



ZIMBABWE LIVELIHOODS ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE (ZIMLAC)

2025 RURAL LIVELIHOODS ASSESSMENT REPORT



MATABELELAND SOUTH PROVINCE

Foreword

Under the leadership of FNC, the Zimbabwe Livelihoods Assessment Committee (ZimLAC) remains committed to providing timely and reliable information on the food and nutrition security situation to inform the development of robust food and nutrition response programmes, policies and strategies. The 2025 Rural Livelihoods Assessment underpins the value of precision sustainable livelihoods planning to provide spatially resolved data to guide efficient targeting of interventions to those populations with the greatest need, to reduce social development disparities and accelerate progress. The results will enable quantification of inequalities and identification of successes and failures of programmes and policies at local level.

The 25th Rural Livelihoods Assessment Report provides updates on pertinent rural household livelihoods issues which include demographics, housing, education, health, nutrition, WASH, energy, social protection, food consumption patterns, food and income sources, income levels, expenditure patterns, debts, coping strategies, shocks and food security. The report will assist the country to evaluate its performance against set targets and aspirations; monitoring the continuing implementation of the National Development Strategic policies, Agriculture related policies, Social Assistance and Social Protection related policies, the Food Nutrition Security Policy, as well as the country's progress against regional and global commitments. The assessment is one of the documents that will be useful in providing baseline data critical for the development of the National Development Strategy 2 (NDS 2).

Our sincere gratitude goes 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. These resources also went a long way in facilitating the collection of data to enable the representation of key indicators at district level.

We remain indebted to the food and nutrition security structures at both provincial and district levels for their support. We appreciate the rural communities of Zimbabwe, the local authorities as well as Traditional Leaders for cooperating and supporting this assessment. We submit this report to you for your use and reference in your invaluable work towards addressing priority issues keeping many of our rural households vulnerable to food and nutrition insecurity.



George D. Kembo (Dr.)

DIRECTOR GENERAL/ ZIMLAC CHAIRPERSON

Table of Contents

Foreword.....	2
Acknowledgements.....	4
Introduction and Background	5
Assessment Purpose.....	9
Assessment Methodology.....	17
Demographic Description of the Sample	27
Chronic Conditions.....	37
Disability.....	40
Social Protection.....	42
Migration.....	49
Consumption Patterns.....	53
Household Coping.....	63
Food Safety.....	70
Water, Sanitation and Hygiene	85
Energy.....	100
Climate Change.....	103
Shocks and Stressors	106
Agricultural Production Technologies.....	119
Agriculture Production.....	123
Livestock.....	130
Access to Information and Critical Infrastructure	136
Income and expenditure.....	146
Assets, Loans and Remittances.....	154
Child Food Poverty.....	160
Child Health.....	163
Infant and Young Child Feeding Practices.....	173
Nutrition Status.....	182
Food Security.....	192
Community Development Challenges and Priorities.....	204
Conclusions and Recommendations.....	207

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- Food and Nutrition Council
- Ministry of Finance, Economic Development and Investment Promotion
- Ministry of Lands, Agriculture, Fisheries, Water and Rural Development
- Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare
- Ministry of Health and Child Care
- Ministry of Local Government and Public Works
- Ministry of Women Affairs, Community, Small and Medium Enterprise Development
- Rural District Councils (RDCs)
- ZIMSTAT
- United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)
- START NETWORK
- United Nations World Food Programme (WFP)
- United Nations Development Programme
- United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO)
- World Vision
- Bindura University of Science Education
- Marondera University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology
- Harare Institute of Technology
- National AIDS Council
- Insiza Godlwayo AIDS Council
- Médecins Sans Frontières
- Organisation of Rural Associations for Progress
- Zimbabwe Project Trust
- Environmental Management Agency
- SNV Netherlands Development Organisation
- Mercy Corps

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 12 urban and 25 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 for improved 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.
- Providing baseline data for NDS 2

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 2025/2026 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, water, sanitation and hygiene), assets, 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 and stressors experienced by communities on food and nutrition security.
6. To identify development priorities for communities.

Contextual Analysis

- The 2024-25 production season generally experienced a delayed start. A normal to below normal rainfall pattern was experienced from October to November 2024, influenced by a weak La Niña. However, a transition into a stronger La Niña phase in the second half of the season resulted in more favourable rainfall, providing optimal conditions for planting and growth of crops.
- According to the Ministry of Lands, Agriculture, Fisheries, Water and Rural Development's Crops, Livestock and Fisheries Assessment Report (CLAFAs – 2), most Pfumvudza crops were planted during November 2024 (40%) and December 2024 (41%), with a smaller portion of crops planted later in January 2025 (19%).
- There was a 290% increase in food crop production compared to last season. The season also experienced an increased production of sorghum and pearl millet due to improved agroecological tailoring of crops. Maize production is estimated at 2,293,556 MT while Traditional Grains production is estimated to be 634,650 MT. Total cereal production is expected to be 2,928,206 MT. (CLAFAs – 2).
- Yield levels from Pfumvudza/Intwasa in maize for the 2024/25 season were slightly higher than those from conventional farming.
- Tobacco production is expected to increase by 15%, Cotton by 52% and Sunflower by 303%. (CLAFAs – 2).

Contextual Analysis

- According to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) staff team that conducted the 2025 Article IV Consultation;
- Zimbabwe is experiencing a degree of macroeconomic stability despite lingering policy challenges. During the first half of 2025, better climate conditions and historically high gold prices have boosted agricultural and mining activity, strengthening the current account and contributing to the recovery, with growth projected at 6 percent in 2025.
- On April 5, 2024, the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe introduced a new currency called Zimbabwe Gold (ZiG; code: ZWG). which is backed by a composite basket of foreign currency and precious metals (mainly gold) held by the RBZ. This structured currency was designed to foster simplicity, certainty and predictability in monetary and financial affairs. The RBZ aimed to consolidate the currency's stability, maintain low inflation and ensure a stable exchange rate.
- Following the introduction of the new Currency, Banks were required to convert existing Zimbabwe dollar balances into ZWG.
- The monetary policy formulation and implementation pursued by the Reserve Bank since 5 April 2024 created relative price, currency and financial stability in the economy. This stability is evidenced by:
 - ZWG month on month inflation which stabilised to 0.5% in February 2025 and -0.1% in March 2025.
 - Greater exchange rate stability, with foreign exchange parallel market premiums below 20%, resulting in price and currency stability.
 - Increased foreign currency inflows.
 - Increased availability of foreign currency and;
 - Sustained financial sector stability and soundness.

Government Mitigatory Measures

The following people-centered measures were implemented to ensure food and nutrition security for all:

- **Food Mitigation:** Government targeted 6 million people in rural areas with a package comprised of pulses, oils and cereal.
- **Presidential Borehole Drilling Scheme:** In order to alleviate water scarcity challenges and climate change, Government is implementing the Presidential Borehole Drilling Scheme. The scheme aims to increase access to safe drinking water.
- **Strengthening of Multi-Sectoral Structures** in order to operationalise a cohesive response to the food and nutrition challenges.
- **Easing of restrictions on maize grain trade (Statutory Instrument 56 of 2023)** thus increasing maize grain flows and improving availability.
- **Emergency Road Rehabilitation Programme** – the Government of Zimbabwe through Statutory Instrument 47 of 2021 declared all roads to be a state of national disaster on 9 February 2021. The second Emergency Road Rehabilitation Programme (ERRP II) was launched and the objectives of the programme are to improve the road network, which was extensively damaged during the rainy season and to harness the potential of the transport system in promoting economic growth.

Government Mitigatory Measures

- The Government of Zimbabwe and the RBZ implemented a range of policy measures:
 - **Monetary Policy Rate:** Set at 35% in September 2024 to curb inflationary pressures.
 - **Money Supply Control:** Established strict controls to prevent excess liquidity from undermining the new currency.
 - **Export Retention Thresholds:** Reduced from 75% to 70% in February 2025 to enhance foreign exchange liquidity in the formal market.
 - **IMF Agreement Delay:** Postponed an IMF staff-level agreement to allow reforms to consolidate before committing to new external programmes.
 - **Public Spending Control:** Maintained tight control over public spending and subsidies.
 - **ZWG Adoption:** Promoted broader use of ZWG across public services and transactions, with over 90% adoption reported by mid-2024. Mandated the use of point-of-sale (POS) systems by all businesses for transactions in both ZWG and USD, making this a pre-condition for business licensing.
 - **Interest Rates:** Upwardly reviewed minimum deposit interest rates, with ZWG savings deposits at 5%, time deposits at 7.5%, and USD savings deposits at 2.5%, time deposits at 4%.
 - **Targeted Finance Facility:** Introduced a facility extended to wholesalers and retailers.
 - **Reporting Currency:** Mandated the use of ZWG as the reporting currency for all entities with immediate effect.

Government Mitigatory Measures

- The 2024 mid-term budget review presented on July 25, 2024 focused on consolidating economic transformation and addressing challenges like the impact of the El Nino-induced drought on agricultural output. While economic growth was projected at 2% for 2024, down from the initial 3.5% projection, measures were being implemented to maintain economic stability and achieve fiscal consolidation.
- The Reserve Bank noted that most banks had stopped charging monthly bank maintenance or service charges for individual bank accounts with a conservative daily balance of USD 100 and below or its equivalent in ZWG for a period of up to 30 days. The exemption for monthly bank maintenance or service charges for accounts with a conservative daily balance of USD 100 or below was extended to Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) with effect from 1 September 2024.
- To further promote the use of electronic means of payment, the Reserve Bank with effect from 1 September 2024 exempted electronic transactions of less than USD 10 or the ZWG equivalent from bank charges. This measure was aimed at removing the cost of using electronic means of payments by according such transactions a near-cash characteristic, consistent with the Reserve Bank's drive towards digital cash.
- The Reserve Bank reiterated that the country was in a multicurrency environment and all domestic transactions must be settled in either ZWG or foreign currency, except in cases where there were explicit exemptions to sell in US dollars. In this context, all economic agents were expected to adhere to the multicurrency system in place.
- On September 27 2024, the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe slashed the value of the ZWG by 43%, taking it from 13.56 ZWG to the US dollar at its launch to ZWG 24.4 to the dollar.
- The Reserve Bank made efforts to ensure that the Monetary Policy stance remained supportive of the envisaged growth of 6% in 2025.

Government Mitigatory Measures

- The Government, through a high-level task force on business malpractices launched this multi-agency initiative in 2024 to clamp down on unethical business practices and smuggling. The task force was led by the Ministry of Industry and Commerce and involved collaboration between the Zimbabwe Revenue Authority (ZIMRA), the Zimbabwe Republic Police (ZRP), the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe, the Consumer Protection Commission and other law-enforcement agencies.
- In addition to reducing smuggling, the operation aimed to regularise imports, ensuring that all importers paid the appropriate duties and taxes. This move was intended to protect consumers from harmful products such as hazardous foodstuffs and cosmetics, while also safeguarding businesses from unfair competition stemming from counterfeit or substandard goods. It further supported legitimate traders by addressing issues such as counterfeiting and intellectual property violations.

Assessment Methodology

Methodology – Assessment Design

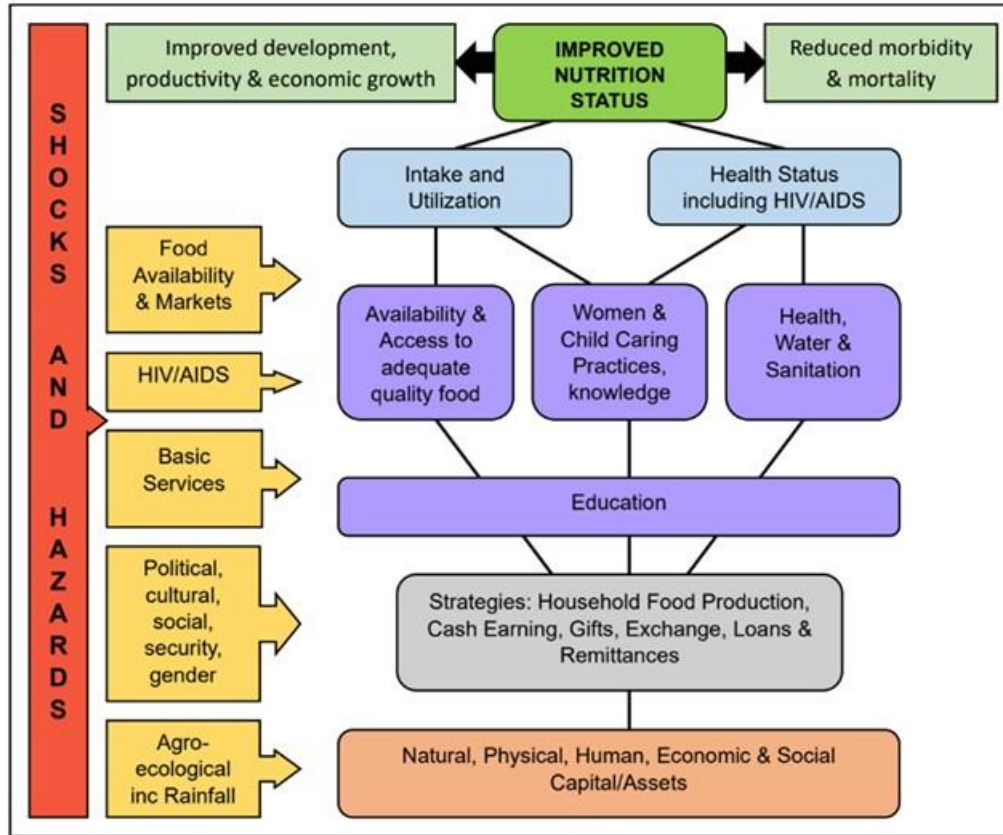


Figure 1: Food and Nutrition Conceptual Framework

- 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.
- The frameworks also place nutrition as an outcome of multi sectoral drivers at various levels and its role in driving the economic development.

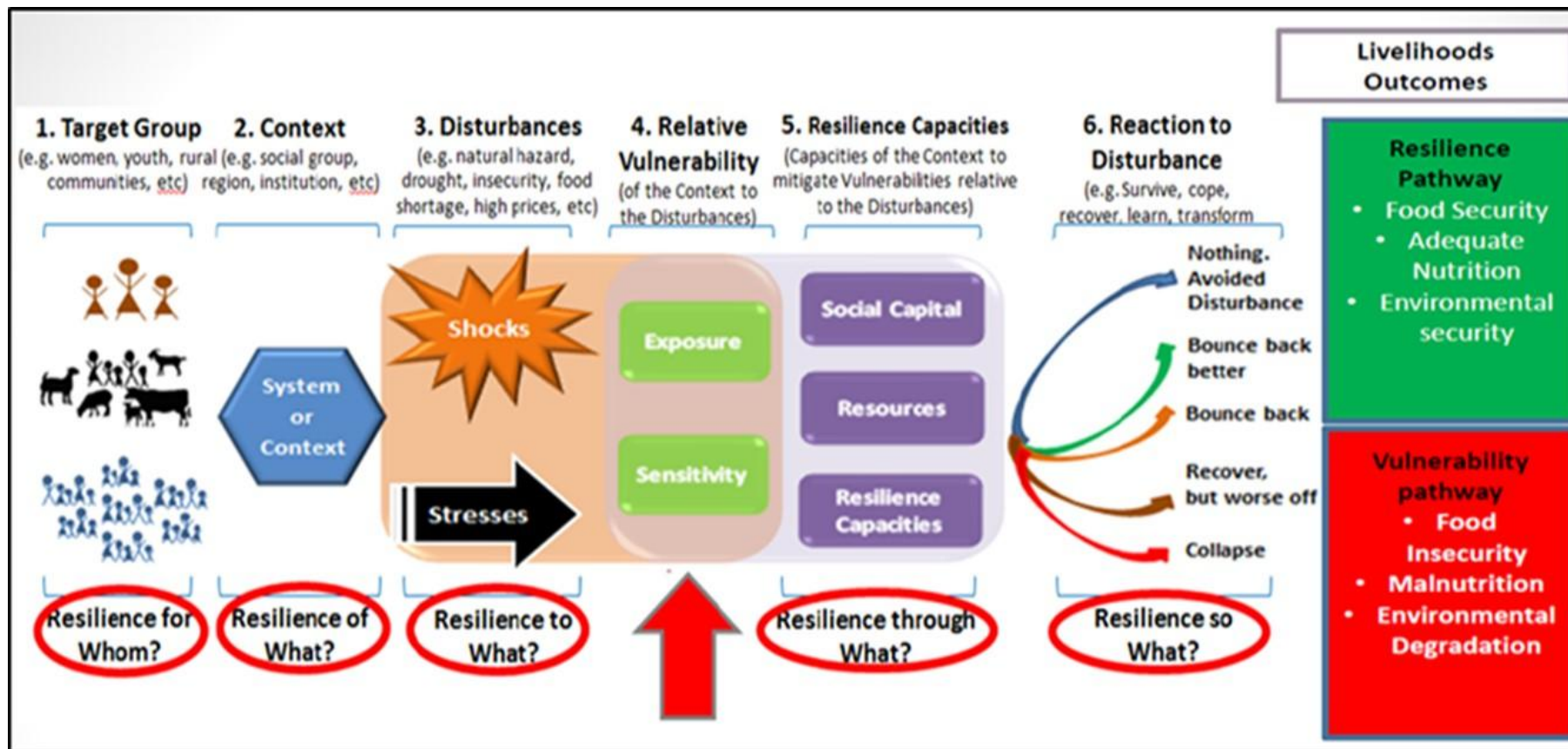
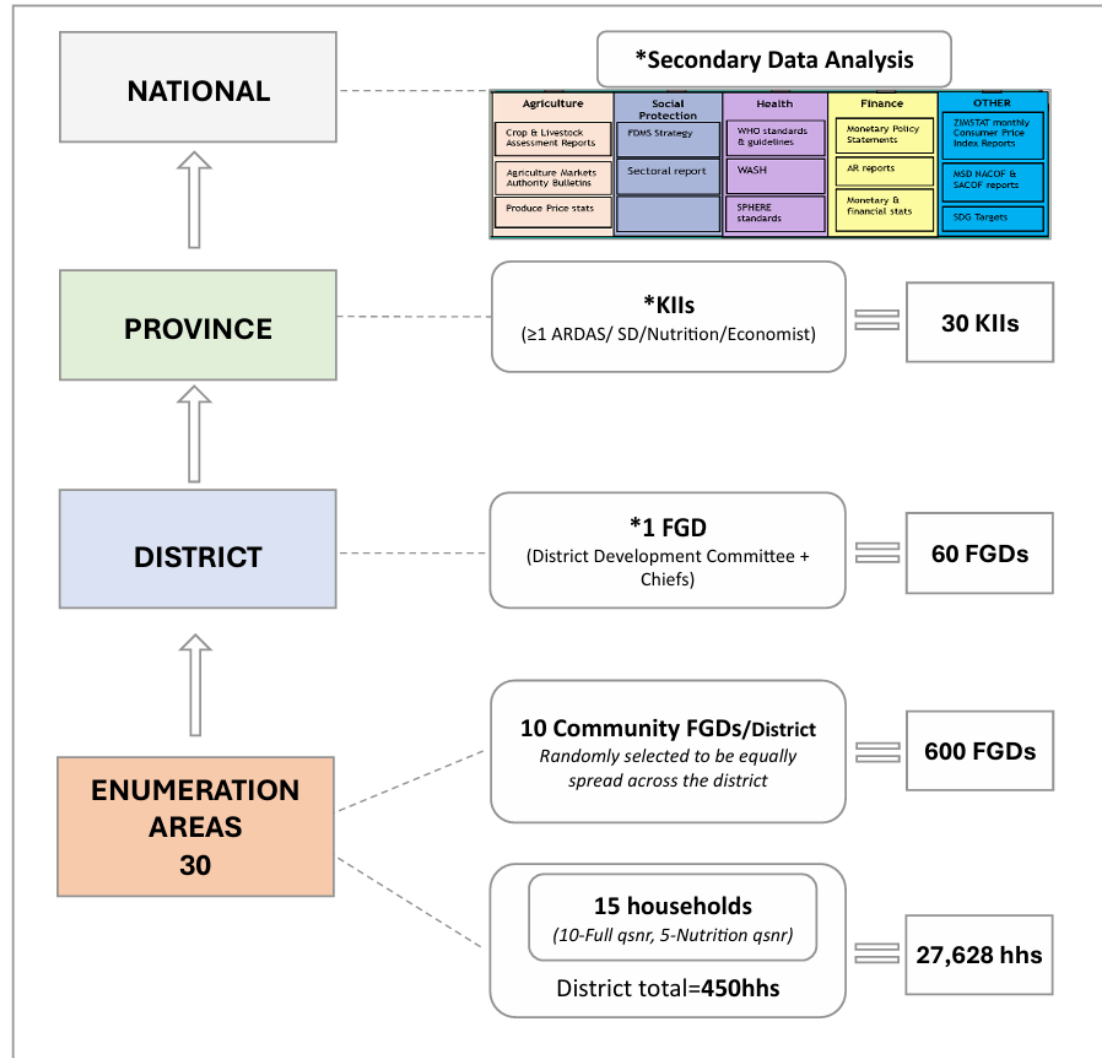


Figure 2: Zimbabwe Resilience Framework (UNDP Zimbabwe, 2015)

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 and the community Focus Group Discussion (FGD) guide.
- ZimLAC national supervisors (including Academia, Provincial Agritex Extension Officers, Provincial Nutritionists and Provincial Coordinators) 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. Four enumerators (including 1 anthropometrist) were selected from each district for data collection.
- Primary data collection took place from 21 May to 11 June 2025. Various secondary data sources and field observations were used to contextualise the analysis and reporting.

Methodology – Assessment Process



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 Enumeration 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 Probability Proportional to Population Size (PPS) (PPS) methodology.
 - The second stage involved the systematic random sampling of 10 households per EA (village).
- About 300 households were sampled per district and a total of 2,074 households were interviewed.
- 70 community FGDs, were held across all the districts.

