption 6-23 Month (UFC)
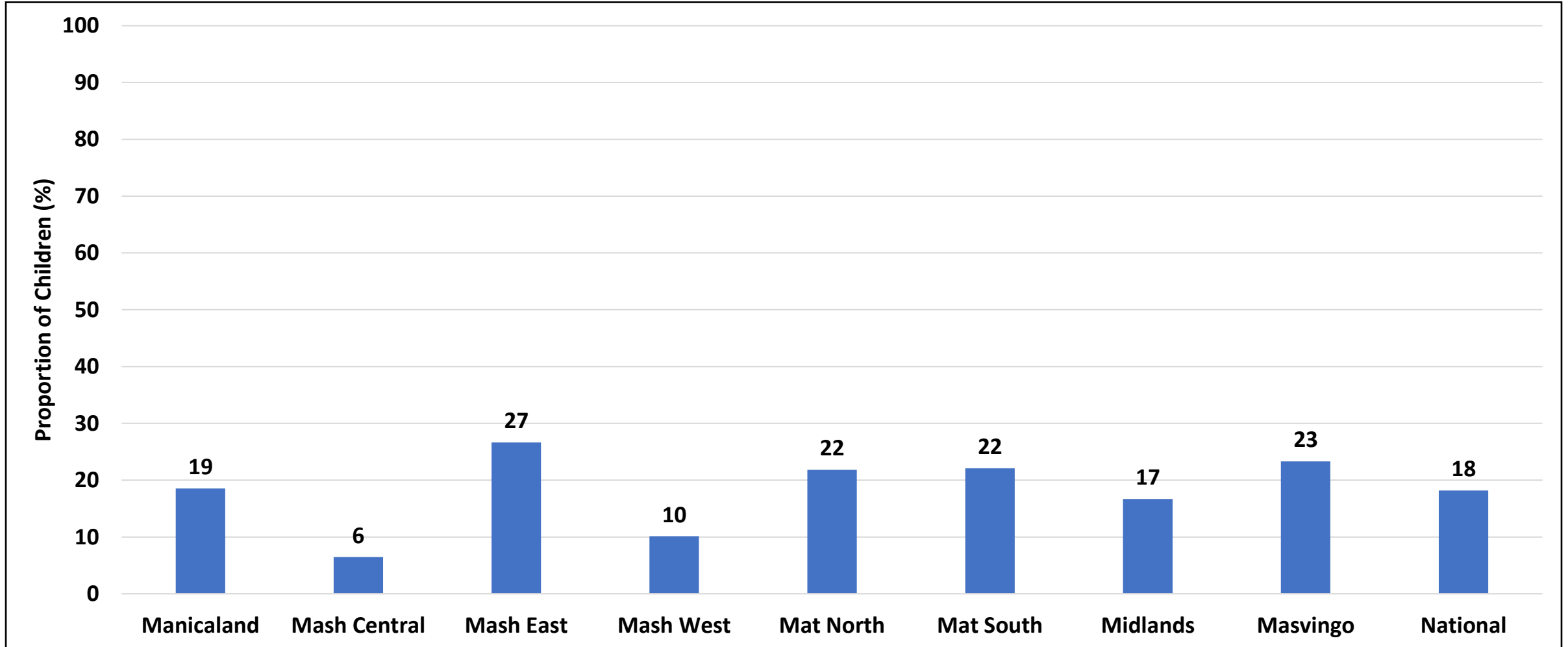
- An estimated 18% of children 6-23 months were consuming unhealthy foods.

- Masvingo province recorded 23%, which was above the national average.

Child Health

Vitamin A Supplementation for Children 6-59 Months

- 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 diarrhoea and measles in children.

The Zimbabwe VAS Schedule

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
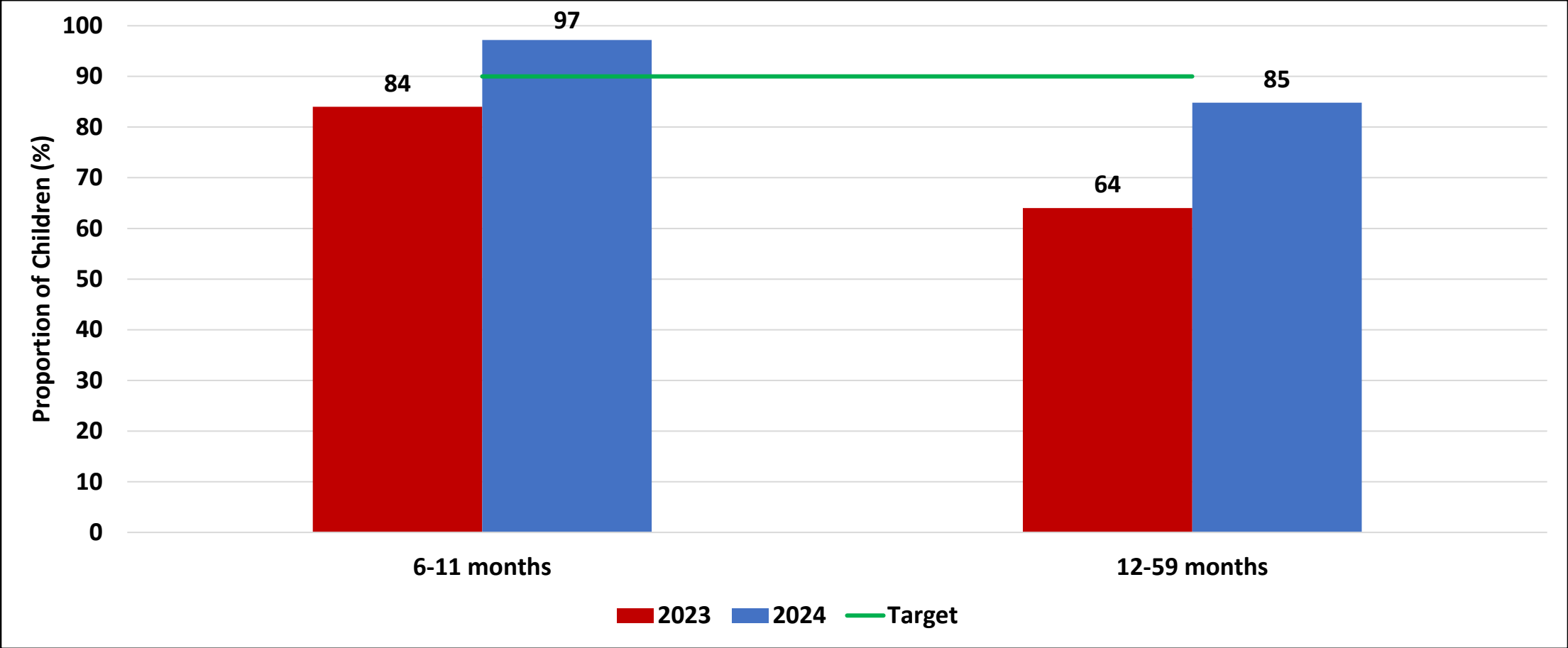
- Nationally, Vitamin A supplementation for children increased for the two age categories, however, the 12-59 months category remains a cause for concern since it was below the national target of 90% coverage.