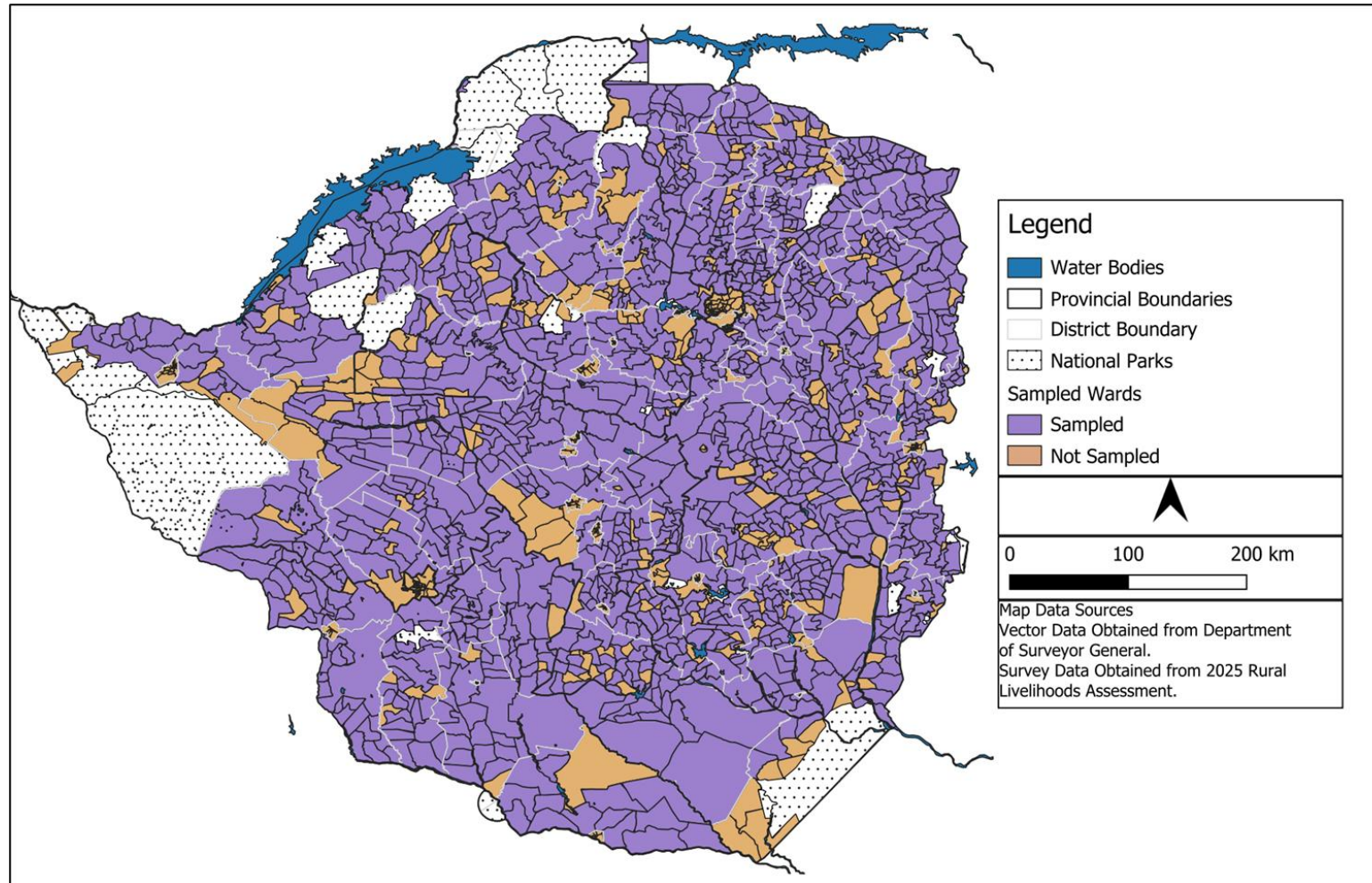
District	Households
Beitbridge	298
Bulilima	263
Gwanda	300
Insiza	312
Matobo	298
Mangwe	303
Umzingwane	300
Mat South	2074

Methodology- Sampling and Sample Size for Nutrition Outcomes

- All members in the households were considered for anthropometric measurements, while adults were considered for non-communicable disease risk factors and individual diets targeted at women and children under 5 years.
- At least 450 households were sampled per district and a total of 3,315 households were interviewed.
- Anthropometric measurements were taken from 2287 Children aged 6-59 months, 174 Children aged 5-9 years, 329 Adolescents 10-19 years, and 2034 Adults aged 20 years and above.

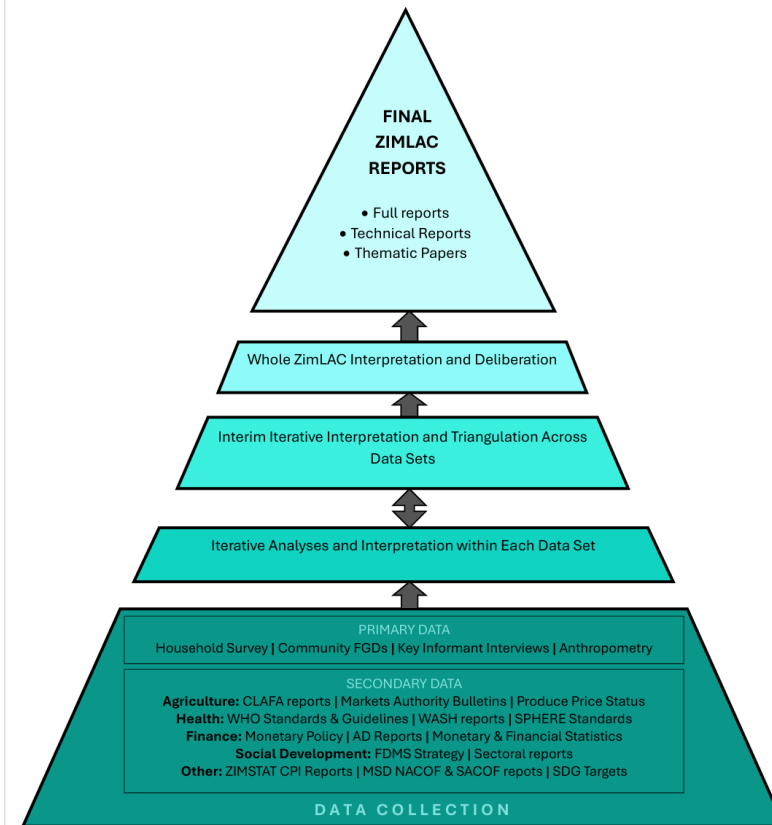
Province	Total
Beitbridge	459
Bulilima	440
Mangwe	497
Gwanda	504
Insiza	478
Matobo	465
Umzingwane	472
Mat South	3315

Methodology – Sampled Wards



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
- 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 2025 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

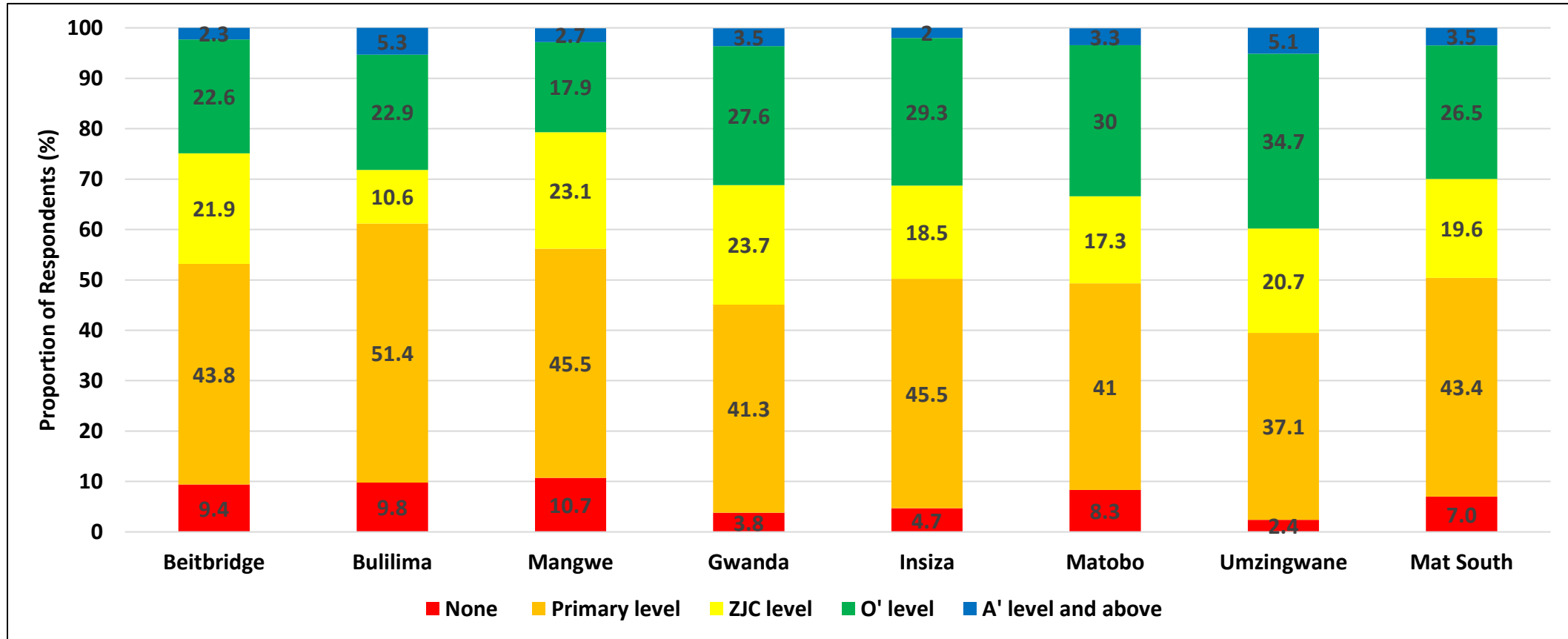
Household Characteristics

Characteristics of Respondents: Age and Sex

District	Average Age of Respondent (Years)	Sex of Respondent	
		Male (%)	Female (%)
Beitbridge	44	23.8	76.2
Bulilima	50	32.8	67.2
Mangwe	50	34.0	66.0
Gwanda	51	36.2	63.8
Insiza	50	37.6	62.4
Matobo	47	36.0	64.0
Umzingwane	50	26.7	73.3
Mat South	48	32.5	67.5

- Age is a characteristic used to understand and categorise populations. It is often analysed in conjunction with other socio-economic factors to provide a complete picture of a population's characteristics.
- The average age of respondents was 48 years
- About 67.5% of the respondents were female.

Characteristics of Respondents: Education Level Attained



- About 93% of respondents had attained at least primary school education. This provides confidence that respondents were knowledgeable on the subject matter.

Household Members Characteristics

District	Average Household size	Sex (%)		Household Members (%)						
		Male	Female	0 - 4 years	5 - 9 years	10 - 17 years	18 - 49 years	50 - 59 years	60 - 64 years	65+ years
Beitbridge	3	42.2	57.8	25.8	5.6	10.2	43.1	6.1	2.0	7.2
Bulilima	3	44.2	55.8	21.0	12.4	15.0	30.7	7.8	3.3	9.8
Mangwe	3	42.2	57.8	22.8	6.3	11.9	35.2	8.1	2.7	12.9
Gwanda	3	45.0	55.0	23.1	7.6	11.4	35.9	7.9	3.6	10.5
Insiza	3	42.9	57.1	23.1	7.7	7.1	39.9	9.4	3.3	9.4
Matobo	3	43.7	56.3	25.1	4.5	7.0	40.4	8.8	3.0	11.2
Umzingwane	4	45.8	54.2	25.1	6.4	10.8	37.8	6.6	2.9	10.3
Mat South	3	43.8	56.2	23.7	7.3	10.6	37.4	7.8	3.0	10.2

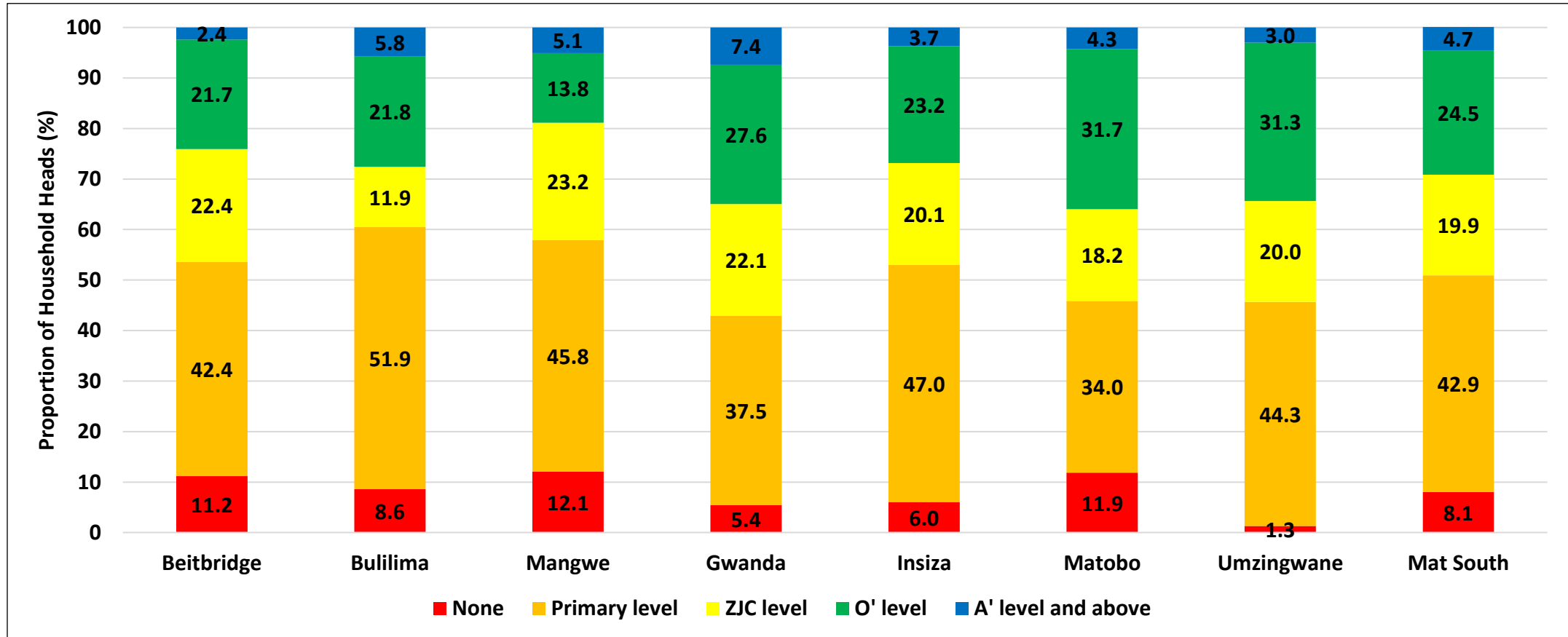
- The average household size for Matabeleland South was 3.
- Of the sampled population, 43.8% were male and 56.2% were female.

Characteristics of Household Head

District	Household Head Average Age (years)	Sex (%)		Household Head by Category (%)	
		Male	Female	Elderly Headed 65 Years and Above	Child Headed
Beitbridge	50	57.8	42.2	22.5	0
Bulilima	58	56.5	43.5	40.7	0.8
Mangwe	56	52	48	42.7	1.0
Gwanda	57	62.5	37.5	34.0	0
Insiza	55	65.1	34.9	29.2	0
Matobo	55	65.7	34.3	36.3	0
Umzingwane	58	61	39	38.3	0
Mat South	55	60.2	39.8	34.7	0.2

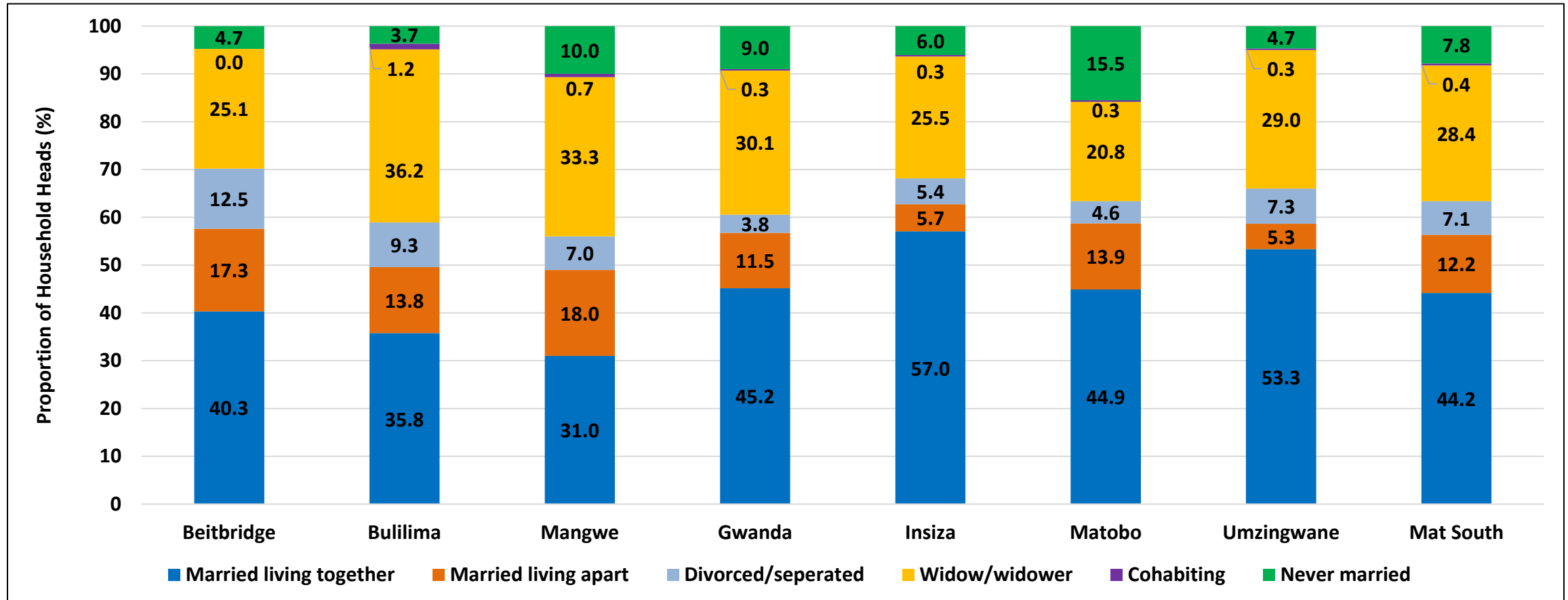
- The average age of the household heads was 55 years.
- Mangwe (42.7%) and Bulilima (40.7%) had the highest proportion of households which were headed by the elderly.

Characteristics of Household Head: Education Level Attained



- About 92% of the household heads had attained some form of education.
- Education level indicates individuals' knowledge, skills, and competencies, which are important in making day-to-day decisions.

Characteristics of Household Head: Marital Status



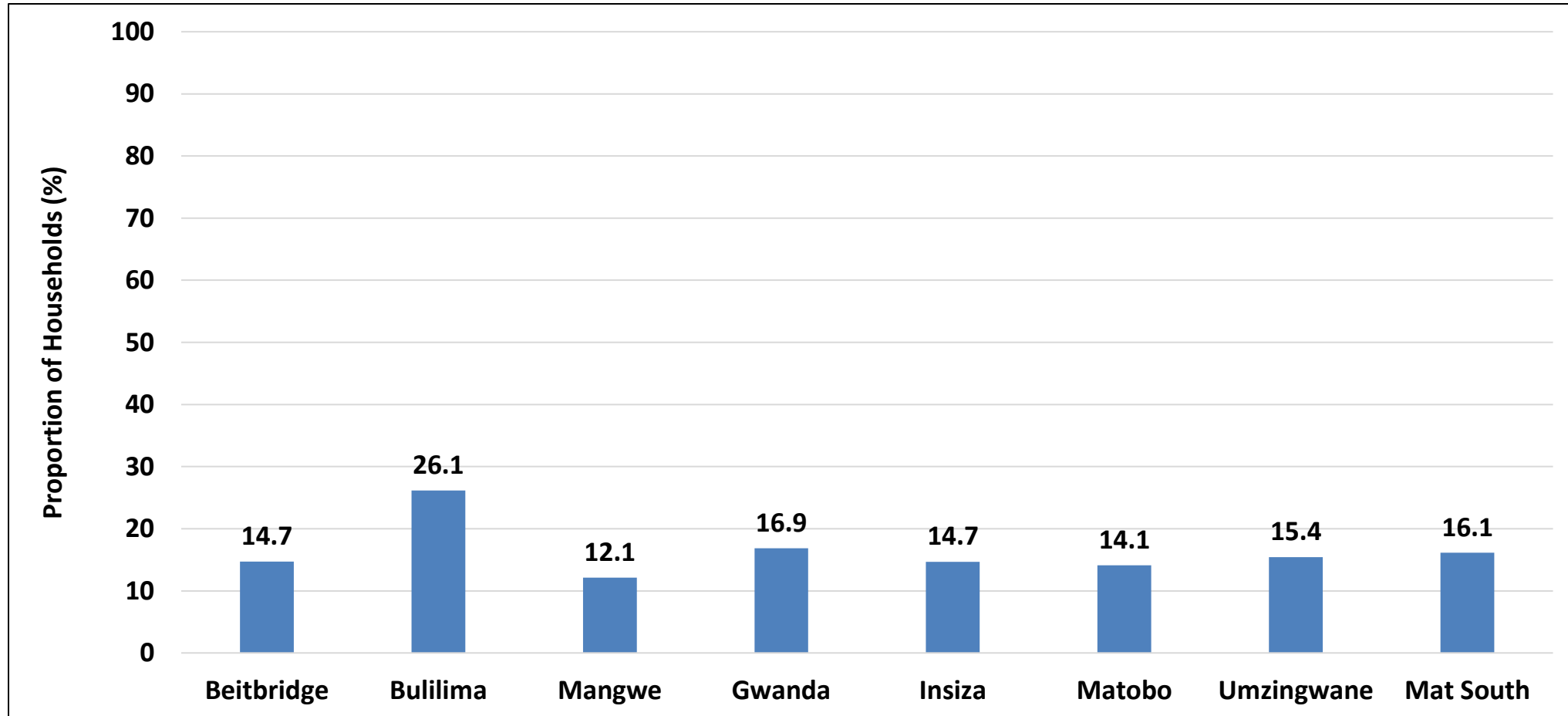
- The largest proportion of household heads (44.2%) were married and living together
- Bulilima (36.2%) and Mangwe (33.3%) had the highest proportion of household heads who were widowed.

Characteristics of Household Head: Religion

District	Roman Catholic (%)	Protestant (%)	Pentecostal (%)	Apostolic Sect (%)	Zion (%)	Other Christian (%)	Islam (%)	Traditional (%)	Other religion (%)	No religion (%)
Beitbridge	1.7	6.8	10.1	20.9	25	10.1	0.3	4.1	0.3	20.6
Bulilima	8.8	0.8	4.8	24.1	35.3	14.1	0	1.6	3.2	6.4
Mangwe	16	1.3	3	16.3	31.7	6.3	0	1.7	0.7	22.3
Gwanda	1.3	7.1	21.8	31.1	15.4	9.3	0.6	3.8	4.2	4.5
Insiza	5.7	6.7	14.8	20.1	18.5	20.5	0	1.3	0.3	11.7
Matobo	8.6	8.3	6.6	15.8	26.1	11.9	0	1	2	19.5
Umzingwane	1.3	3.3	18.7	20.3	9.3	16.7	0	2.7	4	22.7
Mat South	6.1	5	11.6	21.2	22.7	12.6	0.1	2.3	2.1	15.5

- The highest proportion of household heads was mainly from Zion (22.7%) and the Apostolic Sect (21.2%).
- About 15.5% of household heads had no religion.
- Gwanda (31.1%) had the highest proportion of household heads whose religion was the Apostolic sect.

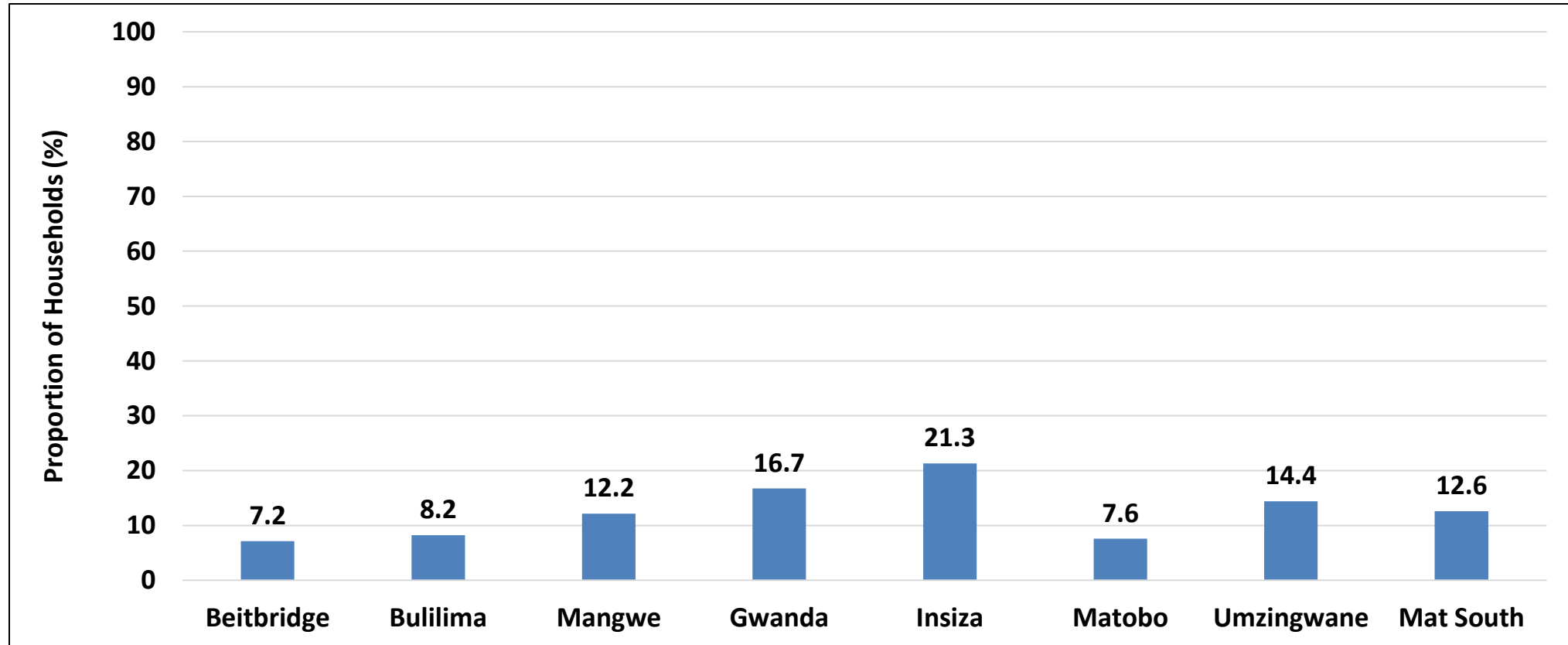
Orphaned Children



- Bulilima (26.1%) and Gwanda (16.9%) had the highest proportion of households with orphaned children.
- The presence of orphans increases the burden of responsibility on the households.

Chronic Conditions

Chronic Conditions



- The proportion of households with at least one member who had a chronic condition was 12.6% in Matabeleland South.
- Insiza (21.3%) and Gwanda (16.7%) had the highest proportions.

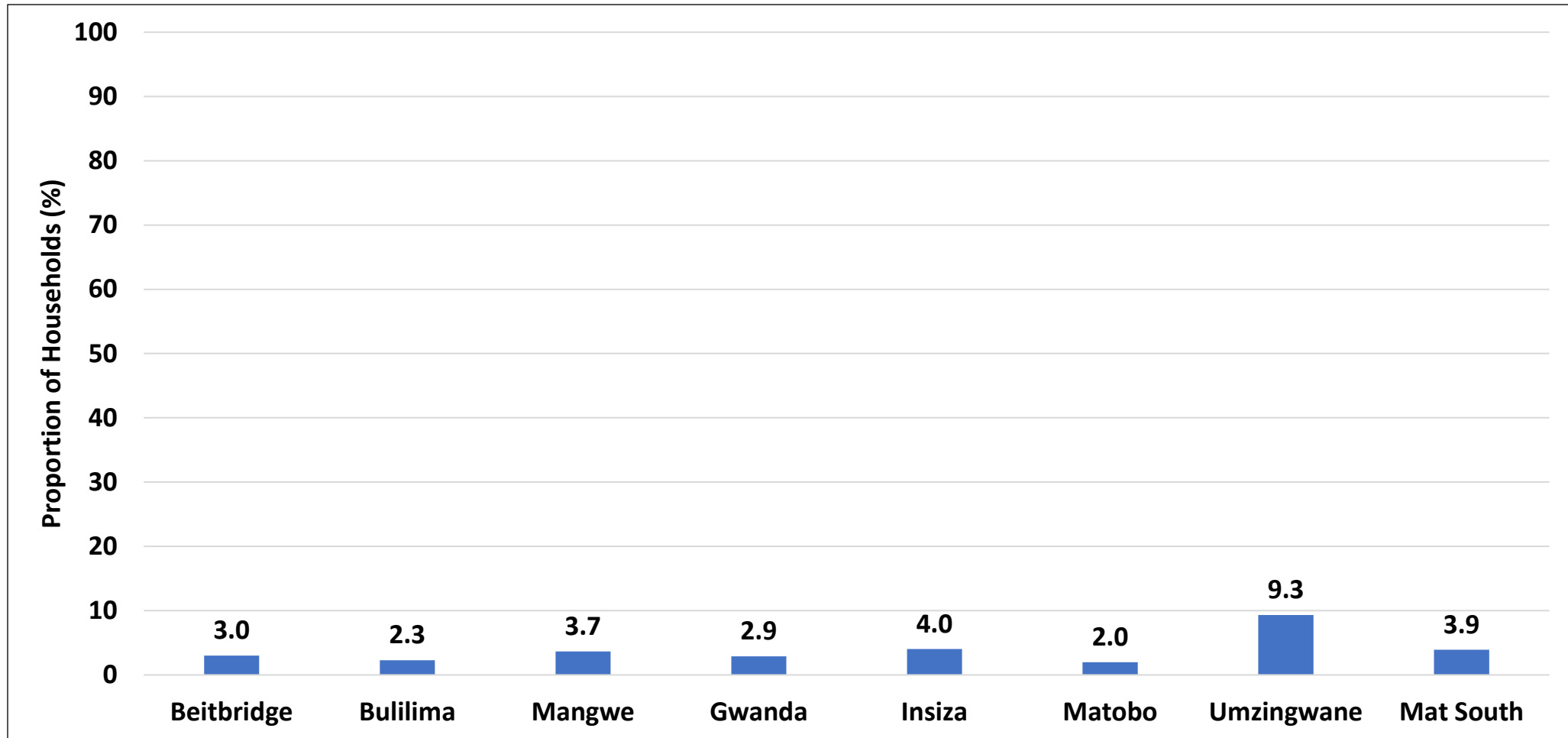
Chronic Conditions (12.6%)

District	Chronic condition													
	HIV infection, AIDS	Heart disease	Diabetes, high blood sugar	Asthma	Hypertension, High blood pressure	Arthritis, chronic body pain	Epilepsy, seizures, fits	Stroke	Cancer	Tuberculosis	Kidney diseases	Ulcer, chronic stomach pain	Mental illness	Other
	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)
Beitbridge	2.3	0.4	1.1	0.5	1.1	0.5	0.3	0.2	0.1	0	0	0.2	0.2	0.7
Bulilima	4.8	0.1	2.0	0.5	0.3	0.1	0.1	0.2	0	0.1	0	0	0.2	0.2
Mangwe	5.4	0.2	1.7	0.5	5.7	0.3	0.1	0.1	0	0	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.6
Gwanda	7.2	0	1.4	0.5	8.3	0.5	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2
Insiza	11.5	0.2	4.4	1.5	2.3	0.9	0.2	0.2	0	0.2	0.2	0.5	0.3	0.5
Matobo	2.0	0	2.7	0.9	1.9	0	0.1	0.2	0	0	0	0.1	0	0.1
Umzingwane	4.4	0.4	2.2	1.1	5.1	1.4	0.6	0.6	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.4	0.5	0.1
Mat South	5.4	0.2	2.2	0.8	3.6	0.5	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.3

- The most reported chronic conditions were HIV/AIDS (5.4%) and Hypertension (3.6%).

Disability

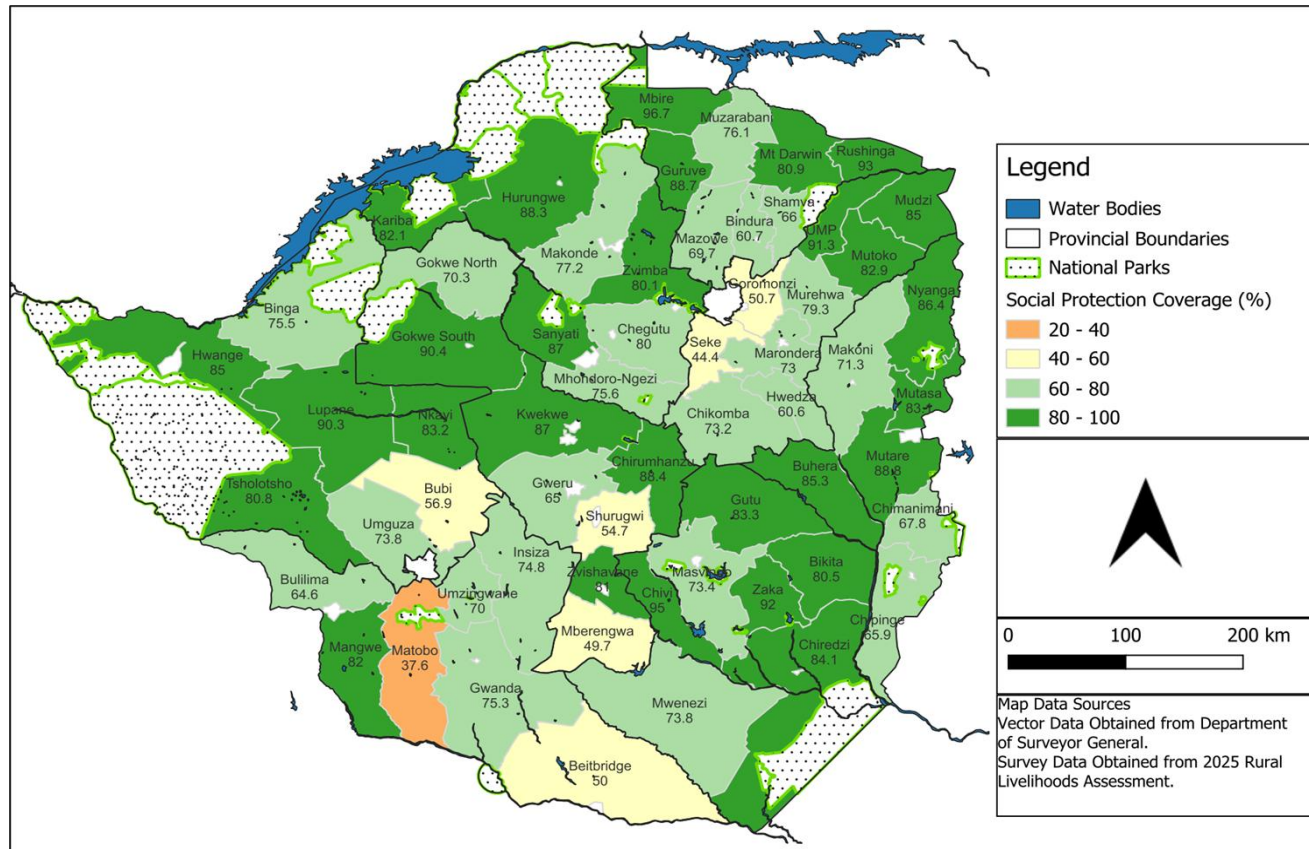
Disability Conditions



- About 3.9% of households reported having a member with a disability.
- Umzingwane (9.3%) had the highest proportion of households which reported having a member with a disability.
- Matobo (2%) had the lowest.

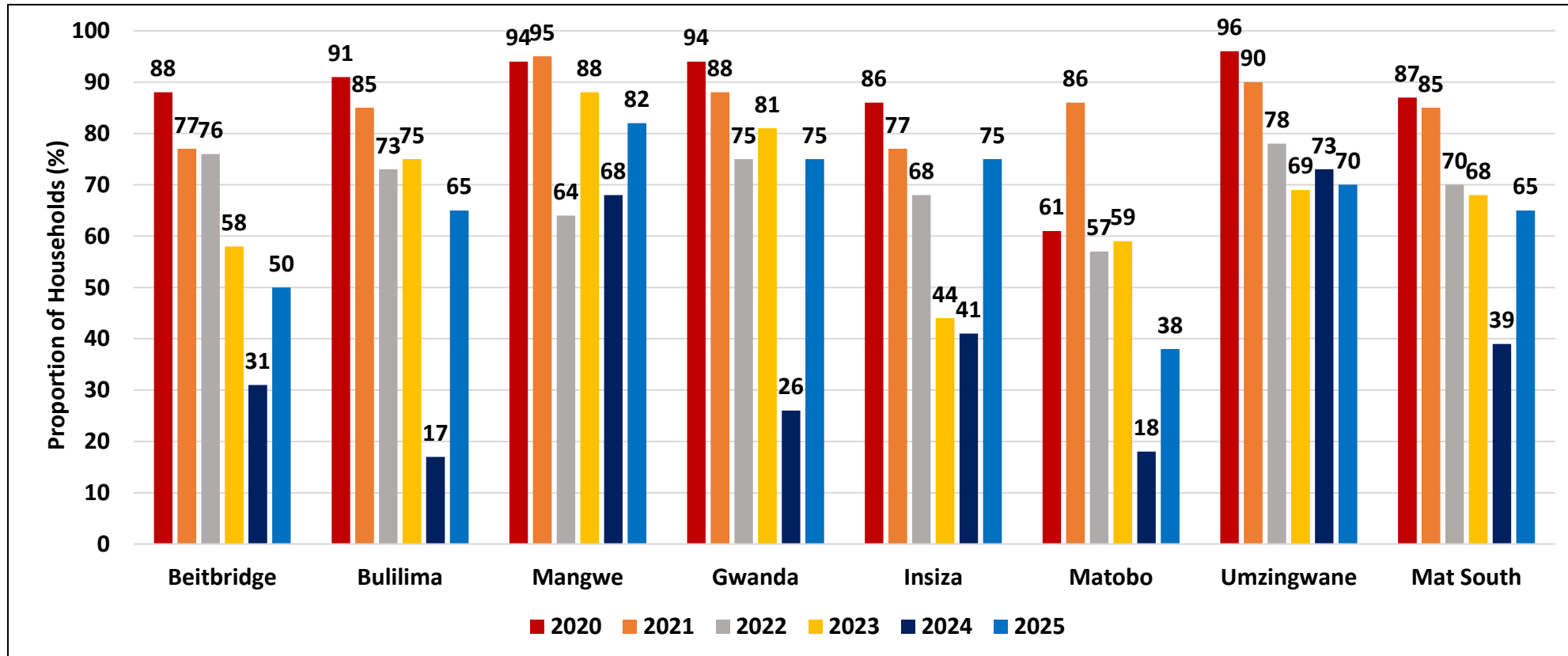
Social Protection

Households which Received Any Form of Support



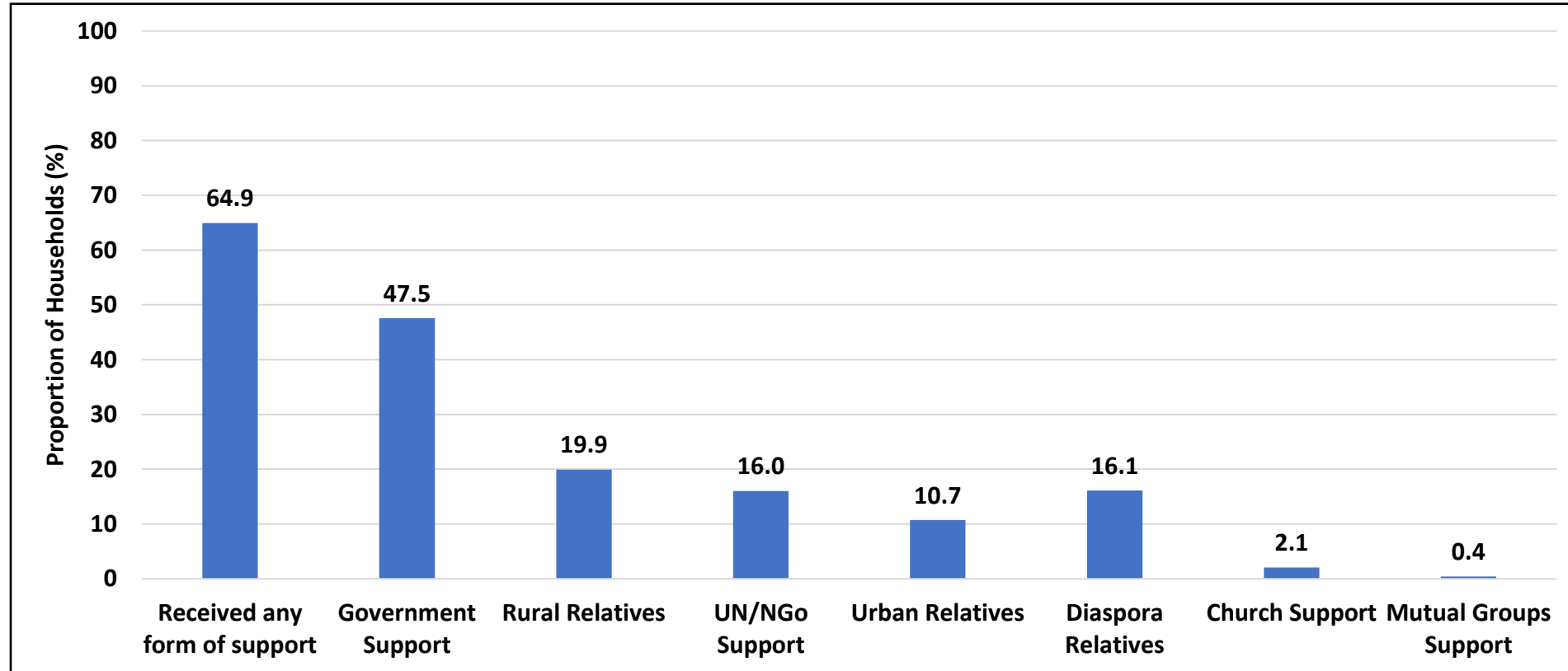
- The proportion of households in Matabeleland South that received any form of support was 65%.
- The highest proportion was reported in Mangwe (82%), whilst the lowest was recorded in Matobo (37.6%).

Households which Received Any Form of Support



- Support increased from 39% in 2024 to 65% in 2025. This may be attributed to the need to respond to the El- Nino induced drought which was experienced in the 2024/2025 season.

Sources of Support



- The majority of households reported to have received assistance from the Government (47.5%), rural relatives (19.9%) and UN/NGO Support (16%).
- Government is complimented for the provision of crucial support towards building resilience and sustainable livelihoods.

Sources of Support

Province	Government Support		UN/NGO Support		Church Support		Urban Relatives		Rural Relatives		Diaspora Relatives		Mutual Groups Support	
	(%)		(%)		(%)		(%)		(%)		(%)		(%)	
	2024	2025	2024	2025	2024	2025	2024	2025	2024	2025	2024	2025	2024	2025
Beitbridge	25	39	8	7	2	2	2	7	1	16	4	12	1	1
Bulilima	17	19	0	5	0	2	0	29	0	54	0	35	0	1
Mangwe	32	69	54	27	1	1	21	7	19	13	17	23	0	0
Gwanda	22	61	2	9	1	1	0	12	0	15	0	16	1	0
Insiza	36	57	6	49	2	3	6	6	8	21	5	13	1	1
Matobo	16	27	1	13	1	1	0	2	0	3	1	5	1	0
Umzingwane	67	56	7	4	1	5	11	14	6	22	10	11	1	1
Mat South	31	48	11	16	1	2	6	11	5	20	5	16	1	0

- Government (48%) provided the highest proportion of households with support, followed by the UN/NGOs (16%).
- Mangwe (69%) had the highest proportion of households that received support from the government.

Forms of Support from Government

	Food	Cash transfers	Vouchers	Crop inputs	Livestock support - large stock (pass on)	Livestock support - large stock (non-pass on)	Small livestock support (goats, chicken, fish, etc)	Livestock support: Teak grease	Other livestock support	WASH inputs	Weather and climate
District	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)
Beitbridge	21.1	0.3	0.3	18.5	1.7	0.7	1.0	1.0	1.7	3.4	1.0
Bulilima	4.9	0	0	8.0	0.4	1.1	0.4	0	4.2	2.7	1.1
Mangwe	53.7	1.0	0	26.3	0.3	2.3	0	0	1.3	0	0
Gwanda	44.9	0.3	0.3	38.8	0	0	0	0.3	0.6	14.1	0.3
Insiza	38.9	0.7	0	24.5	0	0	0	1.3	0	0.7	1.3
Matobo	26.7	0.7	0	0.3	0	0	0	0.3	0	0	0
Umzingwane	51.0	0	0	14.7	0.7	4.0	0	0	2.0	0	0
Mat South	35.1	0.4	0.1	19.0	0.4	1.2	0.2	0.4	1.4	3.0	0.5

- Food (35.1%) and crop inputs (19%) were the major forms of support received from the Government.
- Mangwe (53.7%) had the highest proportion of households receiving support in the form of food, whilst Gwanda (38.8%) had the highest proportion receiving crop inputs.

Forms of UN/NGO support

District	Food (%)	Cash transfers (%)	Vouchers (%)	Crop inputs (%)	Livestock support - large stock (pass on) (%)	Livestock support - large stock (non-pass on) (%)	Small livestock support (goats, chicken, fish, etc) (%)	Livestock support: Teak grease (%)	Other livestock support (%)	WASH inputs (%)	Weather and climate (%)
Beitbridge	3.4	0.3	0.7	2.7	0.3	0.3	0	0.7	1.3	0.7	0.3
Bulilima	2.7	0.4	0	1.1	0	0	0.4	0	0.4	0	0.4
Mangwe	17.3	11.0	0	0.7	0.3	0.3	0	0.3	0	0.3	0
Gwanda	9.0	0	0	0.3	0	0	0	0.3	0	0	0
Insiza	47.7	0.3	1.7	0.3	0	0	0	1.3	0	0	1.0
Matobo	11.6	0	0	0.7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.7
Umzingwane	1.3	0	0	0.3	0	0	0	0	1.7	0.3	0.3
Mat South	13.4	1.7	0.3	0.9	0.1	0.1	0	0.4	0.5	0.2	0.4

- The major form of support from UN/NGOs was food at (13.4%).
- Insiza (47.7%) had the highest proportion of households which received food support in the province.