Vitamin A Supplementation
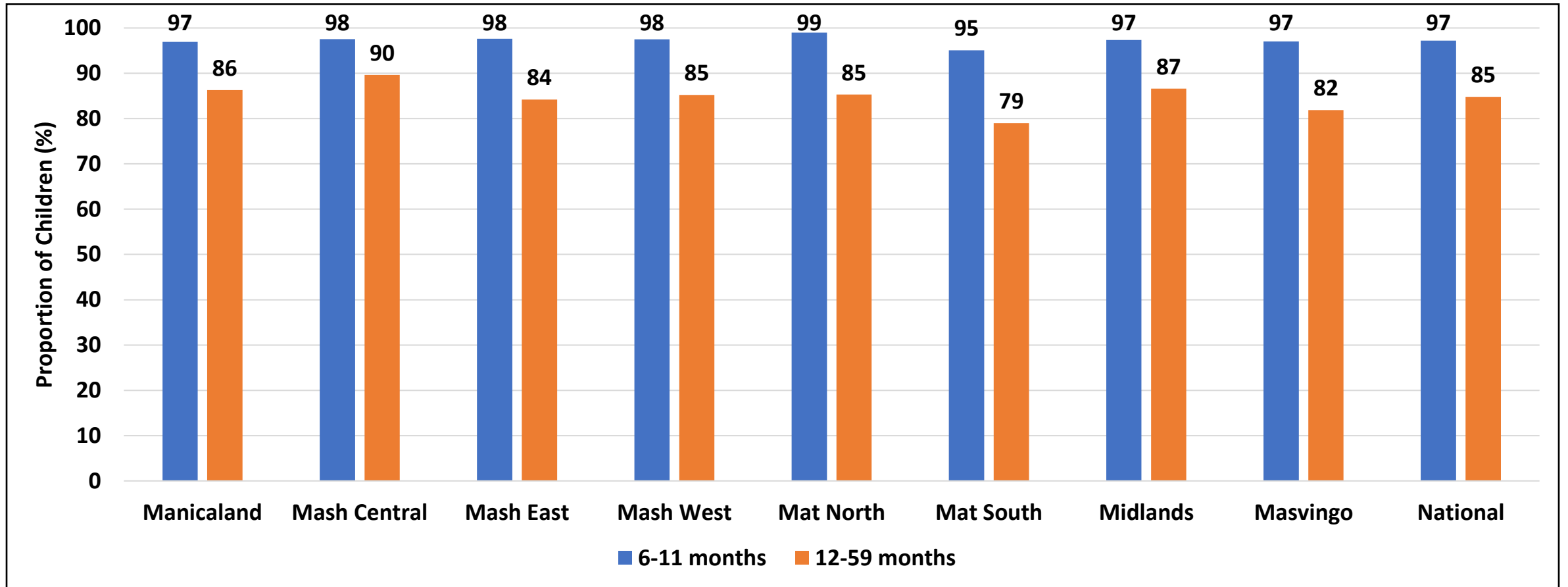
- Nationally, 97% and 85% of children 6-11 months and 12-59 months received the required one and two doses of Vitamin A, respectively.

- Performance for Vitamin A supplementation for Masvingo province was in line with the national performance.

Vitamin A Supplementation for 12-59 Months by District
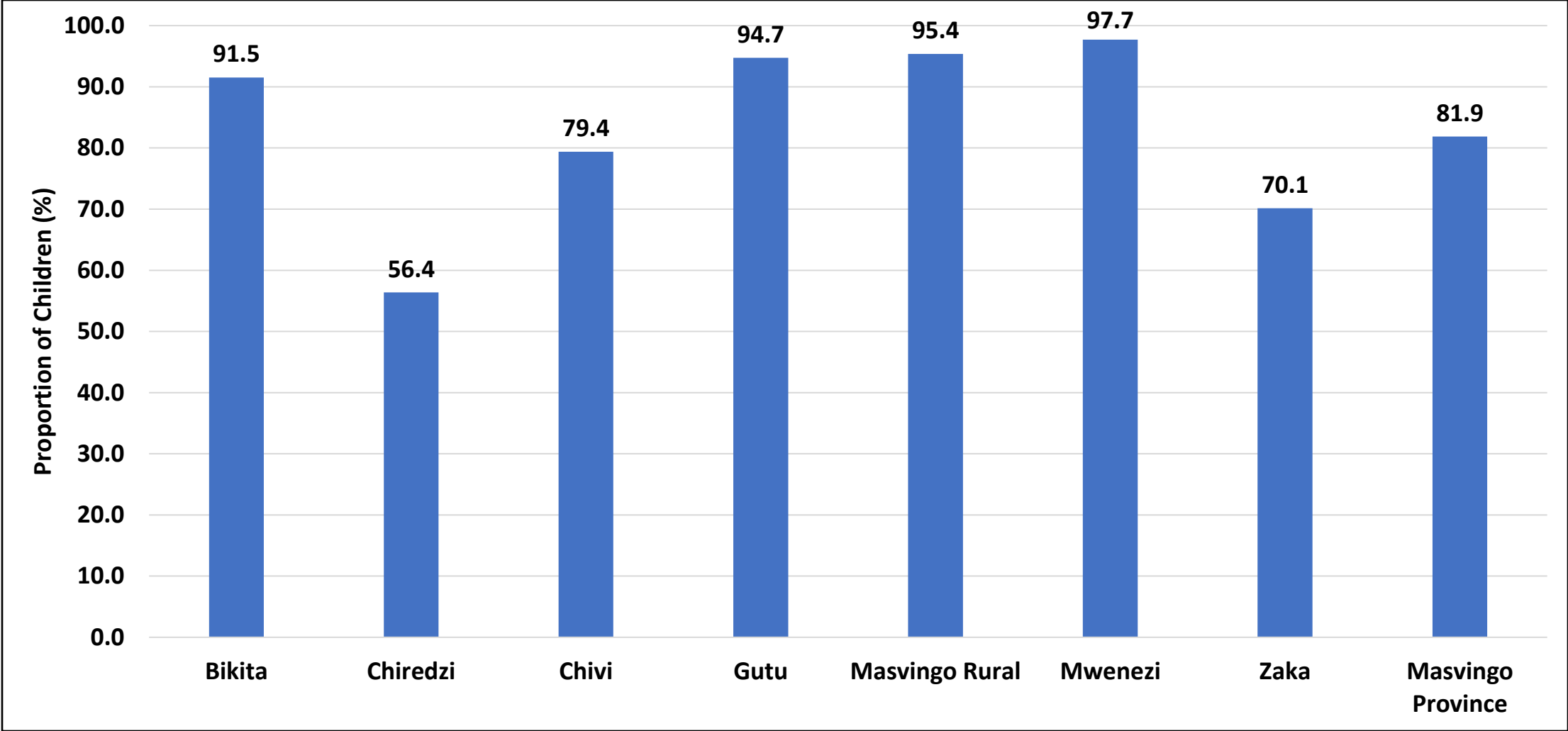
- Chiredzi (56.4%), Zaka (70.1%) and Chivi (79.4%) reported below target (90%) coverage for vitamin A supplementation for children 12-59 months.