Migration

Types of Migration

District	Migrated to Urban from Rural Areas (%)	Joined from Other Rural Areas (%)	Joined from Urban Areas (%)	Joined from Outside Zimbabwe (%)	Migrated to Stay Outside Zimbabwe (%)
Beitbridge	7.6	1.1	2.1	3.5	24.0
Bulilima	9.3	9.9	17.0	23.6	32.4
Mangwe	3.0	1.3	1.7	2.0	16.3
Gwanda	10	1.6	0.3	1.3	17.0
Insiza	4.4	3.7	0.7	0.7	6.0
Matobo	3.0	0.3	1.3	0.3	4.0
Umzingwane	12.7	4.0	5.0	3.0	2.3
Mat South	7.0	2.7	3.2	3.8	13.5

- The main types of migration reported were migrating to stay outside Zimbabwe (13.5%) and migrating to live in urban areas (7.0%).

Reasons for Migrating to Urban Areas (7%)

District	Better livelihood options (%)	Employment opportunities (%)	New job (%)	Newly acquired residential land (%)	Request by a relative (%)	Educational purposes (%)	Access to better standards of living (%)	Marriage (%)	Business opportunity (%)	Illness (%)	Other (%)
Beitbridge	0.7	3.7	0.3	0.3	0.7	0.7	0.3	0.7	0	0	0
Bulilima	1.5	3.0	0.4	0	0.4	0.4	0	0.8	0	0.4	2.3
Mangwe	0.7	2.3	0	0	0	0	0.3	0	0	0.3	0
Gwanda	0.3	8.0	0.3	0	0.3	0.3	0	0.3	0.6	0	0.3
Insiza	0.7	2.7	0.3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.7
Matobo	0.3	2.3	0.7	0	0	0.3	0	0	0	0	0
Umzingwane	1.0	4.3	1.0	0	2.7	1.7	0	0.3	0	2.7	0
Mat South	0.7	3.8	0.4	0	0.6	0.5	0.1	0.3	0.1	0.5	0.4

- The main reason for rural to urban migration was reported to be employment opportunities (3.8%).

Reasons for Migrating Outside Zimbabwe (13.5%)

District	Employment (%)	Access to education (%)	Better standards of living (%)	Assist with caring of relatives` children (%)	Marriage (%)	Other livelihood opportunities (%)	Other (%)
Beitbridge	18.8	1.3	1.0	0.3	0	2.3	0
Bulilima	21.3	0	6.5	0	0	10.6	0.8
Mangwe	10.7	0.3	2.0	0	1.3	8.3	0
Gwanda	17.0	0.3	0.3	0	0	0	0
Insiza	4.7	0	0.3	0.3	0	0.3	0.3
Matobo	2.6	0.3	0.3	0	0.3	0.3	0.3
Umzingwane	2.0	0	0.7	0	0	0	0
Mat South	10.8	0.3	1.5	0.1	0.2	3.0	0.2

- Employment (10.8%) was highlighted as the major reason for migration outside Zimbabwe.

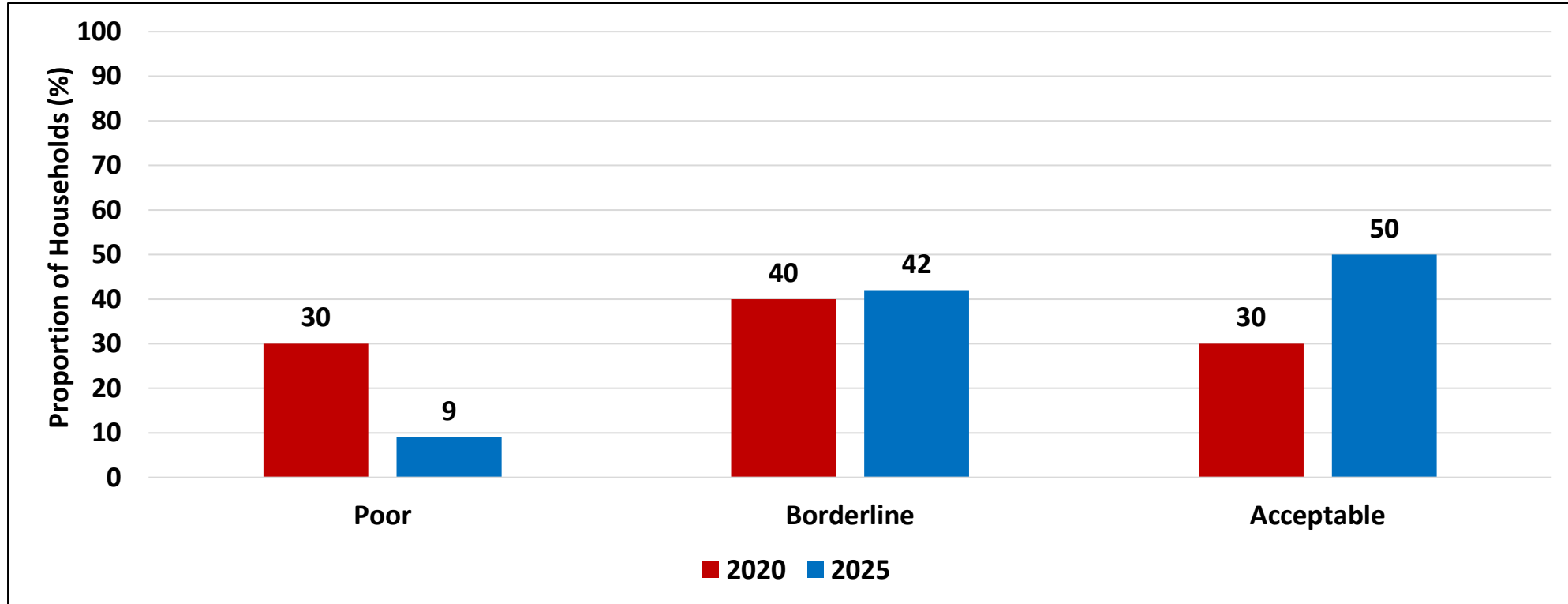
Household Consumption Patterns

Food Consumption Score (FCS)

Food Consumption Score

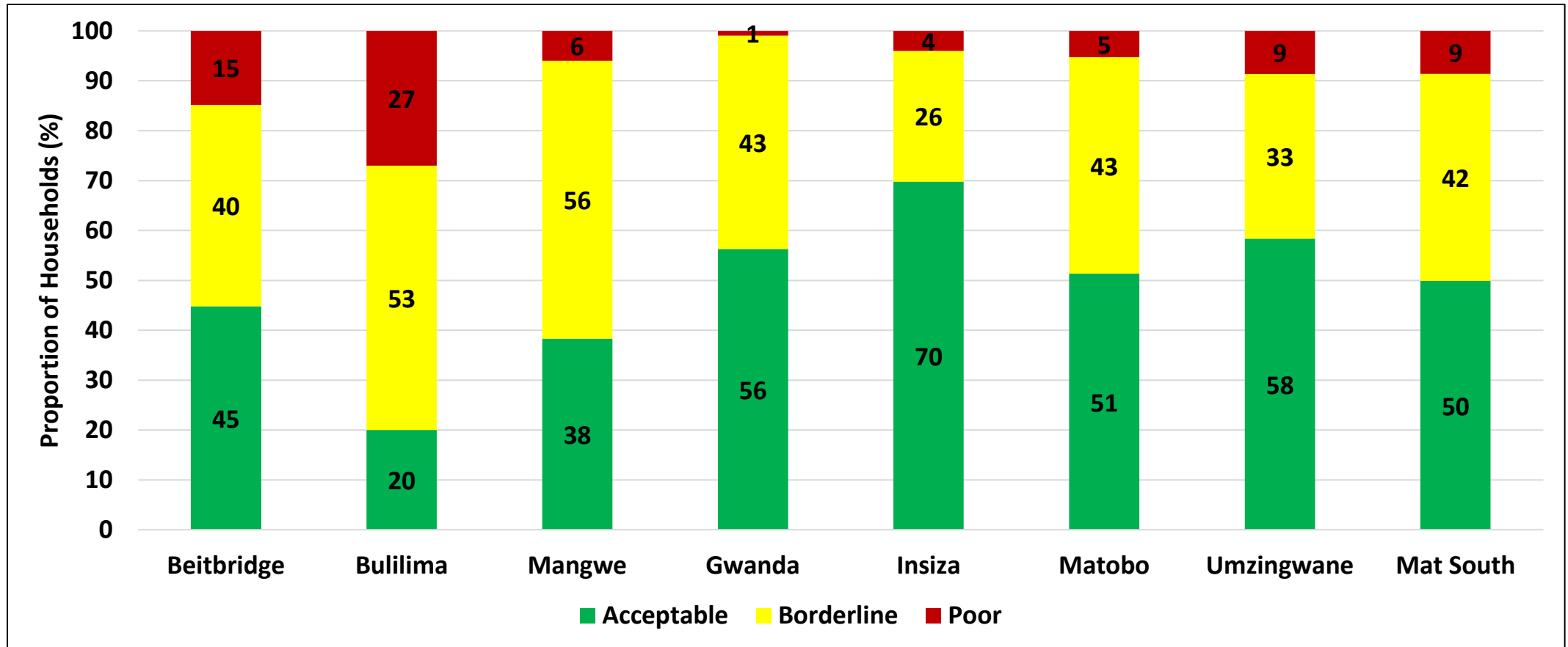
Food Consumption Score Groups	Score	Description
Poor	0-21	An expected consumption of staple 7 days, vegetables 5-6 days, sugar 3-4 days, oil/fat 1 day a week, while animal proteins are totally absent
Borderline	21.5-35	An expected consumption of staple 7 days, vegetables 6-7 days, sugar 3-4 days, oil/fat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

Food Consumption Patterns Trend



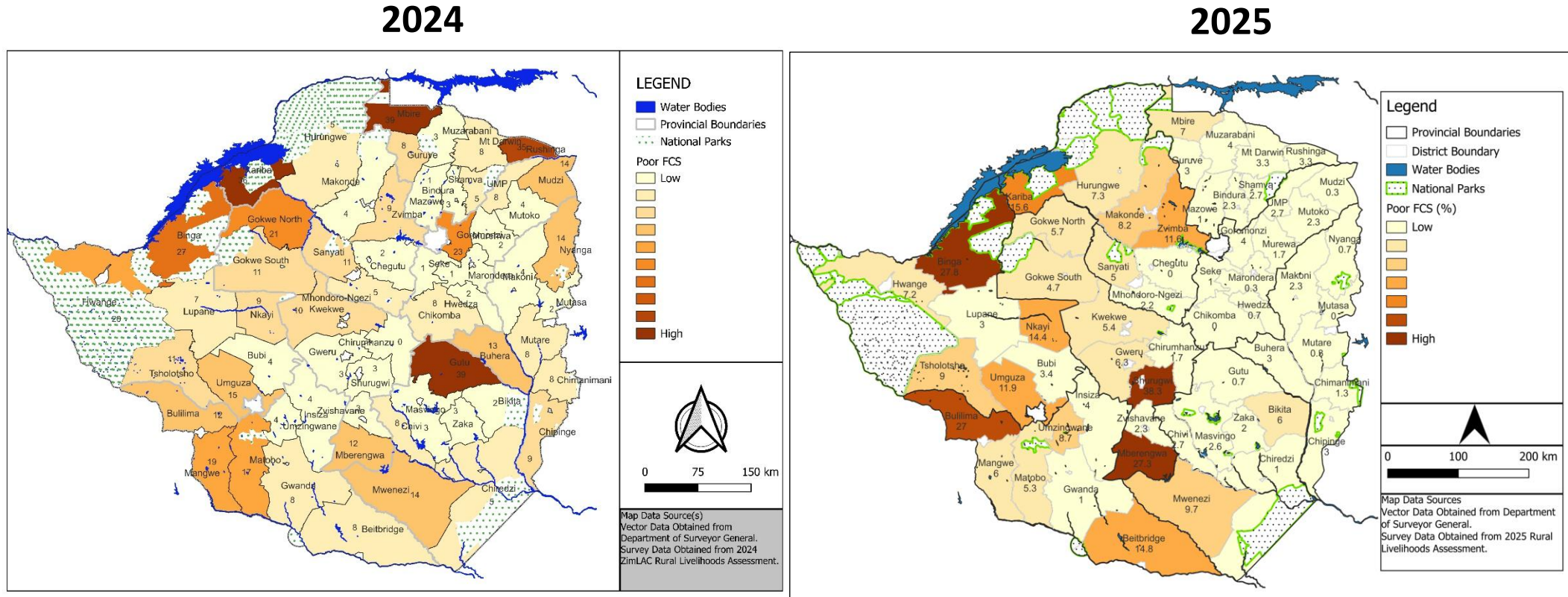
- There was an increase in the proportion of households with acceptable food consumption from 2020 (30%) to 2025 (50%).
- The proportion of households which consumed poor diets decreased from 30% in 2024 to 9% in 2025.
- This reflects an improvement in the quality of diets being consumed by rural households as evidenced by the consumption of more diverse and nutritious food groups.

Food Consumption Patterns



- Bulilima (27%) and Beitbridge (15%) had the highest proportion of households with poor consumption patterns.

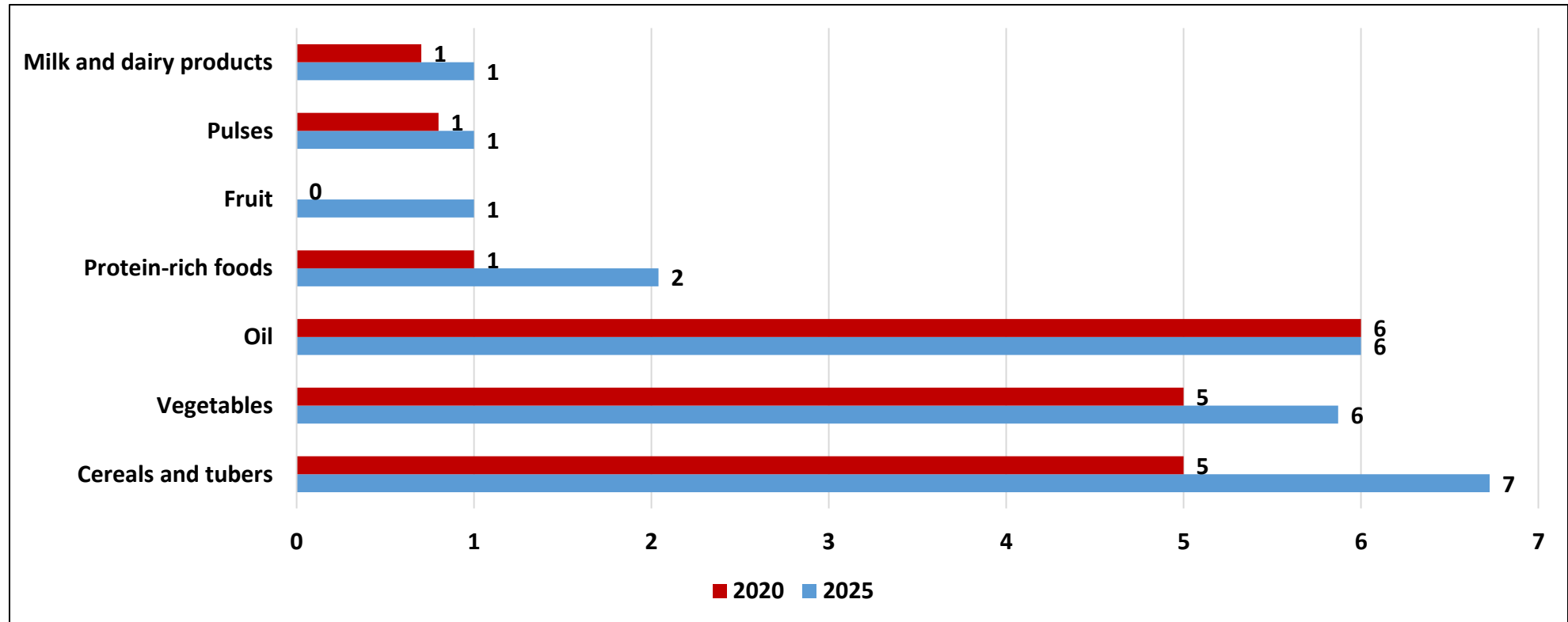
Poor Food Consumption Patterns by District



- The proportion of households with poor food consumption decreased in most districts in 2025 when compared to 2024.

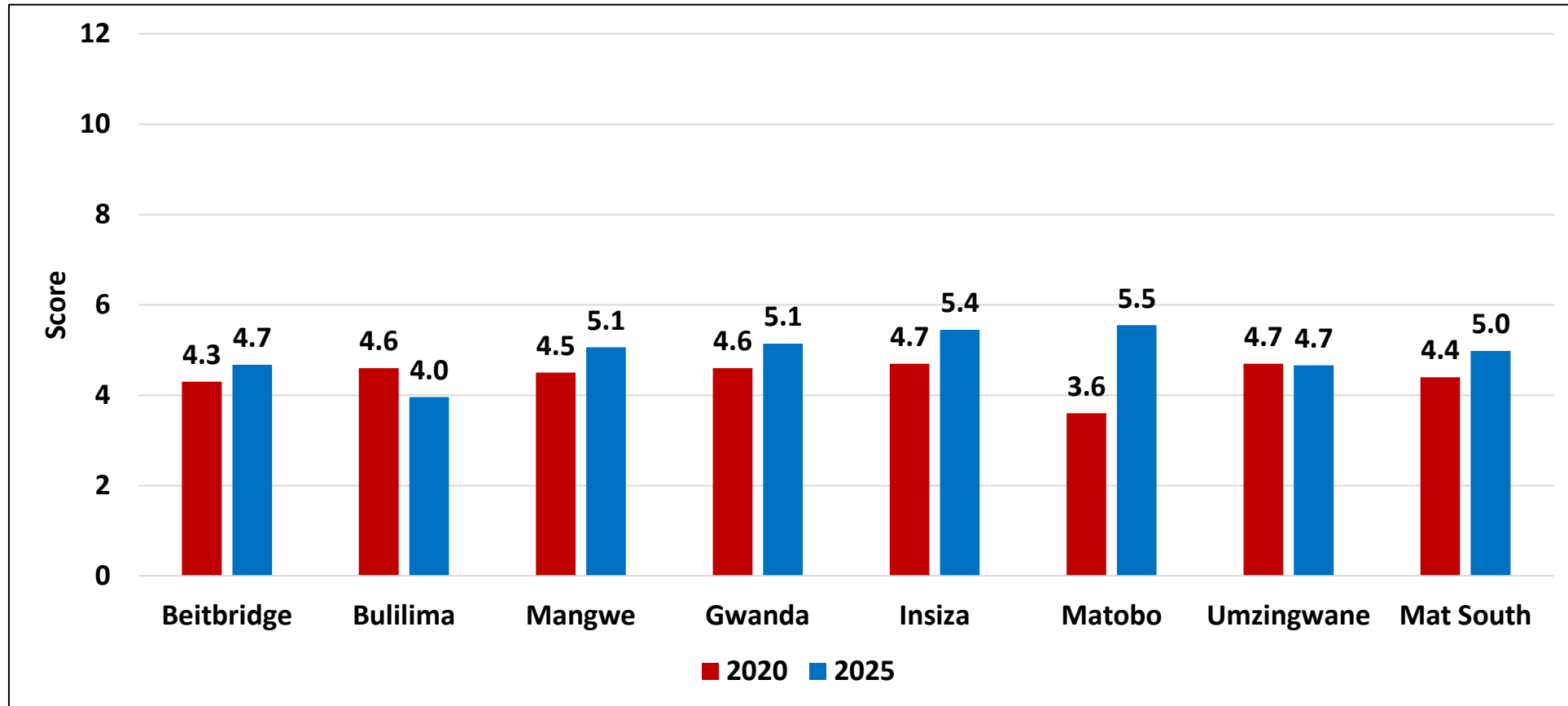
Household Dietary Diversity

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



- The most frequently consumed foods were cereals and tubers (7 days), vegetables and oil (6 days each).
- Pulses, milk and dairy products and fruits were the least consumed.

Average Household Dietary Diversity Score



- There was an improvement in the dietary diversity score from 4.4 in 2020 to 5.0 in 2025.

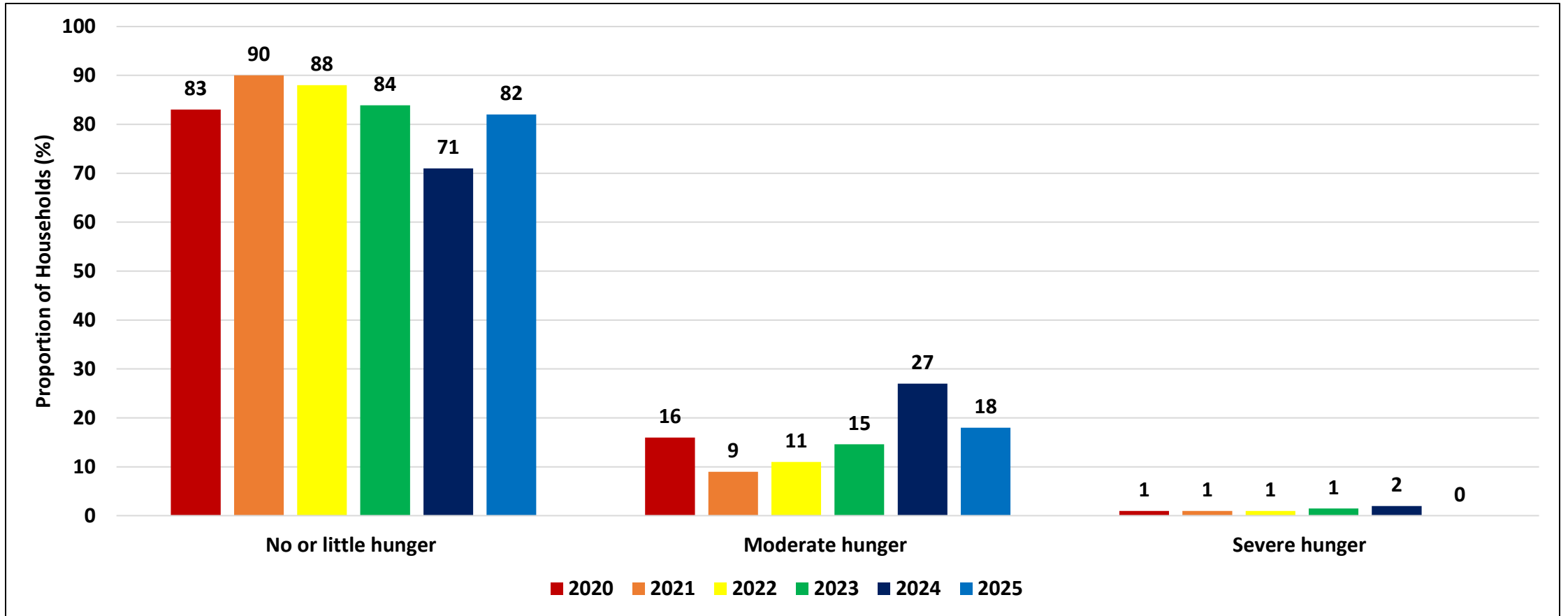
HDDS by Food Groups

District	Cereals (%)	Tubers (%)	Pulses (%)	Dairy products (%)	Meat (%)	Fish (%)	Eggs (%)	Vegetables (%)	Fruits (%)	Oils (%)	Sugar (%)	Condiments (%)
Beitbridge	95.7	71.7	44.4	60	64.2	51.0	55.0	78.4	71.4	85.1	84.6	88.1
Bulilima	91.5	44.4	42.9	65.2	43.1	.0	41.7	87.0	48.3	88.6	76.9	79.0
Mangwe	96.2	53.3	61.4	80.6	68.8	25.0	50	97.9	58.3	99.3	97.6	100
Gwanda	100	23.5	30.6	55.6	49.6	50	43.9	90.1	54.6	97.0	93.2	96.6
Insiza	86.9	57.8	47.7	68.4	67.1	33.3	38.3	91.4	56.0	98.5	95.2	91.5
Matobo	97.3	71.0	67.3	84.3	73.5	56.5	71.4	90.6	72.2	99.3	95.8	95.4
Umzingwane	83.6	44.8	37.1	55.7	52.3	25.0	43.7	82.6	48.7	95.8	72.6	94.9
Mat South	93.2	52.3	46.0	66.6	61.3	40.1	47.2	88.8	58.4	95.5	89.8	93.5

- Oils (95.5%), cereals (93.2%), sugar (89.8%) and vegetables (88.8%) were the most consumed food groups.
- Cereals consumption was highest in Gwanda (100%) and Matobo (97.3%).