Child Illness (6-59 Months)
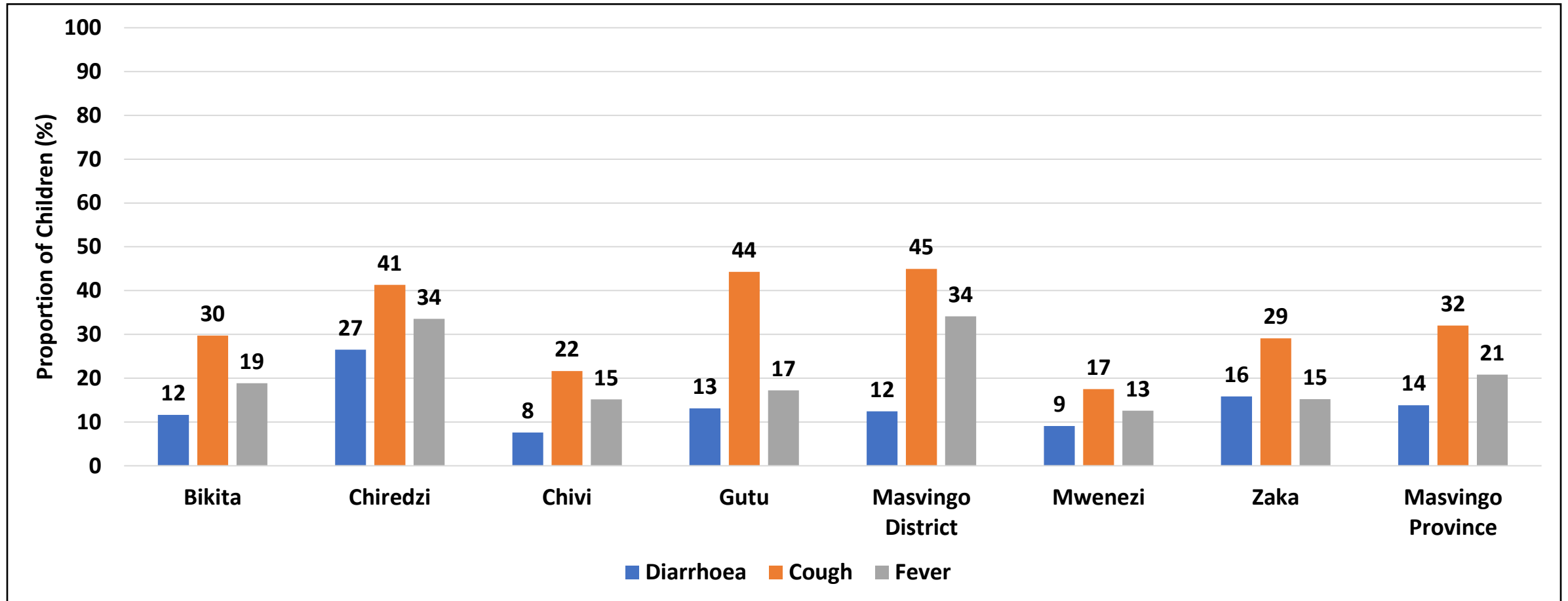
- Cough was the most reported illness for children across all the districts, with Masvingo district (45%) and Gutu (44%) recording the highest.

- Masvingo district and Chiredzi (34%) reported the highest proportion for fever.

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.

Nutritional Status for 5-9 and 10-19 years
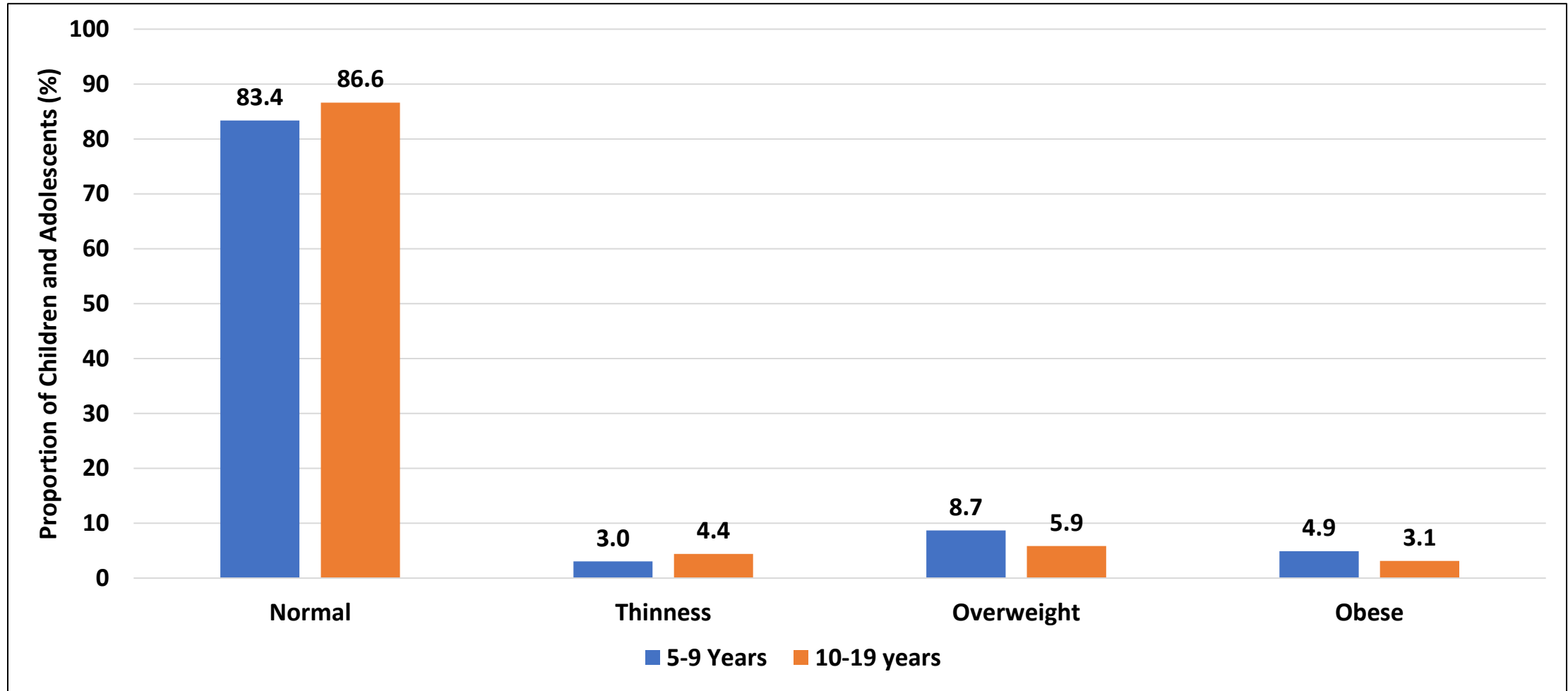
- In Masvingo Province, about 8.7% of children 5 to 9 years old and 5.9% of children and adolescents 10 to 19 years old were overweight, 4.9% of the children 5 to 9 years old and 3.1% of the children and adolescents 10 to 19 years old were obese.