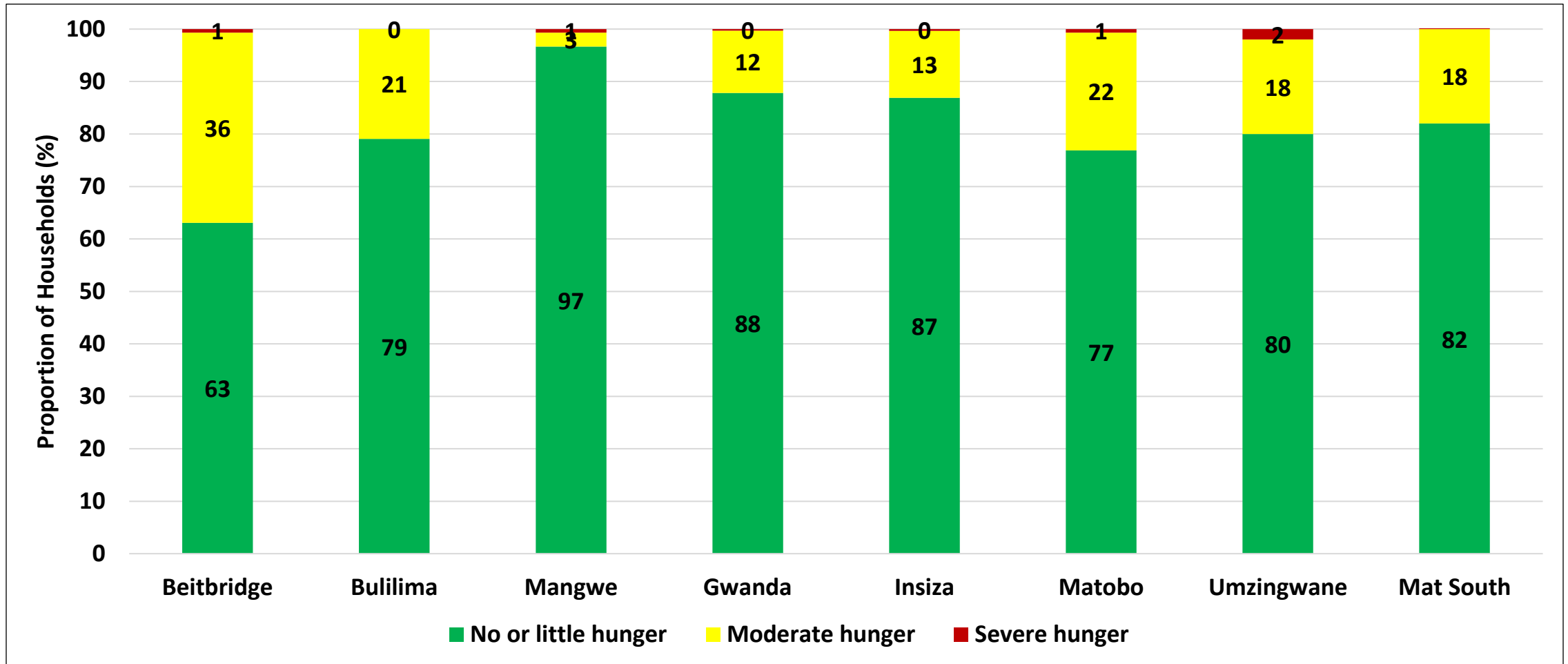
Household Coping

Household Hunger Scale



- The proportion of households which experienced no or little hunger increased from 71% in 2024 to 82% in 2025.

Household Hunger Scale



- Mangwe (97%) reported the highest proportion of households that reported no to little hunger.

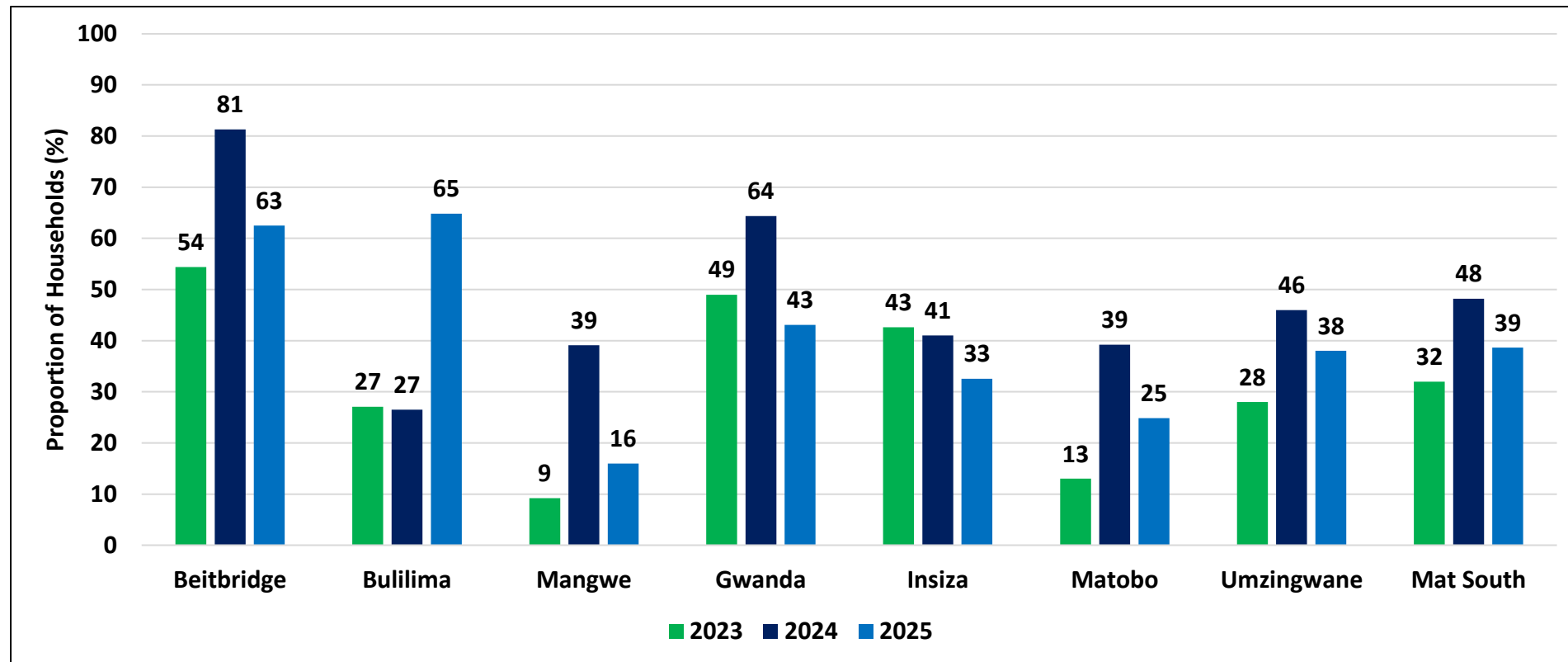
Livelihoods Based Coping Strategies

Livelihoods Coping Strategies

- Livelihood Coping Strategies are behaviors employed by households when faced with a crisis.
- The livelihood coping strategies have been classified into three categories namely stress, crisis and emergency as indicated in the table.

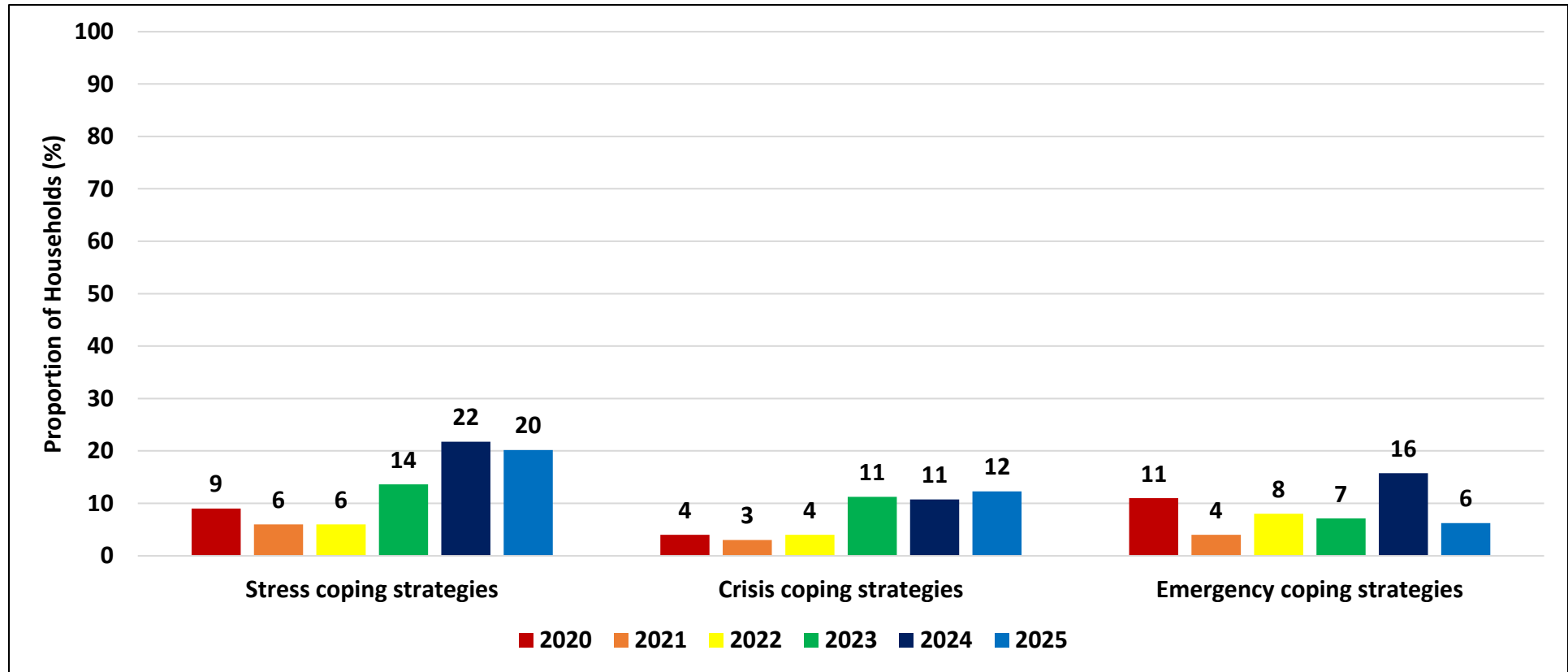
Category	Coping Strategy
Stress	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Selling productive assets, directly reduces future productivity, including human capital formation.• Withdrawing children from school• Reducing non-food expenditure.
Crisis	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Selling productive assets, directly reduces future productivity, including human capital formation.• Withdrawing children from school• Reducing nonfood expenditure.
Emergency	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Selling one's land affects future productivity, strategies are more difficult to reverse or more dramatic in nature.• Begging for food.• Selling the last breeding stock to buy food

Households Engaging in any Form of Livelihood Coping Strategies



- The proportion of households engaging in any form of coping decreased from 48% in 2024 to 39% in 2025.
- Bulilima (65%) had the highest proportion of households engaging in any form of livelihood coping whilst Mangwe (16%) had the least.

Households Maximum Livelihoods Coping Strategies



- The proportion of households engaging in emergency coping strategies decreased from 11% in 2020 to 6% in 2025.

Food Safety

Importance of Food Labelling

Importance of Food Labelling

- Provides essential nutritional information (e.g., energy, fat, sugar, salt) to help make healthier choices.
- Lists ingredients and allergens, protecting consumers with dietary restrictions or food allergies.
- Shows expiry and manufacturing dates, helping avoid consumption of unsafe or expired products.
- Displays origin and manufacturer details, supporting traceability and product accountability.
- Indicates certifications and standards compliance (e.g., fortification logo, organic, Halal), ensuring quality and regulatory adherence.

Why Consumers Should Read Food Labels

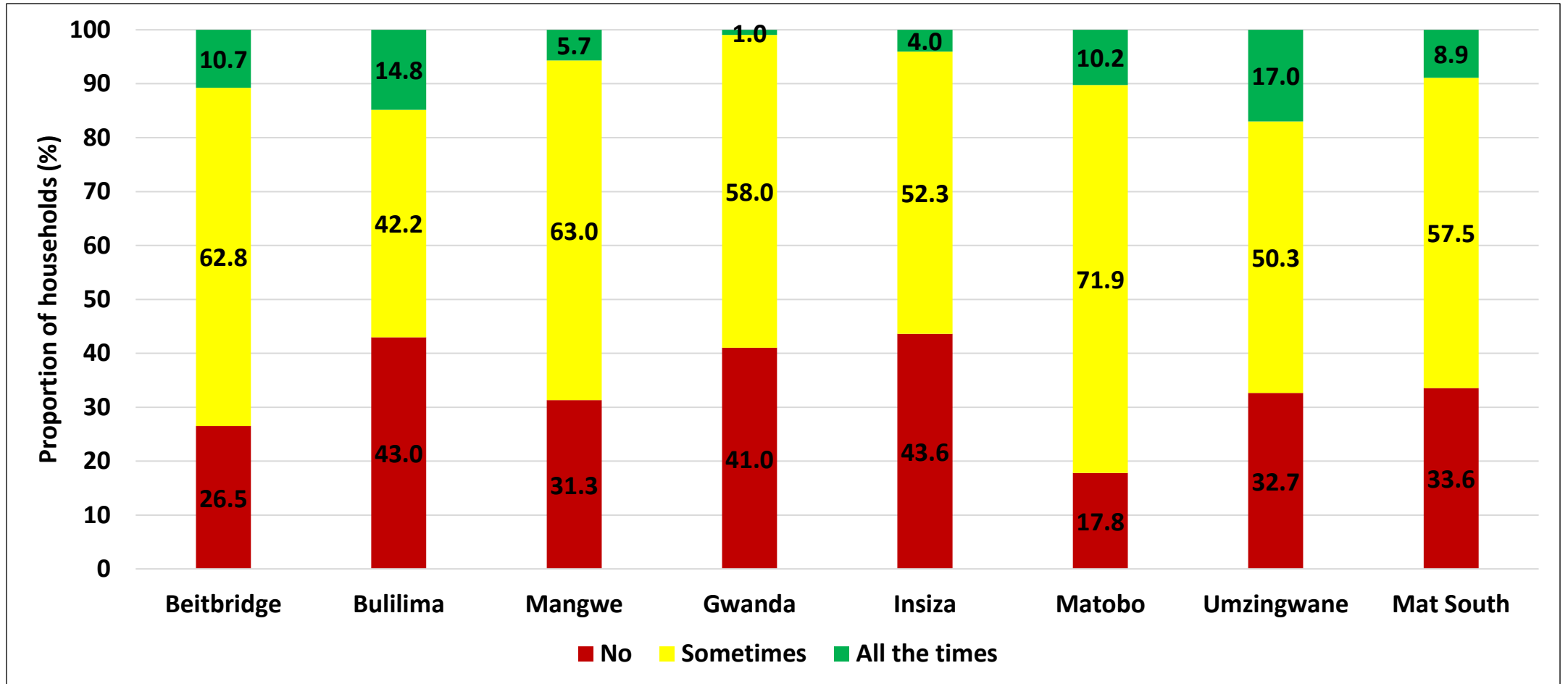
- Helps choose foods that align with health needs (e.g., diabetes, hypertension, child feeding).
- Avoids misleading claims (e.g., “sugar-free”, “natural”) by checking actual contents.
- Supports informed decisions on food value, cost-efficiency, and portion size.
- Protects against adverse reactions by identifying allergens (e.g., peanuts, gluten, sulphites).
- Empowers consumers to hold food producers accountable for food safety and nutrition quality.

Factors Considered by Households When Purchasing Food Items

District	Brand/source (%)	Expiry /Best before date (%)	Nutritional Content (%)	Storage Instructions (%)	Other (%)	No Other Consideration (%)
Beitbridge	18	81	31	15	1	11
Bulilima	23	54	18	18	5	16
Mangwe	77	63	36	42	4	18
Gwanda	14	72	1	2	2	25
Insiza	7	61	3	2	1	34
Matobo	34	87	33	13	1	9
Umzingwane	46	85	20	7	4	8
Mat South	32	72	20	14	2	17

- Holding price constant, 72% of households reported that they considered expiry/best before date when purchasing food.

Households which Read Food Labels When Purchasing Food Items



- About 34% of households reported that they did not read information on the food packages before purchasing.

Importance of Observing Pre-Harvest Intervals (PHIs) on Pesticides

The Pre-Harvest Interval (PHI) is the minimum number of days that must pass between the last pesticide application and the harvesting of fruits or vegetables. This allows pesticide residues to degrade to safe levels before the crop is consumed.

Importance of Observing PHI

Protects consumer health by preventing exposure to harmful pesticide residues that can cause acute poisoning, cancer or reproductive issues.

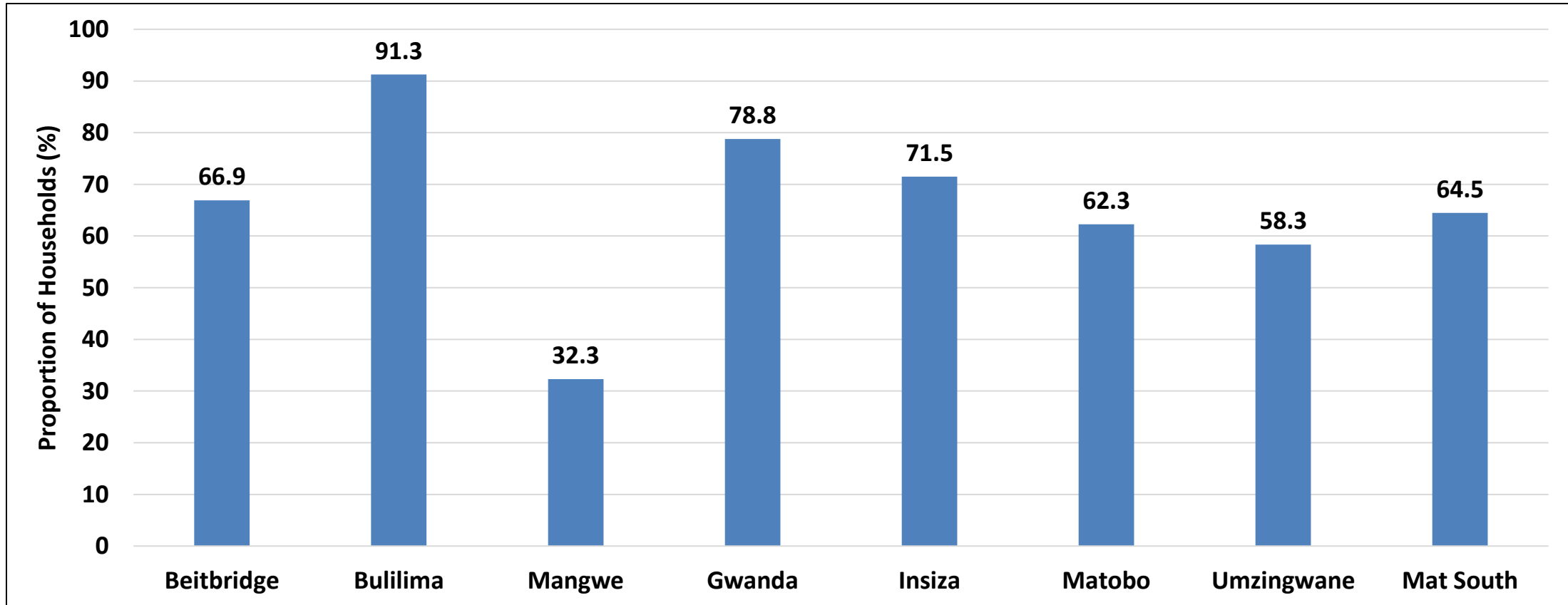
Reduces residue levels to within acceptable safety limits set by regulatory authorities (e.g., WHO, FAO, Codex).

Supports food safety and quality, ensuring that fruits and vegetables meet national standards and retain consumer trust.

Preserves export markets by complying with international residue limits (Maximum Residue Limits – MRLs).