Nutrition Status of Adults
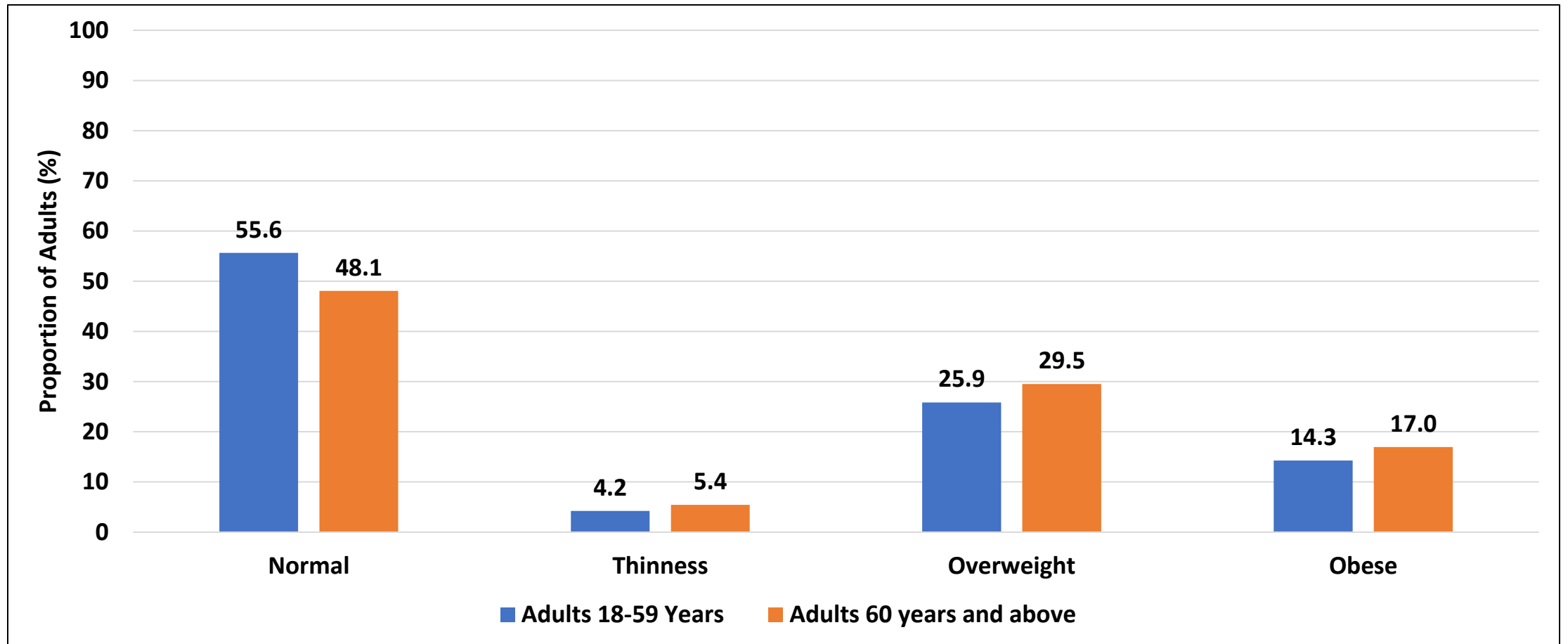
- Adults over 60 years had poor nutritional outcomes as compared to those in the 18 to 59 age category.

- About 5.4% of the 60 years and above age category, were thin, whilst 29.5% were overweight and 17% were obese.

Minimum Dietary Diversity for Women of Childbearing Age

Minimum Dietary Diversity for Women of Childbearing Age by Year
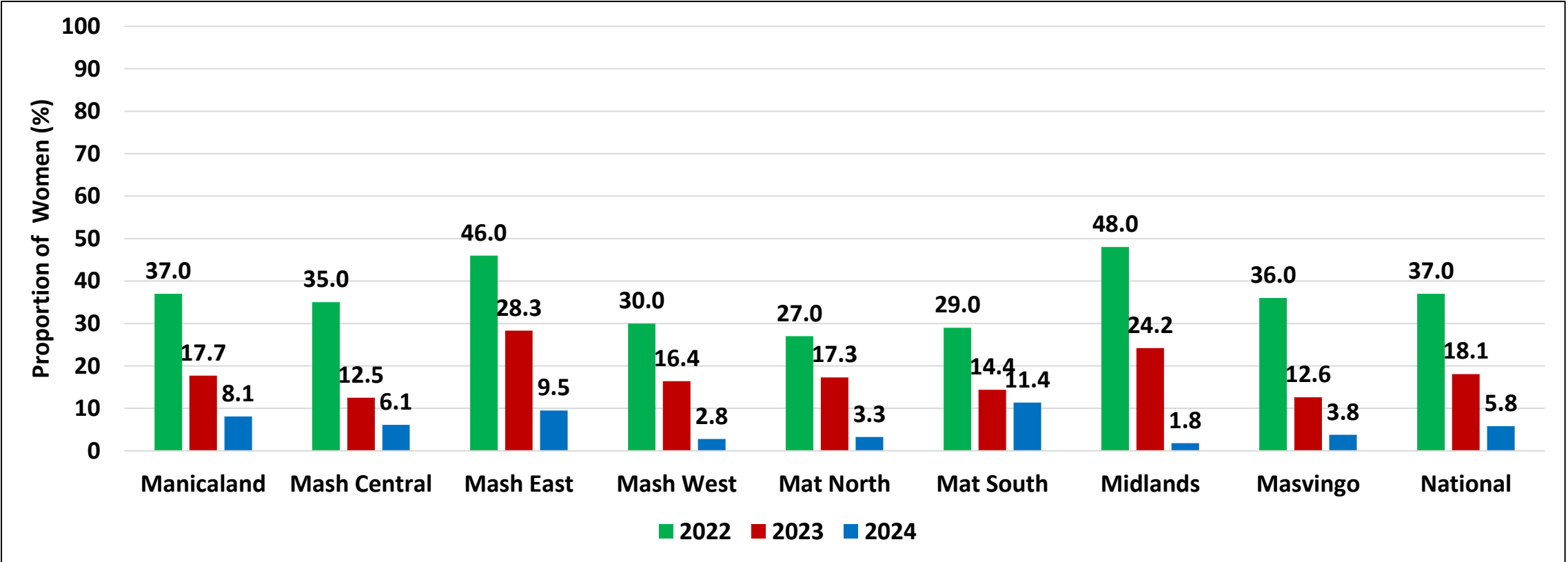
- The proportion of Women of Childbearing Age (WCBA) consuming at least 5 food groups from the possible 10 declined from 18.1% in 2023 to 5.8% in 2024.

- In Masvingo province there was a decrease from 12.6% to 3.8%.

Actual Food Groups Consumed by WCBA

	Foods made from grains (%)	Orange fleshed Vegetables or root (%)	White roots and tubers (%)	Dark green leafy vegetables (%)	Fruits that are dark yellow or orange inside (%)	Other fruits like bananas, apples, citrus fruits (%)	Other vegetables like onion, tomato (%)	Meat made from animal organs (%)	Other types of meat or poultry, (%)	Eggs (%)	Fish or seafood, (%)	Beans or peas, (%)	Nuts or seeds, (%)	Milk or milk products, (%)	Oils/fat/ butter (%)	Condiments and seasonings, (%)	Other beverages and foods (%)
Manicaland	98.3	22.0	4.1	62.9	2.8	15.9	28.4	3.1	8.9	5.2	5.0	5.4	1.8	5.5	35.8	16.1	8.3
Mash Central	99.1	19.4	3.3	58.2	3.1	7.8	32.2	3.3	8.5	5.9	8.5	4.1	2.6	4.6	39.4	17.0	5.4
Mash East	95.2	16.3	7.7	57.8	1.0	7.8	46.1	3.9	15.2	7.1	3.8	3.5	2.7	10.1	57.9	27.3	24.4
Mash West	98.8	12.9	1.7	46.4	1.0	2.4	29.4	0.9	5.0	3.8	13.9	3.3	0.3	6.6	39.5	7.5	8.2
Mat North	99.1	9.6	2.4	61.2	0.3	1.5	17.0	4.0	8.9	3.1	2.2	5.0	0.9	6.4	33.0	29.0	21.5
Mat South	97.3	18.1	9.4	50.4	4.0	12.7	32.5	7.9	27.5	5.9	6.4	11.7	2.5	13.2	34.5	13.1	21.4
Midlands	98.0	13.5	4.6	49.1	2.3	4.9	32.3	3.2	11.4	1.5	2.4	4.4	1.4	4.9	29.0	10.3	11.0
Masvingo	96.7	10.5	3.2	50.1	1.0	9.0	30.4	3.8	15.6	1.8	3.7	4.2	3.7	9.2	45.6	9.7	16.0
National	97.7	15.1	4.7	54.3	1.9	7.6	31.4	3.8	12.9	4.2	5.5	5.2	2.0	7.7	39.5	16.3	15.0

- Women of Child Bearing Age (WBCA) because of their physiological demands of pregnancy and lactation require a more nutrient-dense diet. Requirements for most nutrients are higher for this group than for adult men.

- The results show that generally WCBA in the province are mostly consuming foods made from grain (96.7%), dark green vegetables (50.1%), Oils (45.6%), Other vegetables (30.4%), orange fleshed vegetables (10.5%) and condiments (9.7%).

- Insufficient nutrient intakes before and during pregnancy and lactation can affect both women and their infants.

Physical Activity and Non-Communicable Diseases

Type of Physical Activity by Children 5-9years

	Walking (%)	Dancing (%)	Swimming (%)	Jogging (%)	Aerobic exercise (%)	Bicycle Running (%)	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 5-9 years in Masvingo province was walking (82%) , jogging (32.2%) , gardening (32.1%) and participated in sporting activities (24.6%).

- About 8.1% 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, and weakened bones and muscles.

Type of Physical Activity by Adolescents 10-19 years

	Walking (%)	Dancing (%)	Swimming (%)	Jogging (%)	Aerobic (%)	Bicycle %)	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.

- Most adolescents aged 10-19 years in Masvingo province engaged in walking (81.4%), gardening (56.3%) and sporting activities (35.8%) .

- About 3.1% 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, and low levels of physical activity.

Type of Physical Activity by Adults 18-59 years

	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 Masvingo province was walking (81.4%), gardening (56.3%) and sporting activities (51.3%).

Type of Physical Activity by Elderly +60 years

	Walking (%)	Dancing (%)	Swimming (%)	Jogging Running (%)	Aerobic Exercise (%)	Bicycle Riding (%)	Gardening Activities (%)	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 above 60 years in the province was walking (75.8%) and gardening (57.2%).

- Thirteen point two percent (13.2%) of household members above 60years reported that they were not engaging in any physical activity.

Type of Physical Activity by WBCA 15-49 years

	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 Childbearing age in Masvingo province was walking (83.4%) and gardening (71.9%).

Chronic Conditions by Age

	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 the most common medically confirmed chronic condition amongst the 60 years and above age group.