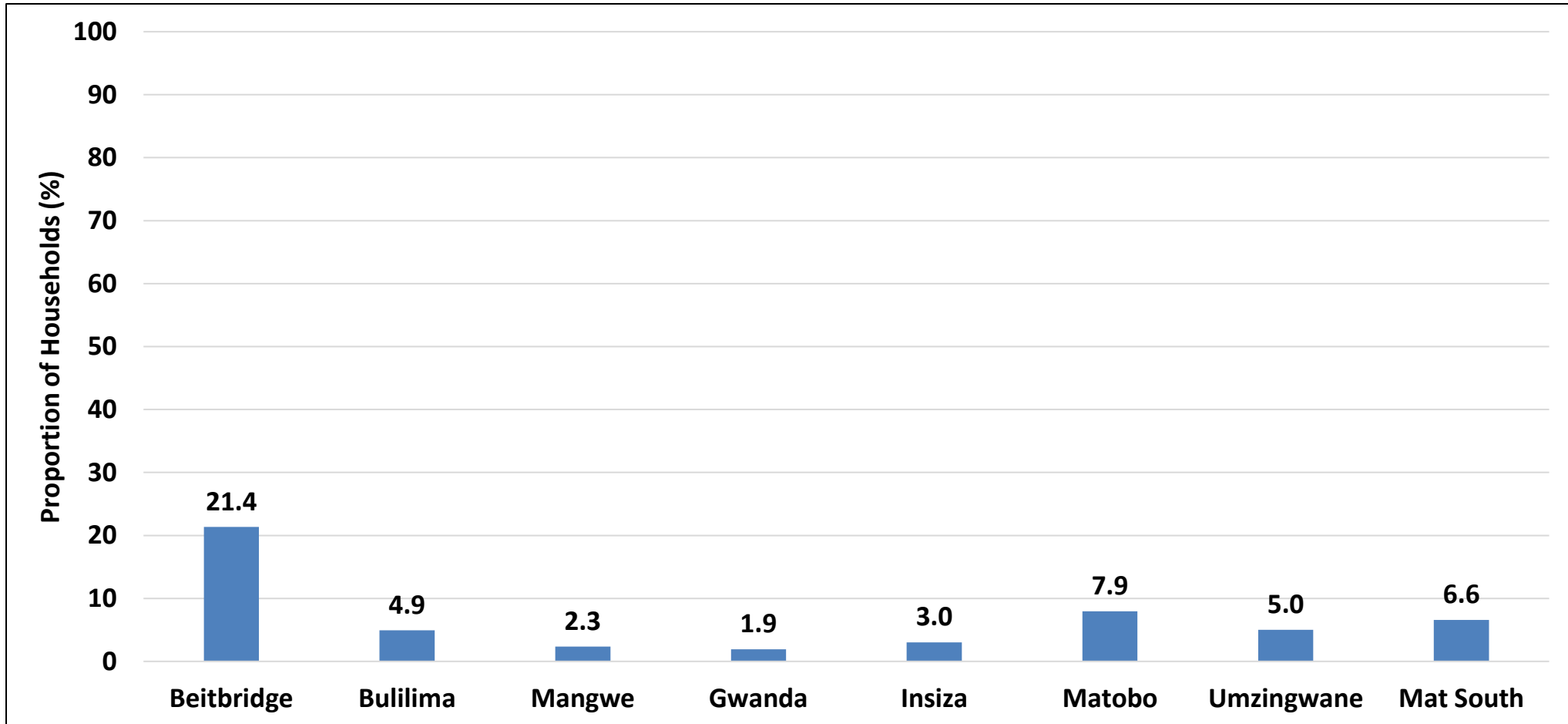
Promotes responsible farming by reinforcing good agricultural practice.

Knowledge on Fruits and Vegetables Sprayed with Pesticides



- About 64.5% of the households reported that they had knowledge about the pre-harvest interval to be observed after spraying fruits and vegetables with pesticides.

Consumption of Vegetables or Fruits Sprayed with Pesticides



- About 6.6% of the households reported consuming vegetables or fruits before the recommended pre-harvest interval after pesticide application.

Importance of Observing Withdrawal Periods on Antibiotics in Livestock

The withdrawal period is the minimum time that must pass between the last antibiotic treatment of an animal and the slaughter or harvesting of animal products (milk, eggs, meat) to ensure no harmful drug residues remain.

Importance of Observing Withdrawal Periods

Protects human health by preventing consumption of animal products with antibiotic residues that can cause allergic reactions or toxicity.

Prevents antibiotic resistance, a major global threat where bacteria become resistant to treatment due to overexposure to antibiotics.

Ensures compliance with food safety standards, helping farmers to meet national and international regulations (e.g., Codex, WHO).

Preserves market access by ensuring products are safe for trade.

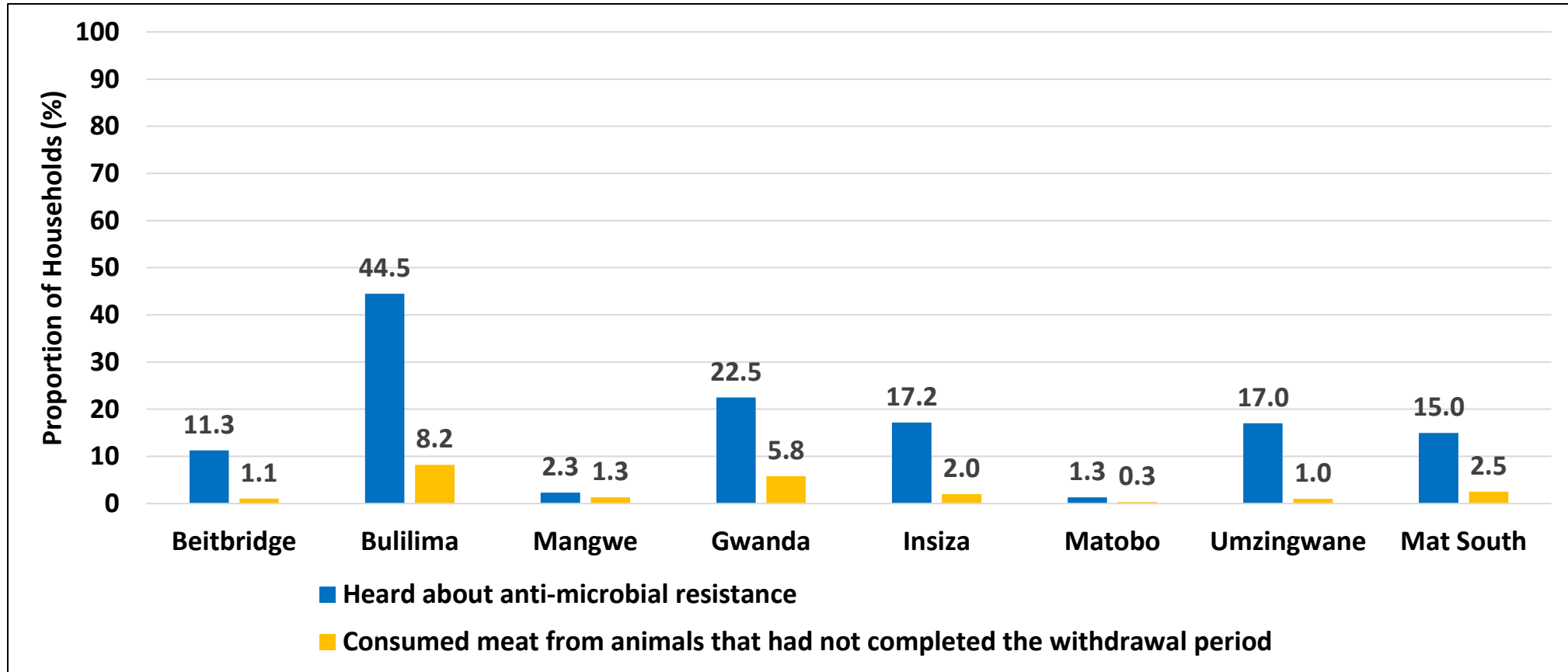
Maintains consumer trust in animal-derived foods such as meat, milk and eggs.

Use of Antibiotics to Treat Livestock

District	Use antibiotics to treat livestock (%)				Read instructions regarding withdrawal periods (%)			
	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
Beitbridge	0	2.0	0	0	4.1	2.0	0	0
Bulilima	3.0	0	0	0	0	3.0	0	0
Mangwe	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Gwanda	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Insiza	2.6	3.8	1.3	0	1.3	6.4	5.1	7.7
Matobo	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Umzingwane	0	2.9	1.0	0	3.8	0	0	1.9
Mat South	0.7	1.7	0.5	0	1.7	1.7	1.0	2.0

- About 1.7% of the households indicated that they rarely read instructions on the withdrawal period when treating animals with antibiotics.

Knowledge of Antimicrobial Resistance



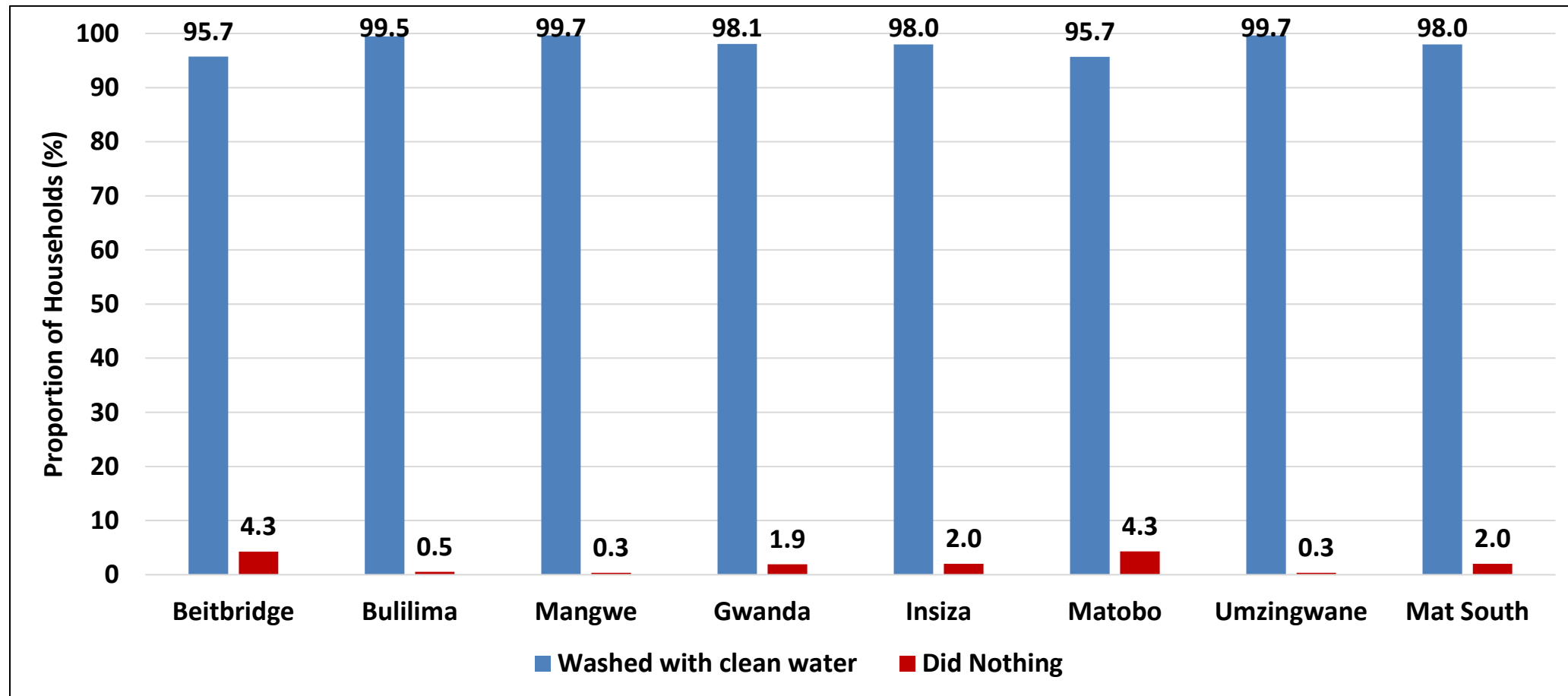
- About 15% of the households had heard about antimicrobial resistance.
- At least 2.5% reported having consumed meat from livestock that had not completed the withdrawal period.

WHO Five Keys to Safer Food

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

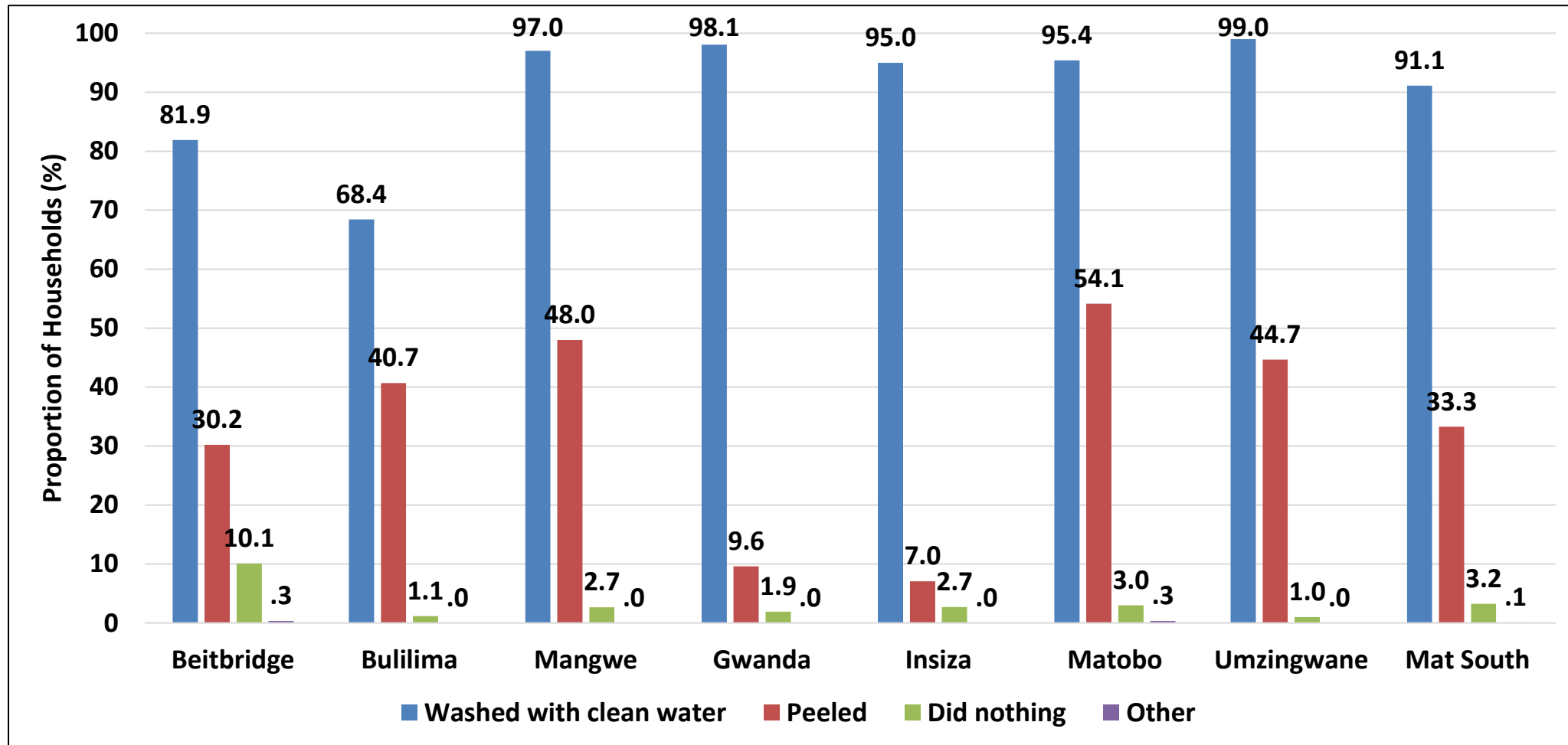
Five Keys	Key Steps
Keep clean	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wash hands before handling food and often during food preparation • Wash hands after going to the toilet • Wash and sanitise all surfaces and equipment used for food preparation • Protect kitchen areas and food from insects, pests and other animals
Use safe water and raw materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use safe water (<i>households improved water source</i>) or treat it to make it safe (<i>households treat water</i>) • Select fresh and wholesome foods • Choose foods processed for safety, such as pasteurised milk • Wash fruits and vegetables, especially if eaten raw • Do not use food beyond its expiry date
Separate raw and cooked	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Separate raw meat, poultry and seafood from other foods • Use separate equipment and utensils such as knives and cutting boards for handling raw foods • Store food in containers to avoid contact between raw and prepared foods
Cook thoroughly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cook food thoroughly, especially meat, poultry, eggs and fish • Bring foods like soups and stews to boiling to make sure that they have reached 70°C • Reheat cooked food thoroughly
Keep food at safe temperatures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not leave cooked food at room temperature for more than 2 hours • Refrigerate promptly all cooked and perishable food (preferably below 5°C) • Keep cooked food piping hot (more than 60°C) prior to serving • Do not store food too long even in the refrigerator • Do not thaw frozen food at room temperature

Safe Ways of Handling Meat and Fish



- Most of the households (98%) washed meat and fish with clean water before cooking.

Safe Ways of Handling Fruits and Vegetables



- Most of the households (91.1%) reported washing fruits and vegetables with clean water before eating.

Safety of Food During Storage, Cooking and Serving

District	Use Clean and Fresh Utensils (%)	Keep Food at Correct Temperatures (%)	Keep Food Closed or Covered (%)	Separate Raw and Cooked Food (%)	Cook Food Completely and not Leave any Part Raw (%)	Other (%)
Beitbridge	52.7	33.2	55.7	22.8	6.7	0
Bulilima	60.5	22.1	56.3	33.8	35.0	0
Mangwe	95.3	69.3	74.3	72.7	65.3	0
Gwanda	95.8	46.8	91.7	76.0	80.1	1.0
Insiza	97.0	28.9	32.6	27.9	30.2	0
Matobo	72.6	65.7	60.4	59.7	39.6	2.3
Umzingwane	95.7	35.3	71.7	31.0	37.3	0.3
Mat South	81.8	43.5	63.5	46.7	42.4	0.5

- At least 81.8% of households used clean and fresh utensils and 63.5% kept food covered during storage, cooking and serving.

Most Common Food Items Purchased from Vendors

District	Cereal (Rice, Pasta, Mealie Meal, Traditional Grains)	Biscuits, sweets and snacks	Drinks	Fruits and vegetables	Meat and Meat Products	Dairy Products	Other	Nothing
	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)
Beitbridge	14.1	33.2	38.6	52.3	15.1	7.0	0.7	22.5
Bulilima	3.0	8.7	4.2	44.1	12.5	1.1	3.0	21.3
Mangwe	30	56.7	38.3	55.0	31.7	28.3	2.3	14.0
Gwanda	22.4	25.6	7.4	58.7	9.9	2.9	3.5	24.4
Insiza	71.5	24.2	21.5	52.7	57.4	21.8	9.7	9.4
Matobo	1.3	3.0	1.3	49.5	2.6	.0	3.3	45.5
Umzingwane	2.3	9.7	9.7	92.3	4.3	3.7	0.7	6.3
Mat South	20.9	23.2	17.4	58.1	19.1	9.4	3.3	20.5

- The majority of the households (58.1%) reported that they purchased fruits and vegetables from vendors.
- About 19.1% of the households reported that they bought meat and meat products from vendors. This predisposes them to foodborne illnesses.

Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)

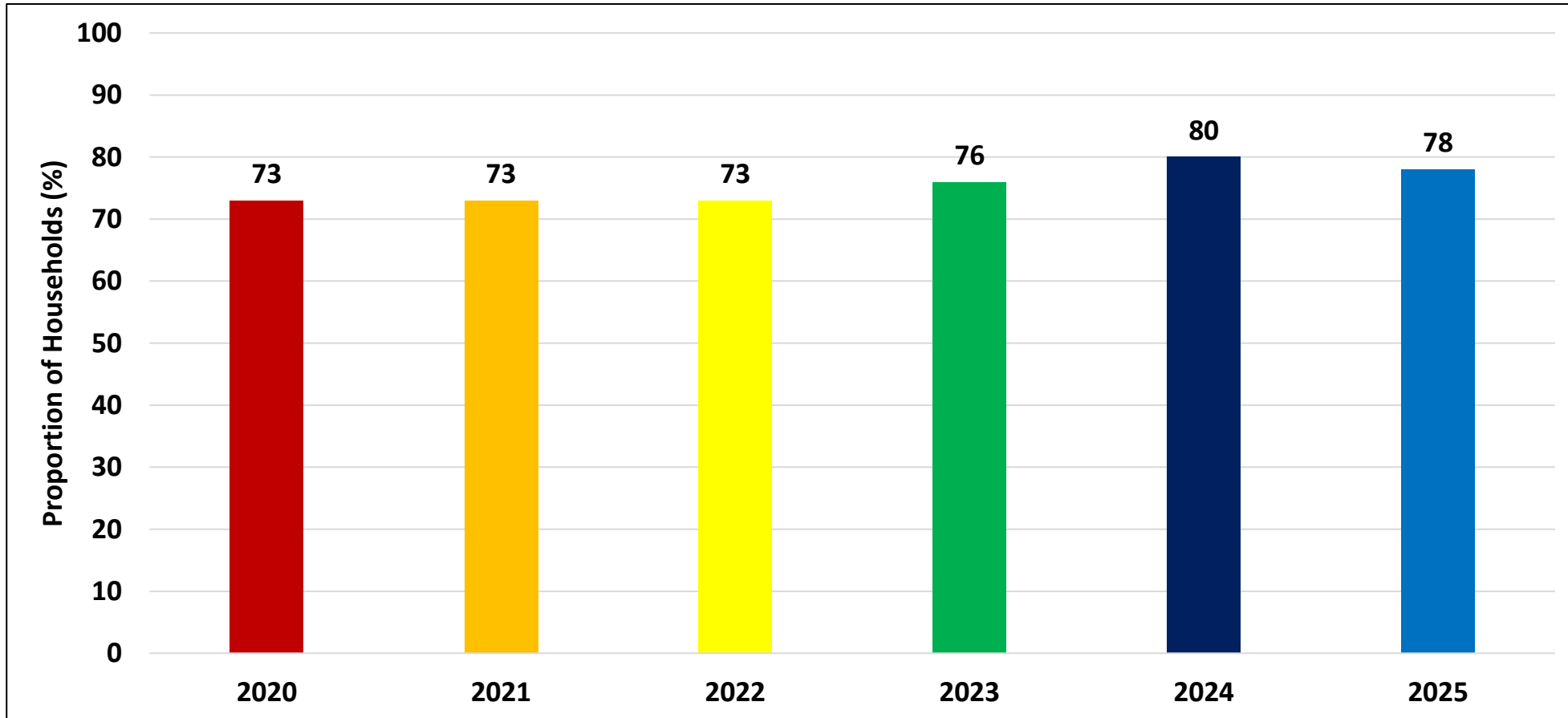
Ladder for Drinking Water Services

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 Year



- In Matabeleland South, access to improved water sources increased from 73% in 2020 to 78% in 2025.
- This is a reflection of the country's progress towards achieving SDG 6 which is fundamental for human health, economic development and environmental sustainability.