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:
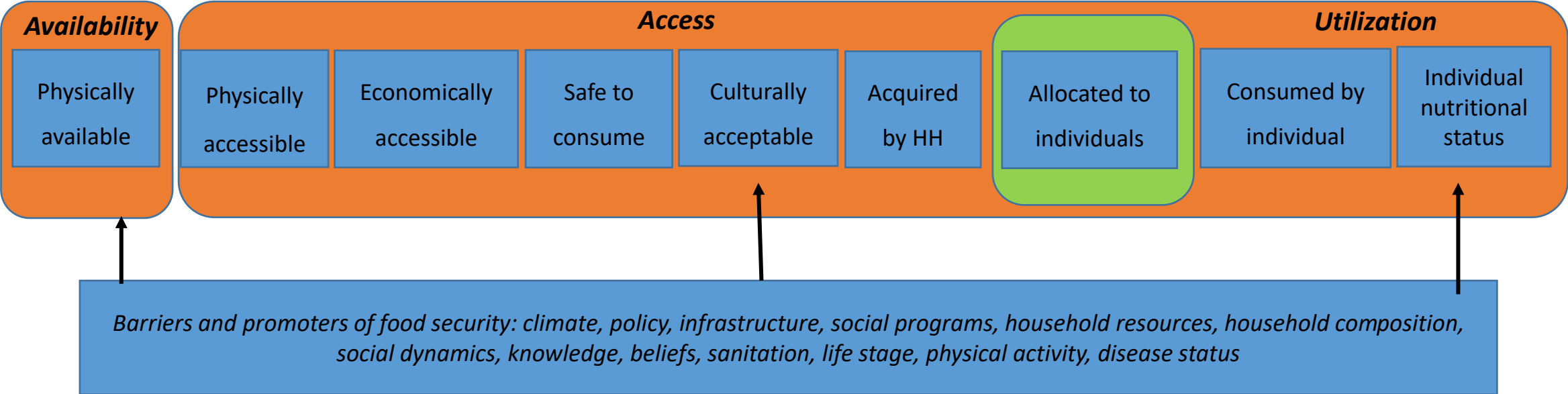
Figure 3: Dimensions of Food Security (Jones et al., 2013)

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 nationally approximately **57%** of the rural households will be cereal insecure and in Masvingo Province 56% 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.

- The 56% of Masvingo Province translates to **839,503 individuals requiring a total of 31,062MT of cereal.**

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
Bikita	85	84	84	84	79	43
Chiredzi	91	86	85	85	77	55
Chivi	94	94	94	94	89	69
Gutu	87	86	86	86	81	60
Masvingo	85	81	81	81	76	50
Mwenezi	82	81	80	80	74	54
Zaka	95	94	94	93	89	61
Masvingo	88	87	87	86	81	56

- Considering all sources of potential income, the cereal insecurity prevalence in the province is projected to be 56% during the peak hunger in the 2024/25 consumption year.

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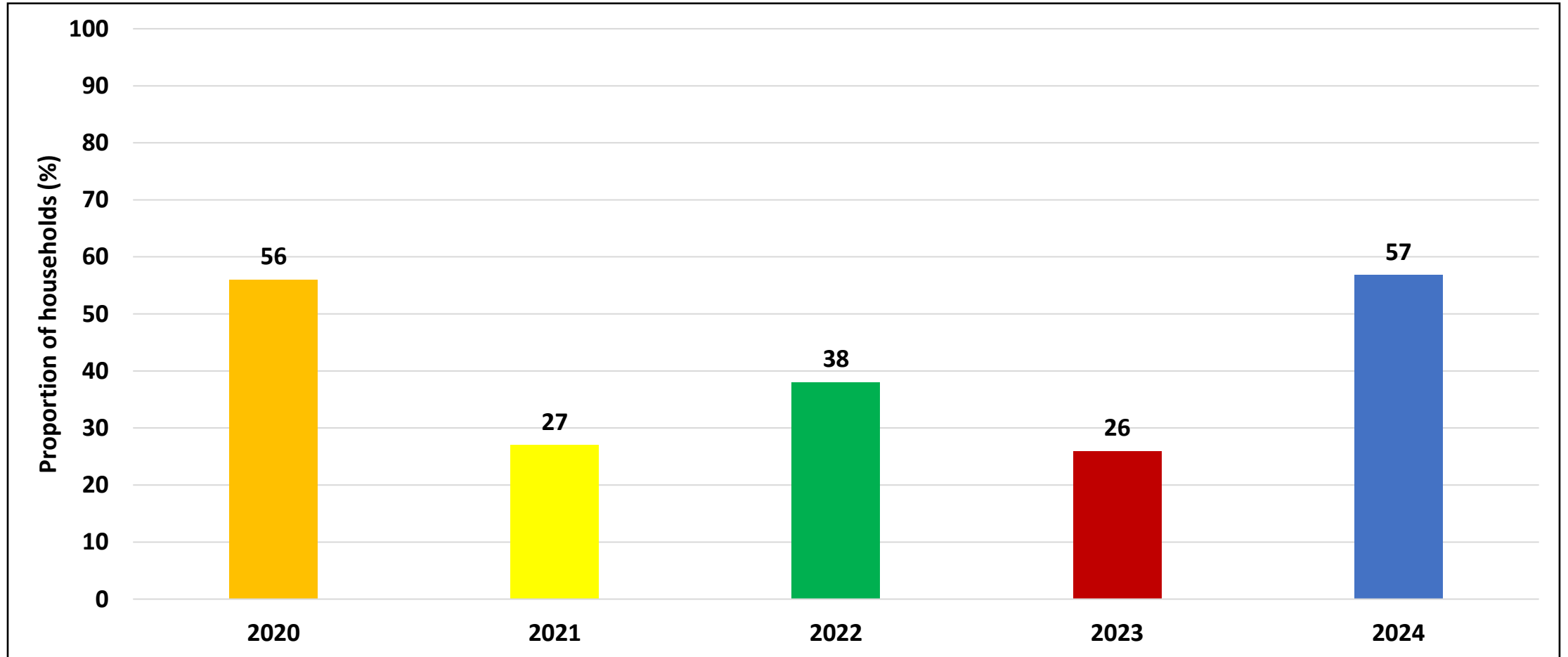
- Generally, the household cereal insecurity has deteriorated across all provinces due to poor rains.

Cereal Insecurity Progression by Quarter
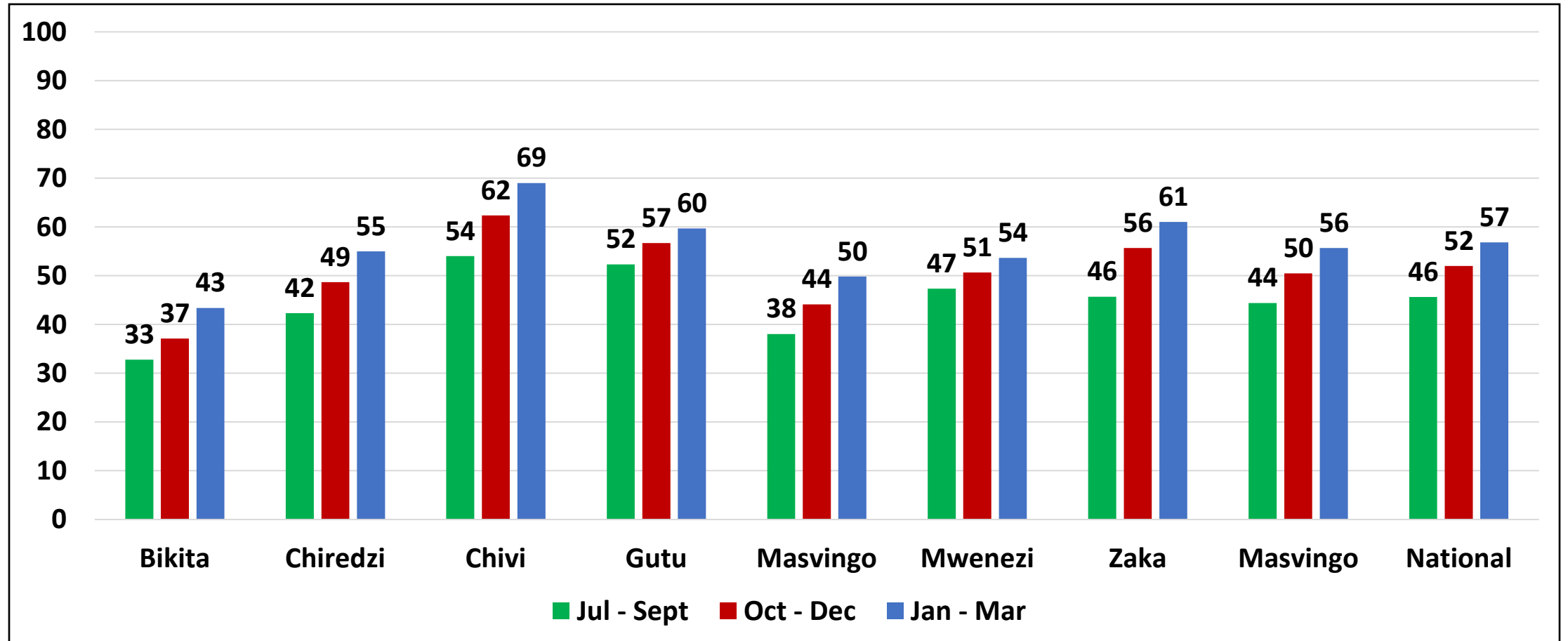
- About 44% of the rural households in Masvingo Province were projected to be facing food access challenges in the July to September quarter.

Cereal Insecure Population by Quarter

District	Food Insecure Population		
	Jul - Sept	Oct - Dec	Jan - Mar
Bikita	57,969	65,581	76,707
Chiredzi	128,483	147,705	166,927
Chivi	93,409	107,824	119,356
Gutu	108,937	117,957	124,202
Masvingo	90,591	105,022	118,651
Mwenezi	99,081	106,059	112,339
Zaka	90,826	110,715	121,322
Masvingo	669,297	760,863	839,503

- Chiredzi (166,927) and Gutu (124,202) were projected to have the highest populations of cereal insecure people during the peak hunger period.

Cereal Requirements (MT) by Province by Quarter

District	Cereal Requirements		
	Jul - Sept	Oct - Dec	Jan - Mar
Bikita	2,145	2,427	2,838
Chiredzi	4,754	5,465	6,176
Chivi	3,456	3,989	4,416
Gutu	4,031	4,364	4,595
Masvingo	3,352	3,886	4,390
Mwenezi	3,666	3,924	4,157
Zaka	3,361	4,096	4,489
Masvingo	24,764	28,152	31,062

- Chiredzi (6,176MT) and Gutu (4,595MT) were projected to have the highest cereal requirements during the peak hunger period.

Developmental Issues

Community Development Challenges

Challenge	Proportion of Communities (%)
No primary school in the ward	2.9
Gender Based Violence	2.9
Illegal settlers	2.9
Other, specify	2.9
Lack of life survival/entrepreneurial skills	4.4
School dropouts	4.4
Prohibitive By-laws	4.4
Drug and Substance Abuse	4.4
Unavailability of crop inputs on the local market	4.4
Corruption	4.4
Poor access to livestock/produce markets	5.9
Land degradation and pollution	5.9
Economic challenges/high cost of living/High food prices	5.9
Fewer or no vocational training centres	7.4
Livestock diseases	8.8
Early marriages	8.8
Livestock mortalities	8.8
Limited access to water for projects	10.3
Unpredictable and unreliable rainfall patterns	10.3
Lack of /limited Water for crop and livestock production	10.3
Lack of school fees	11.8
Poor Information Communication Services/ Infrastructure	11.8
Shortage of cash	14.7
Lack of capital	14.7
Draught Power shortage	14.7
Poor/ lack of Health and infrastructure	16.2
Poverty	16.2
Poor Road infrastructure/Bad roads	19.1
Lack of/ limited Water for domestic use	29.4
Unemployment	38.2
Lack of income generating projects	45.6
Prolonged mid-season dry spells	73.5

- In Masvingo province, prolonged mid-season dry spells (73.5%) were ranked highest among community development challenges followed by lack of income generating projects (45.6%) and unemployment (38.2%).

Community Development Priorities

Community Development Priorities bar chart showing Proportion of Communities (%):

- Other — 1.5
- Control of wildlife — 1.5
- Revival and development of Industries — 2.9
- Youth friendly centres (Social centres) — 7.4
- Skills and capacity development — 7.4
- Electricity infrastructure development — 8.8
- Education support (social assistance) — 10.3
- Livestock support programs — 10.3
- Education and related infrastructure improvement — 10.3
- Agricultural markets availability and access development — 10.3
- Livestock disease surveillance and control — 11.8
- Vocational Training Centres — 14.7
- Livestock restocking — 16.2
- Start-up capital/loans/revolving fund — 23.5
- Borehole rehabilitation — 23.5
- Health services and related infrastructure improvement — 23.5
- Employment/ job creation — 25.0
- Water Supply including piped water — 32.4
- Road infrastructure development — 32.4
- Irrigation infrastructure development — 45.6
- Dams/Water reservoirs construction — 50.0
- Income Generation Projects promotion — 57.4

- In Masvingo province, most communities prioritised income generation projects promotion (57.4%), dam construction (50.0%), irrigation infrastructure development (45.6%), road infrastructure development (32.4%) and water supply (including piped water) at 32.4%.

Youth

Youth Challenges

Challenge	Proportion of Communities (%)
Unemployment	80.9
Lack of income generating projects	58.8
Lack of life survival/entrepreneurial skills	51.5
Drug and substance abuse	41.2
Drought/long dry spells	36.8
School dropouts	29.4
Early marriages	27.9
Lack of school fees	23.5
Limited access to water for projects	20.6
Economic challenges/high cost of living	19.1
Lack of capital	17.6
Limited access to recreational facilities	11.8
Shortages of schools	7.4
Poor communication infrastructure	7.4
Shortages of clinics	2.9
Bad roads	1.5
Politics	1.5
Other	1.5

- In Masvingo province, unemployment (80.9%), lack of income generating projects (58.8%) and lack of life survival/entrepreneurial skills (51.5%) were reported as major challenges affecting youths.