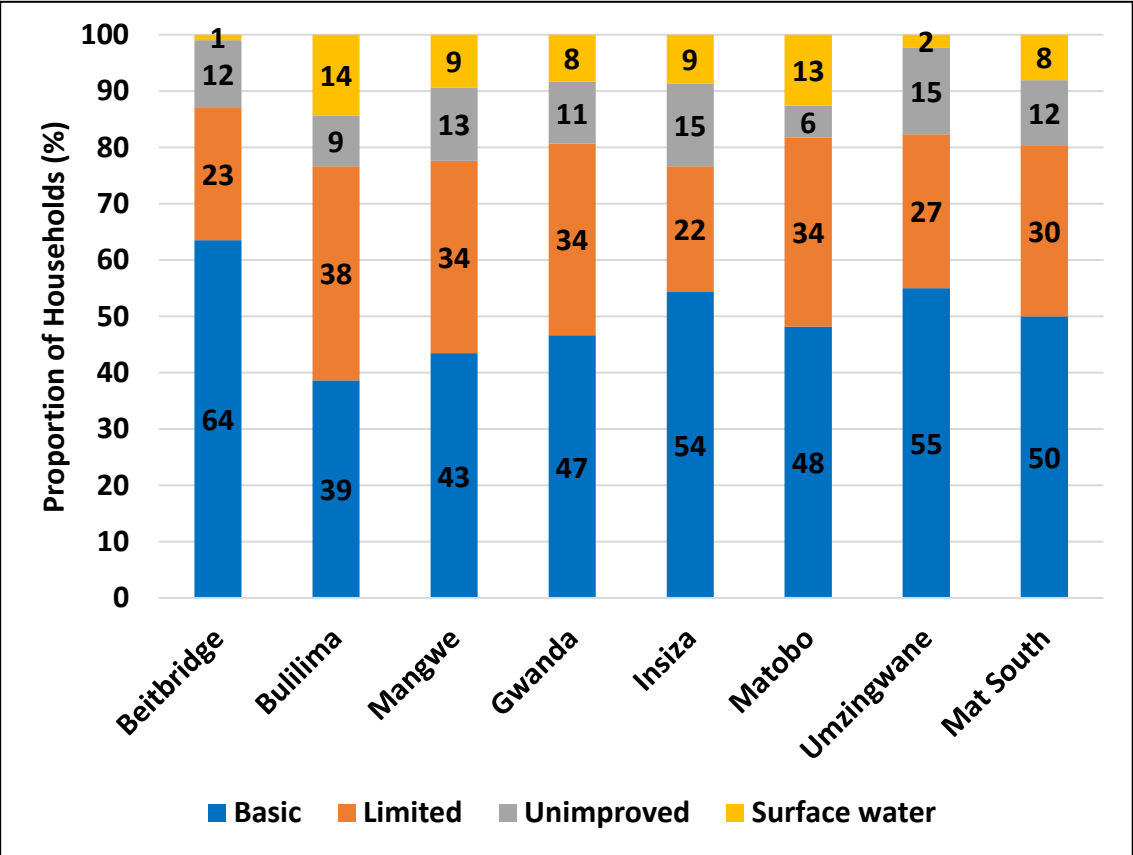
Main Source of Drinking Water

District	Piped into dwelling (%)	Piped into yard or plot (%)	Piped into public tap or standpipe (%)	Piped into neighbour's yard (%)	Borehole /Tube well (%)	Protected well (%)	Unprotected well (%)	Protected spring (%)	Unprotected spring (%)	Surface water (%)	Sand abstraction (%)	Other (%)
Beitbridge	8.7	2.8	5.9	6.3	56.4	10.5	6.3	0.3	0.3	2.1	0.3	0
Bulilima	9.3	1.6	4.9	3.8	58.8	3.8	12.6	0	0	4.4	0	0.5
Mangwe	2.0	0.7	14.3	2.7	43.3	6.7	2.3	0	1.3	26.7	0	0
Gwanda	1.6	1.6	2.9	1.3	60.8	4.2	7.7	0	1.9	17.4	0	0.6
Insiza	2.3	2.7	10.7	2.7	43.6	5.0	5.0	0.7	0	26.5	0	0.3
Matobo	2.6	7.3	12.6	1.3	49.0	8.6	7.0	0.7	0	10.6	0	0.3
Umzingwane	0.3	5.3	19.0	4.7	45.7	9.3	9.3	0	0.3	4.0	0.7	1.0
Mat South	3.5	3.2	10.4	3.2	50.7	7.0	6.9	0.3	0.6	13.7	0.2	0.4

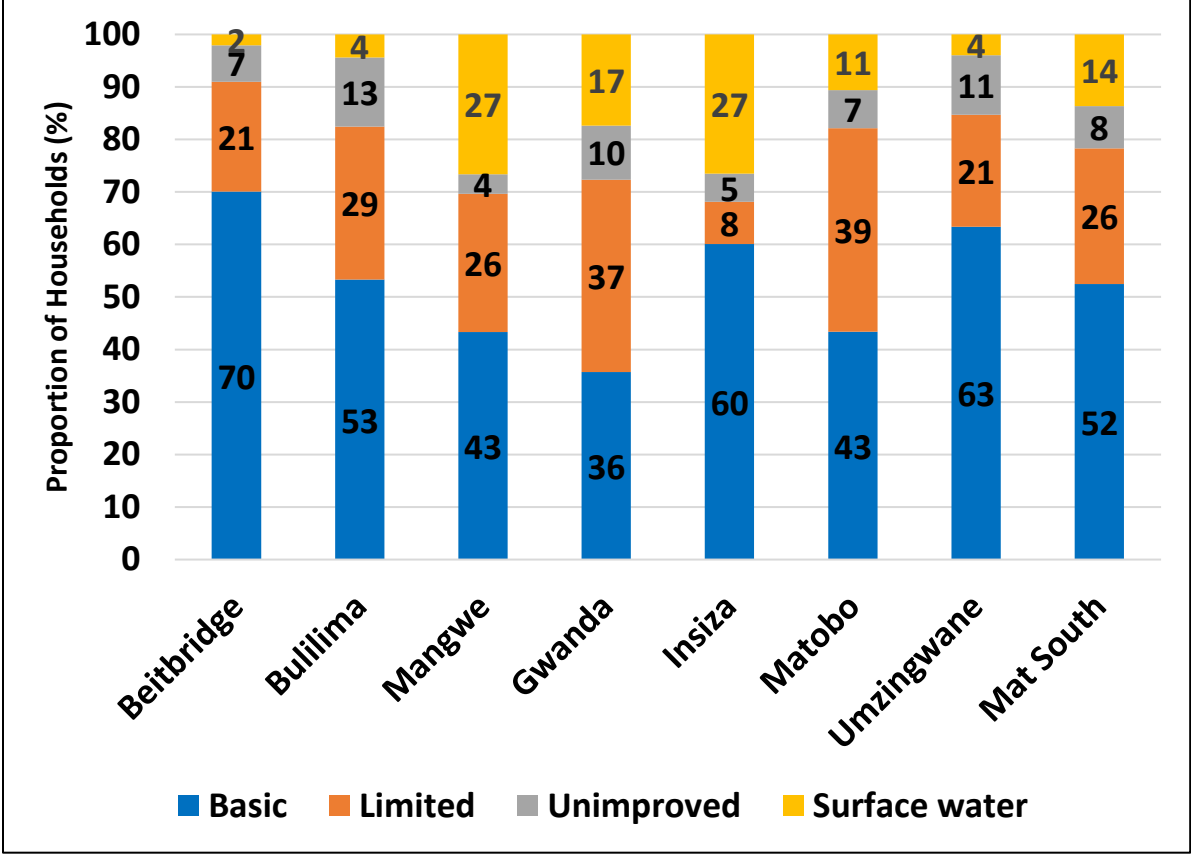
- The majority of households were drinking water from boreholes or tube wells (50.7%).
- About 13.7% of the households were drinking surface water.

Main Drinking Water Services

2024

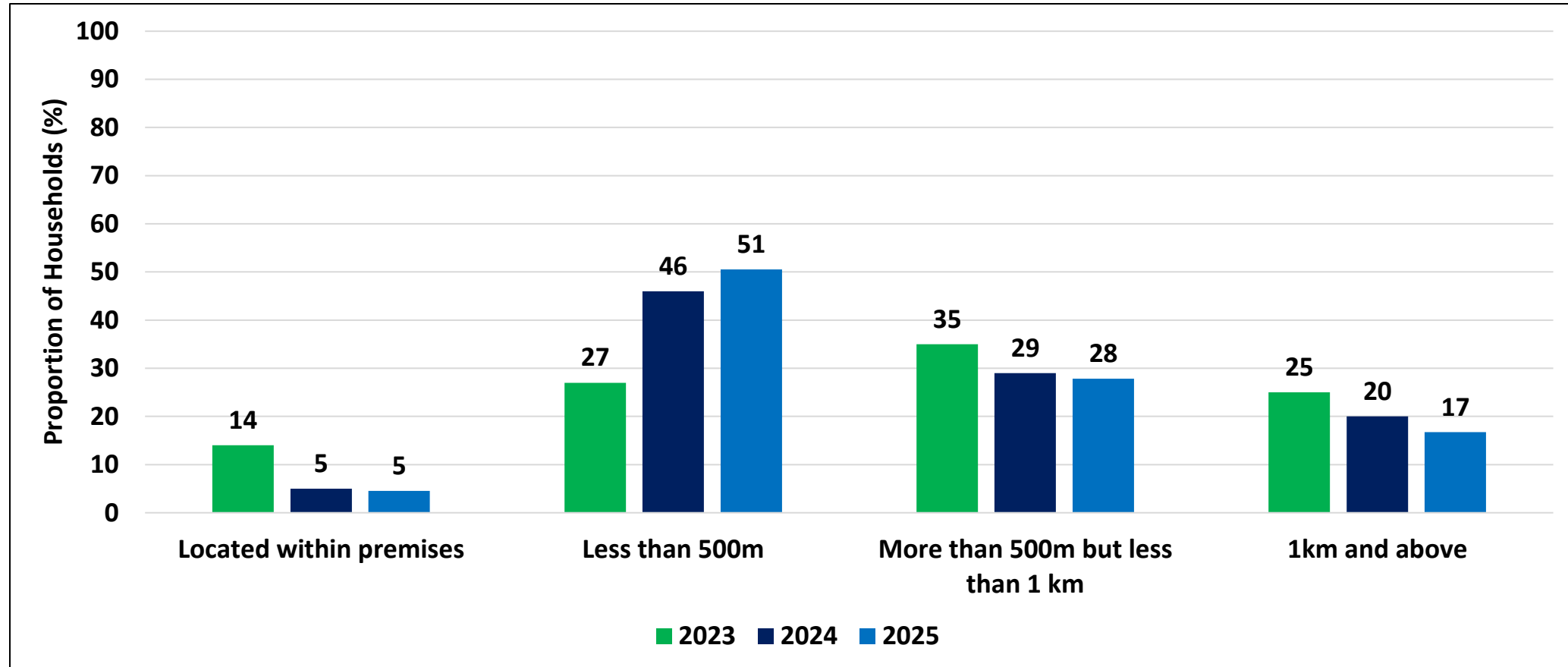


2025



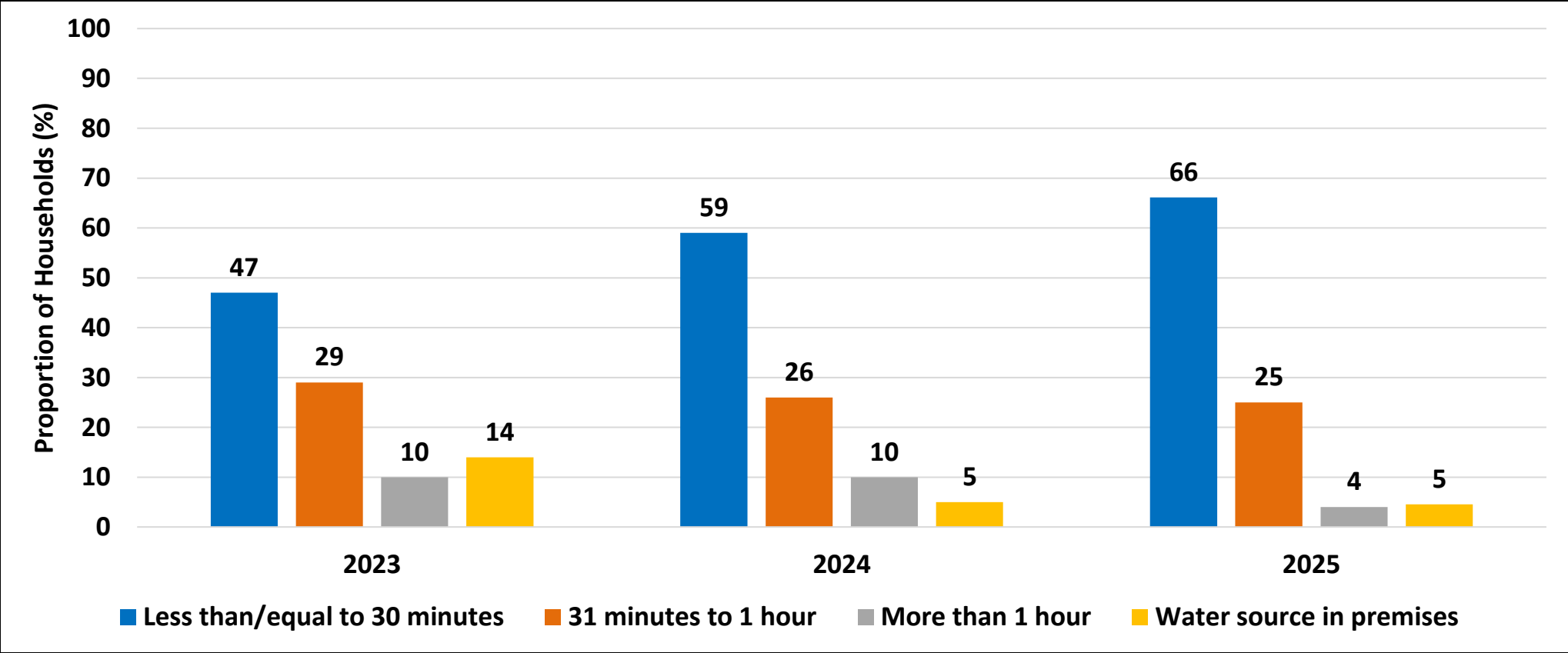
- There was an increase in the proportion of households accessing basic water services from 50% in 2024 to 52% in 2025.
- Beitbridge (70%) and Umzingwane (63%) had the highest proportion of households that had access to basic water services.

Distance Travelled to Main Drinking Water Source



- About 51% of the households accessed water less than 500m from their homes in 2025, an increase from 27% in 2023.
- The proportion of households travelling 1km and above to their main water source decreased from 25% in 2023 to 17% in 2025.

Time Taken to and from Main Drinking Water Source



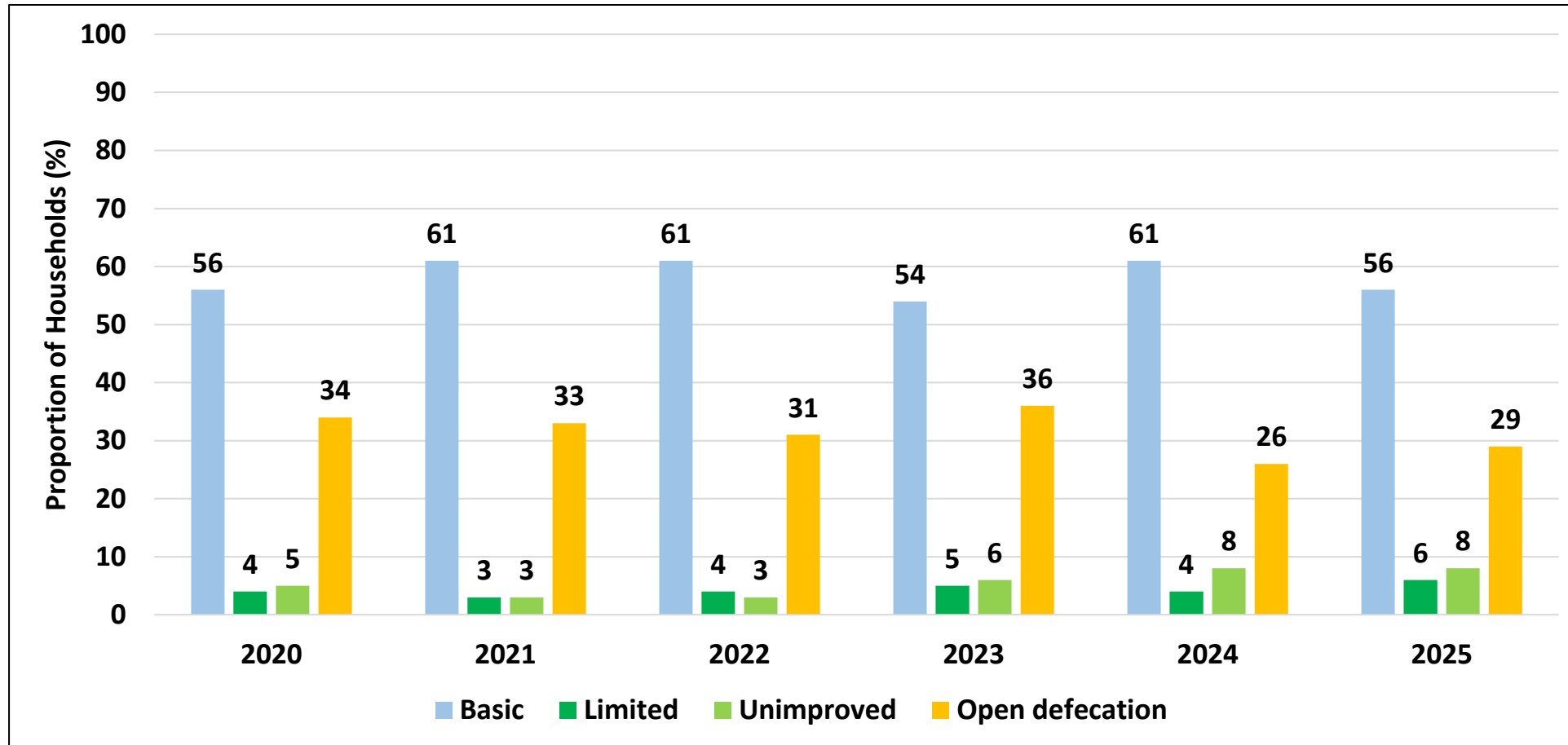
- The proportion of households spending thirty minutes or less for a round trip to collect water from their main drinking water source increased from 47% in 2023 to 66% in 2025.

Sanitation

Ladder for Sanitation

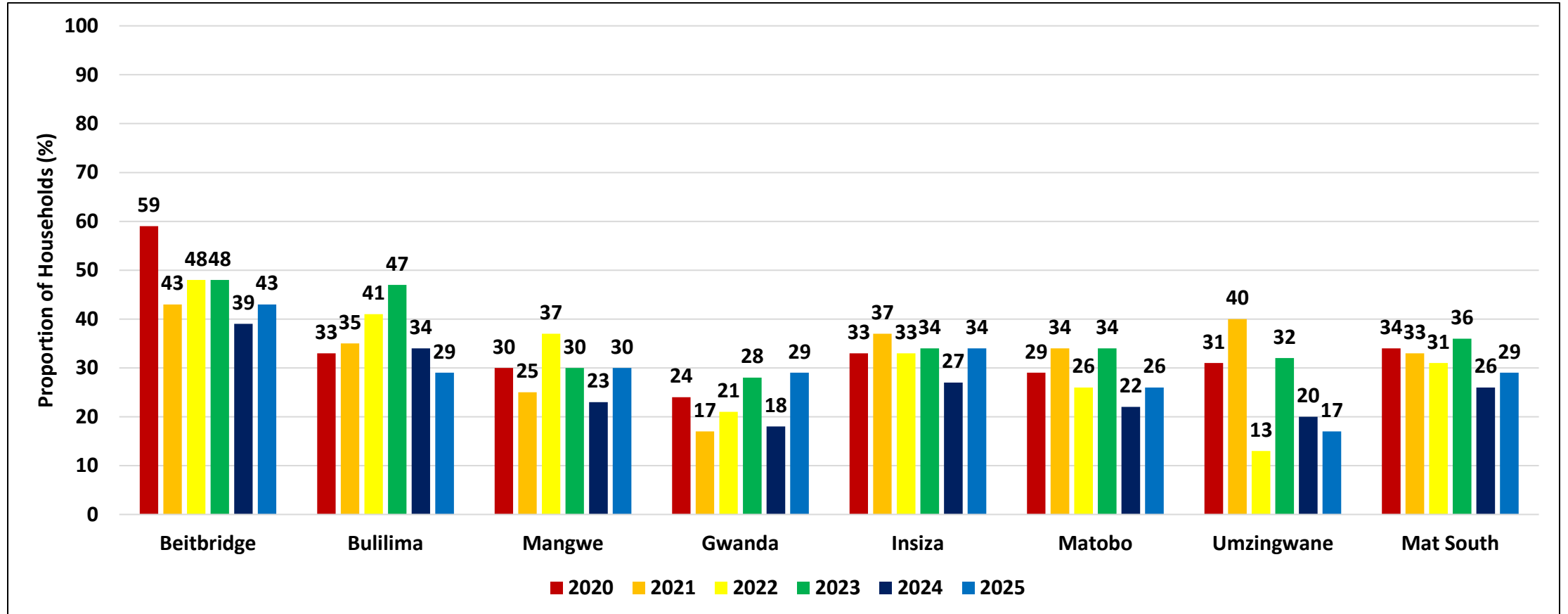
Service level	Definition
Safely Managed	Use of improved facilities that are not shared with other households and where excreta are safely disposed of in situ or transported and treated offsite.
Basic Sanitation Facilities	Use of improved facilities which are not shared with other households.
Limited 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.
<p>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.</p>	

Household Sanitation Services



- Access to basic sanitation (56%) services has not changed from 2020 to 2025.
- There was a decline in the proportion of households practising open defecation from 34% in 2020 to 29% in 2025.

Open Defecation by District



- There has been a decrease in the practise of open defecation from 2020 (34%) to 2025 (29%).

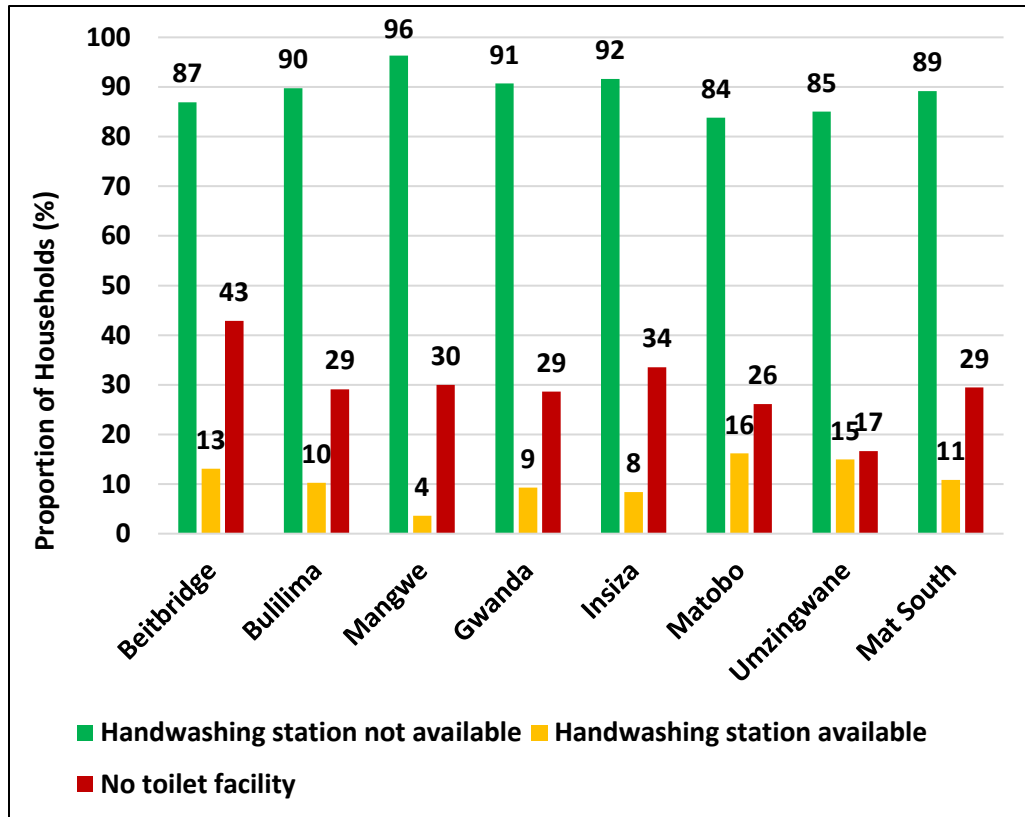
Ladder for Hygiene

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.