Youth Priorities

Bar chart: Proportion of Communities (%)

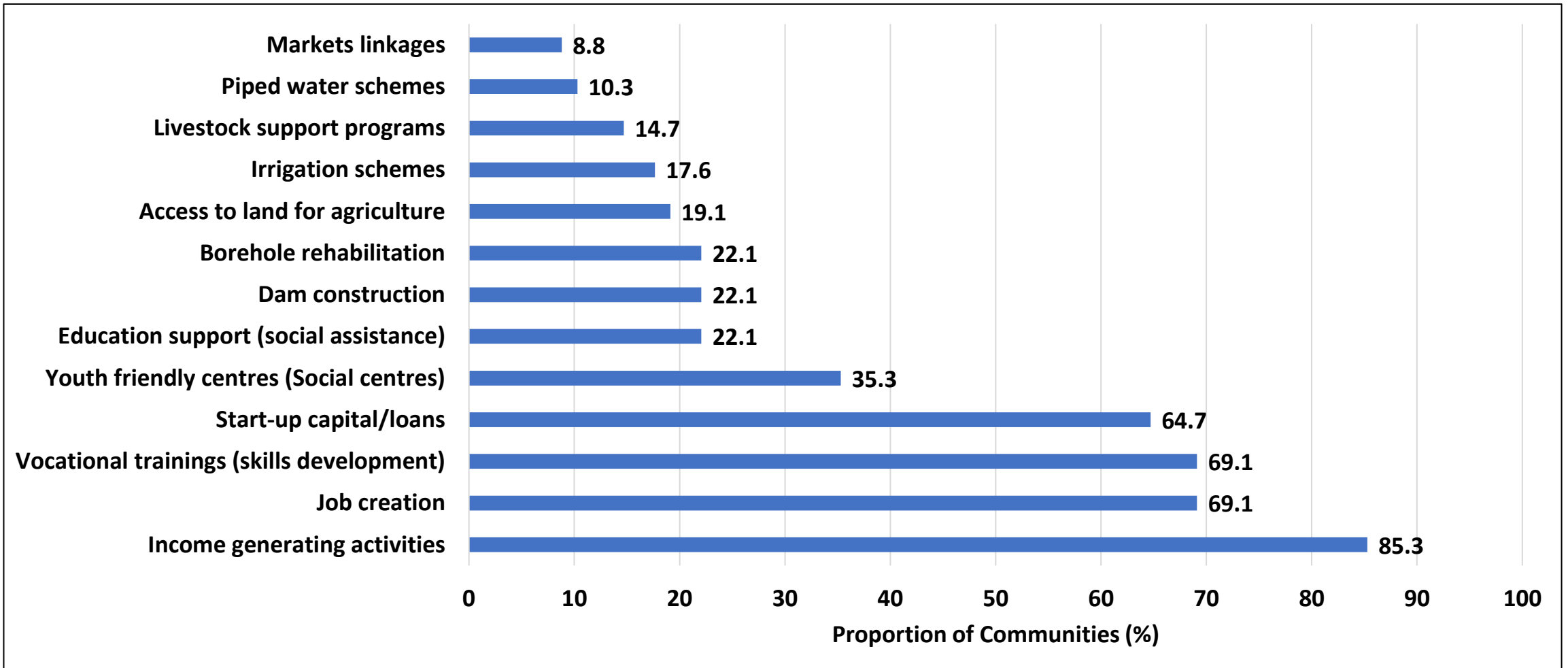| Priority	%
Markets linkages	8.8
Piped water schemes	10.3
Livestock support programs	14.7
Irrigation schemes	17.6
Access to land for agriculture	19.1
Borehole rehabilitation	22.1
Dam construction	22.1
Education support (social assistance)	22.1
Youth friendly centres (Social centres)	35.3
Start-up capital/loans	64.7
Vocational trainings (skills development)	69.1
Job creation	69.1
Income generating activities	85.3

- In Masvingo province, income generating activities (85.3%), job creation (69.1%), vocational trainings and skills development (69.1%) and start-up capital/loans (64.7%) were reported as the major development priorities for youths.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Conclusions and Recommendations

- Provincially 44% of households will be cereal insecure during the period July to September 2024, 50% in the October to December 2024 and 56% will be cereal insecure during the peak hunger period (January to March 2025). Hence there is need to scale up food assistance by the responsible ministry to cushion the vulnerable households. Approaches which integrate resilience and preparedness should be implemented by multi-sectoral partners.

- Access to improved sanitation for the province was 55% and 34% of the households practiced open defecation. All districts in the province had at least 20% of the households practising open defecation. Government and development partners need to scale-up interventions and adopt innovative approaches to end open defecation. The SADC Hygiene Strategy (2021-2025) identifies opportunities and evidence for innovative approaches to end open defecation.

- In the province, the proportion of households using unimproved water sources was 28%. Government and development partners should prioritize the establishment and rehabilitation of water sources that are safe for cooking and drinking for communities. The Government should scale up village level borehole drilling and solarization for piped water.

Conclusions and Recommendations

- The provincial stunting prevalence for Masvingo was 27.4% and is categorized as high according to the WHO. GAM (3.1%) was below the 5% WHO threshold for public health emergency. There is need for the Ministry of Health and Child Care to scale up detection, prevention and treatment of acute malnutrition in the short and medium term whilst increasing coverage of nutrition sensitive programmes including awareness, involvement of community leadership for community mobilization and use and promotion of local traditional food varieties.

- At least 39.8% of the households reported accessing police services within an hour and 45.5% of households reported accessing victim friendly services. Furthermore approximately 12% of the households travelled over 10km to access a health facility. There is need to improve access to Police and Health Facilities.

- The majority of households in the province experienced economic and climatic related shocks and exposure to shocks was higher than the ability to cope. There is need to scale up resilience building initiatives to increase the capacity of households and communities to withstand the effects of shocks and stresses.

Conclusions and Recommendations

- The uptake of value chain practices was low in the province. On average, 30.2% of households accessed agriculture inputs through agro-dealers and 17.8% received market prices, product demand or product quality requirements. Only 5.5% made use of organized marketing systems and 3.2% used organized marketing. The relevant government ministries will need to scale up community awareness on value chains, foster private sector- community linkages and pilot and adopt some of the agriculture value chain models successfully implemented in Southern Africa.

- Prolonged mid-season dry spells (73.5%) were ranked highest among community development challenges followed by lack of income generating projects (45.6%) and unemployment (38.2%). Unemployment (80.9%), lack of income generating projects (58.8%) and lack of life survival/entrepreneurial skills (51.5%) were reported as major challenges affecting youths. The aspirations for rural development spelt out in the NDS1 will require the Government to fully utilize the water bodies across the province and develop community led irrigation business units and to finance and fully implement local level business units incorporating the different community projects and skills training.