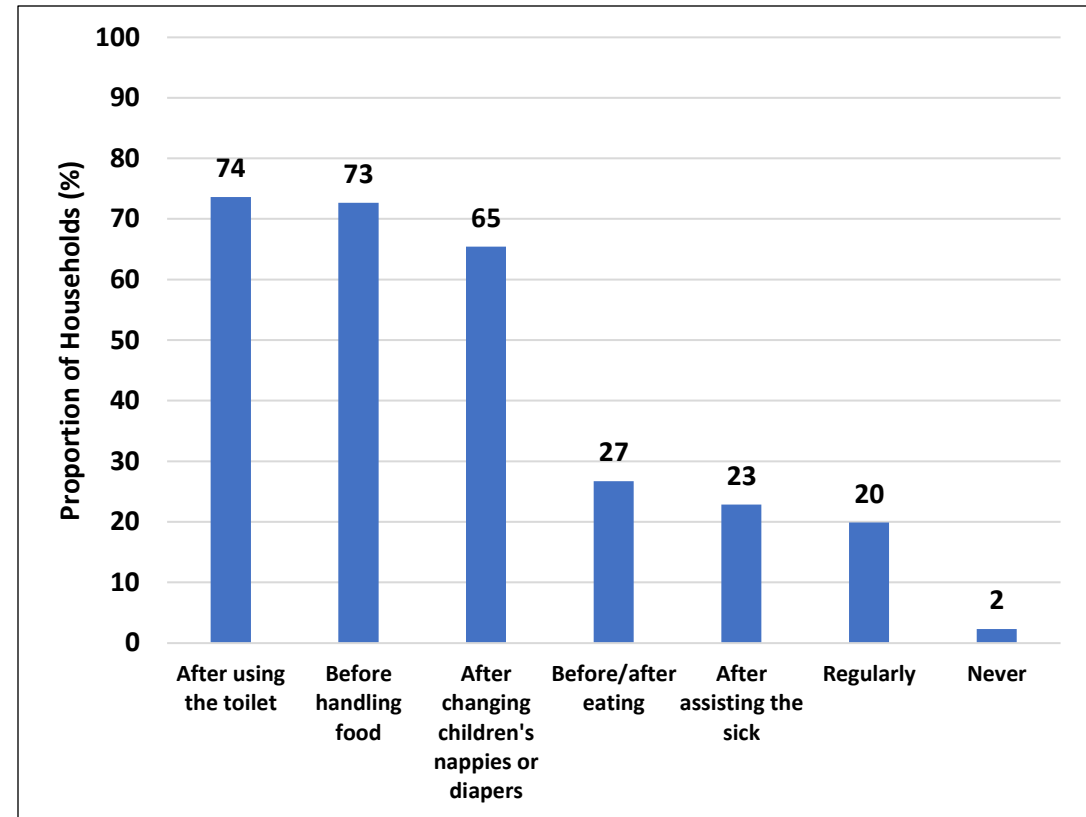
Note: handwashing facilities may be fixed or mobile and include a sink with tap water, buckets with taps, tippy taps, and jugs or basins designated for hand washing. Soap includes bar soap, liquid soap, powdered detergents and soapy water but does not include sand, soil, ash and other handwashing agents.

Handwashing

Handwashing facilities



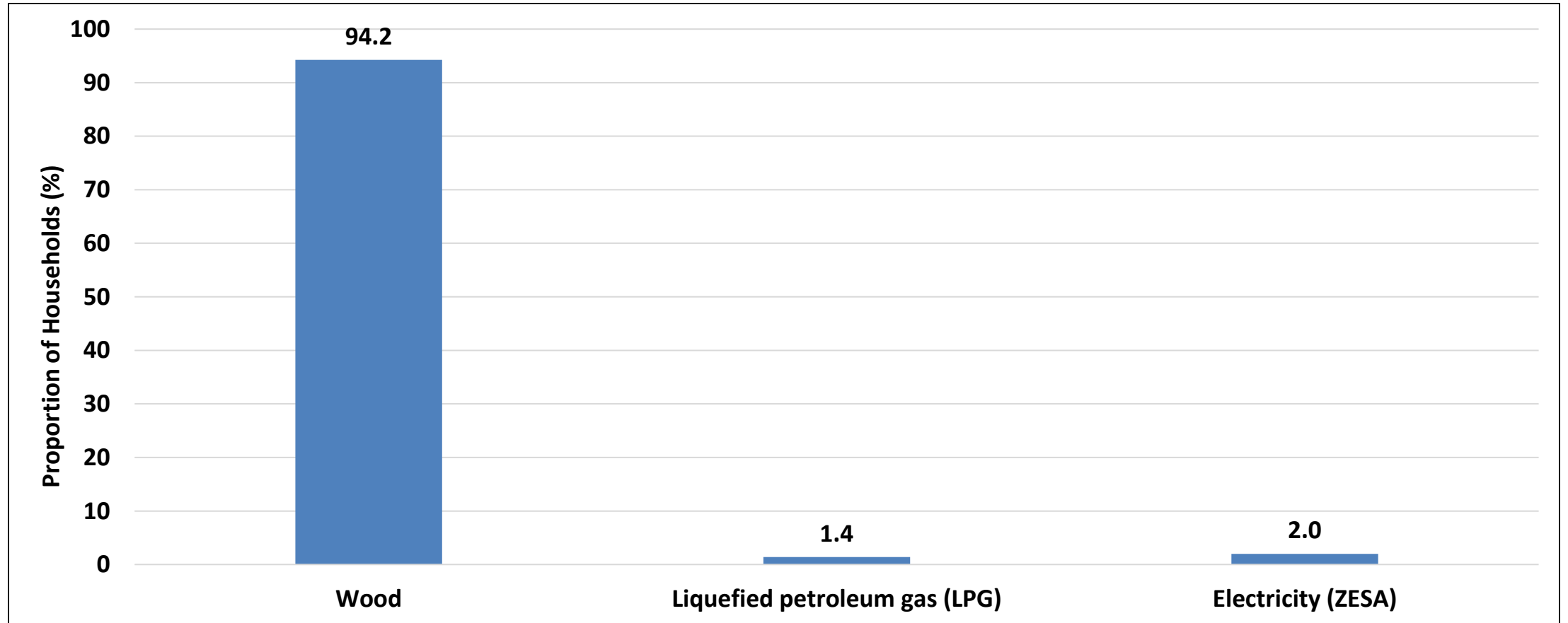
Handwashing at Critical Times



- About 89% of households had no handwashing stations.
- Most households reported practising hand washing after using the toilet (74%), before handling food (73%) and after changing children's nappies or diapers (65%).

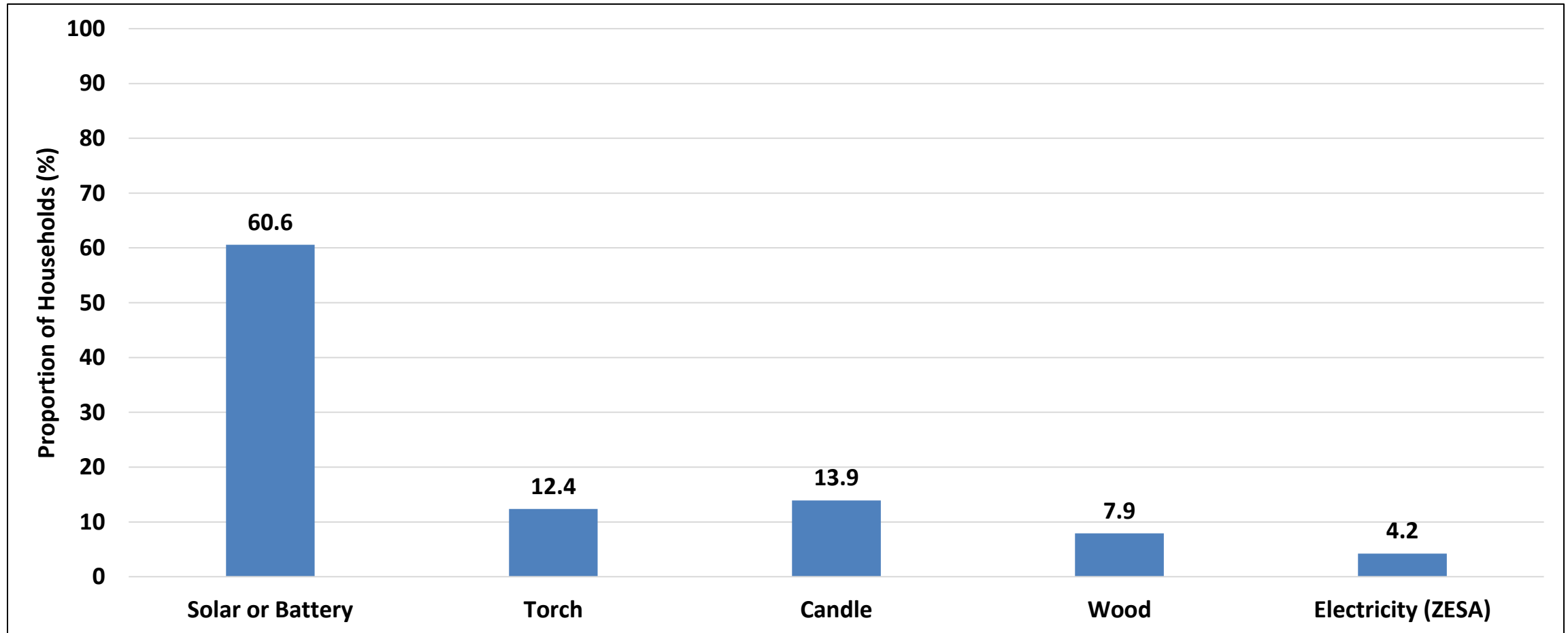
Energy

Type of Energy Used for Cooking



- Wood (94.2%) was the most reported type of energy used for cooking.
- The unsustainable use of firewood may lead to high levels of deforestation.

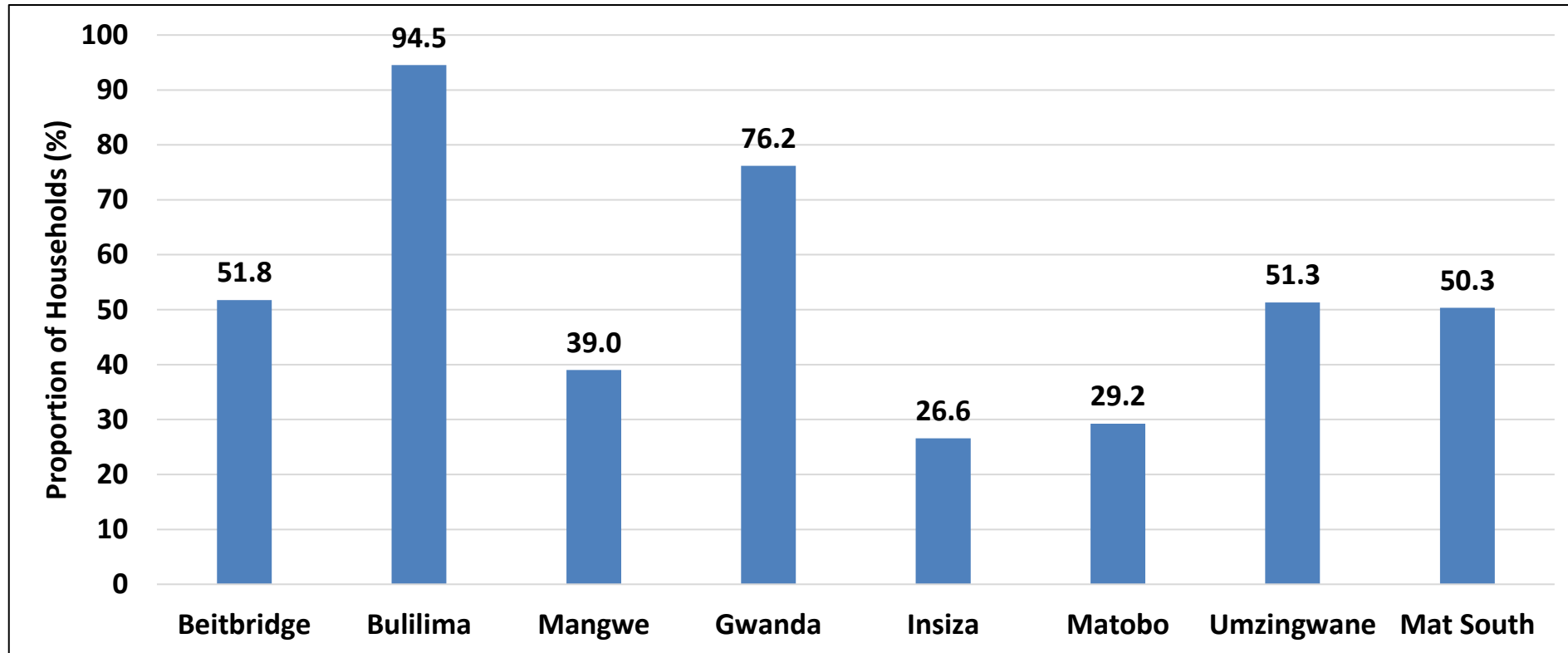
Type of Energy Used for Lighting



- Solar or battery (60.6%) was the most reported type of energy used for lighting in Matabeleland South.

Climate Change

Household Knowledge on Climate Change



- The proportion of households that reported having knowledge on climate change was 50.3%.
- Bulilima (94.5%) had the highest proportion of households with knowledge on climate change, while Insiza (26.6%) had the lowest.

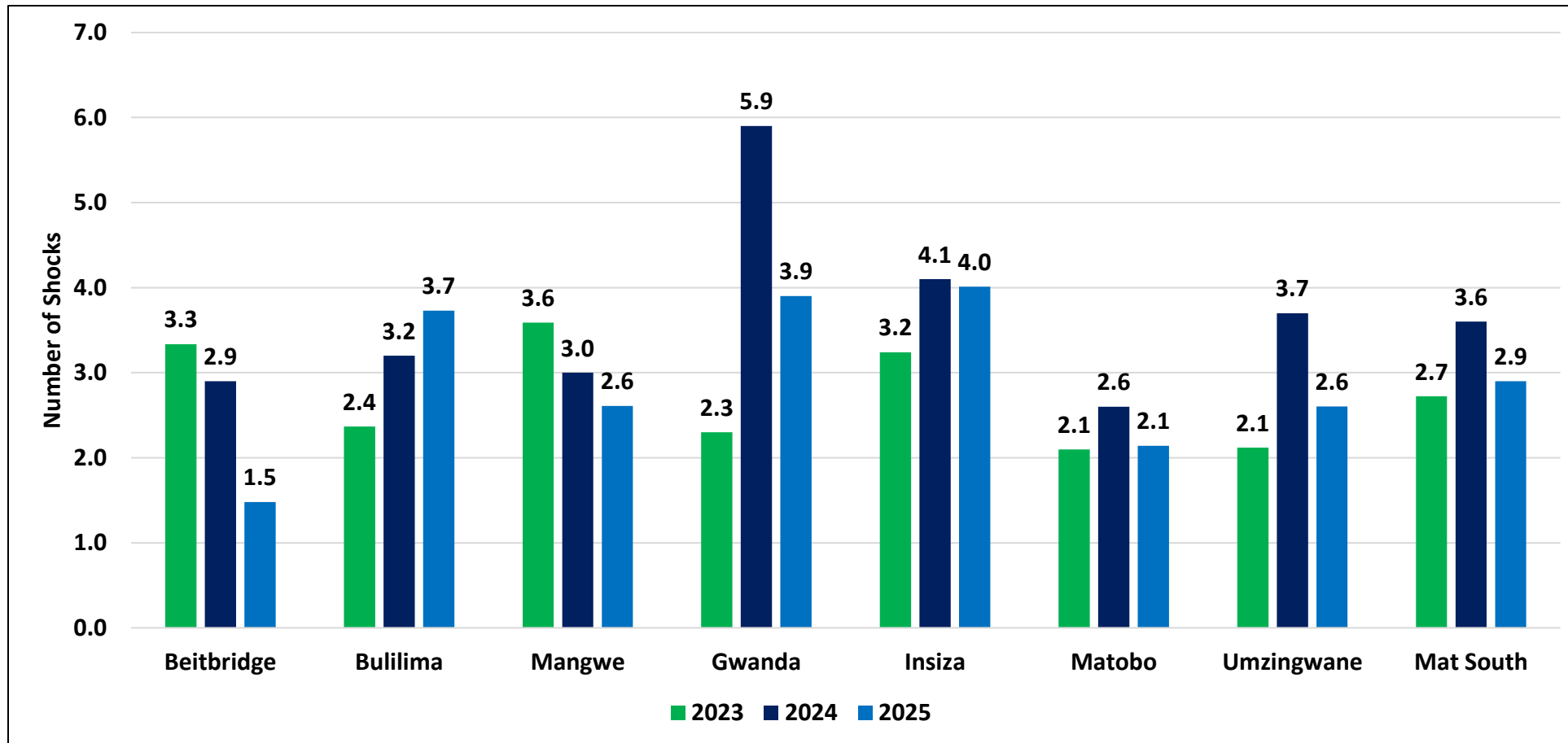
Perceived Effects of Climate Change

District	Not enough food (%)	Increased droughts (%)	More health risks (%)	Extreme temperatures (%)	Severe storms (%)	Loss of species (%)	Poverty and displacement (%)
Beitbridge	29.5	14.8	0.7	3.0	1.3	0	0
Bulilima	36.1	11.4	3.0	8.4	1.5	1.1	3.8
Mangwe	18.0	19.0	0	1.0	0.7	0	0.3
Gwanda	43.6	27.6	0	3.5	0	0	1.3
Insiza	18.5	3.4	0.7	2.7	0.7	0	0.7
Matobo	11.6	14.5	1.0	1.3	0.7	0	0
Umzingwane	20.3	24.3	0.7	5.0	0.3	0	0.7
Mat South	25.3	16.6	0.8	3.5	0.7	0.1	0.9

- Not enough food (25.3%) and increased droughts (16.6%) were the most reported perceived effects of climate change.

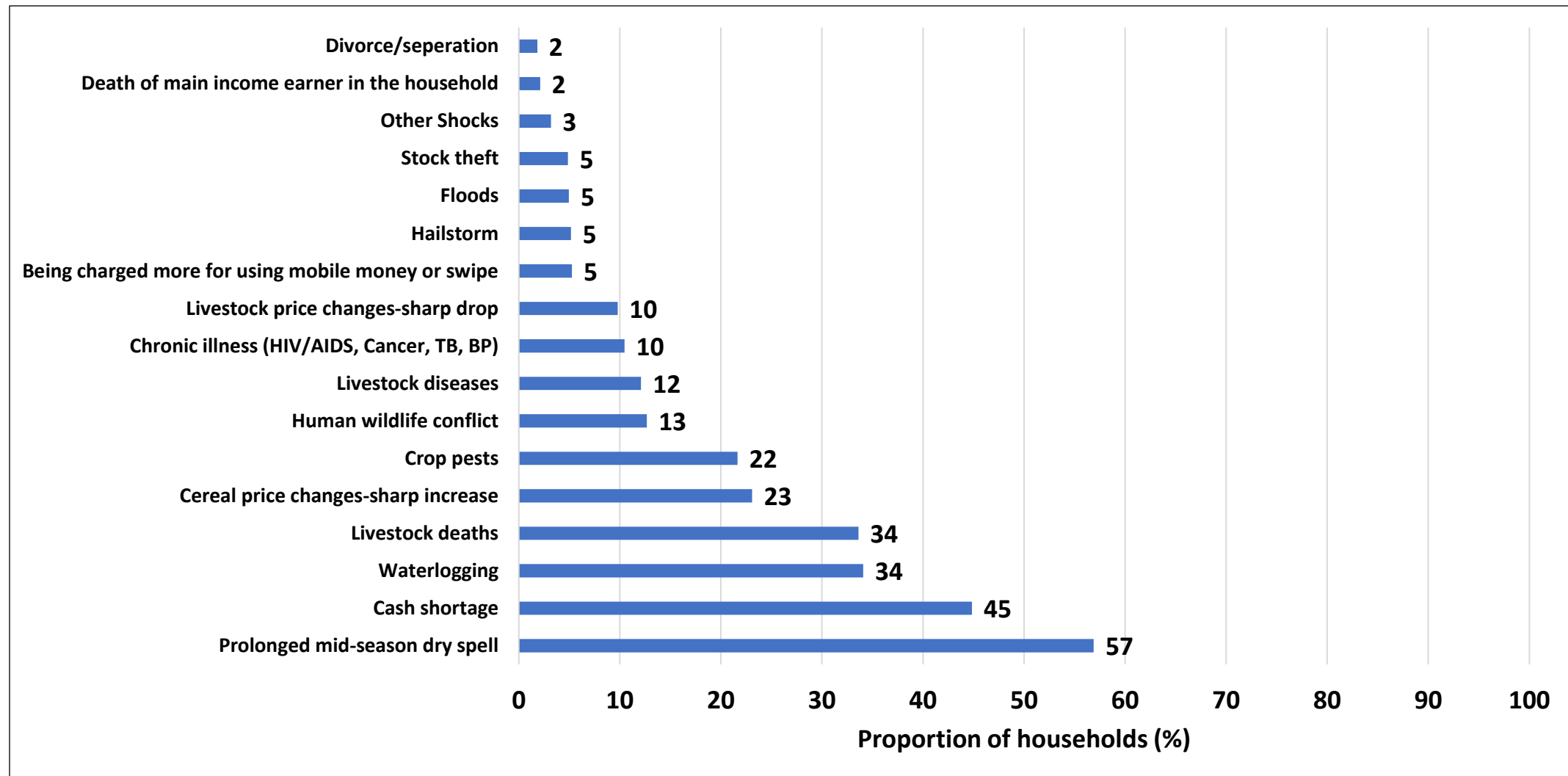
Shocks and Stressors

Number of Shocks Experienced by Households



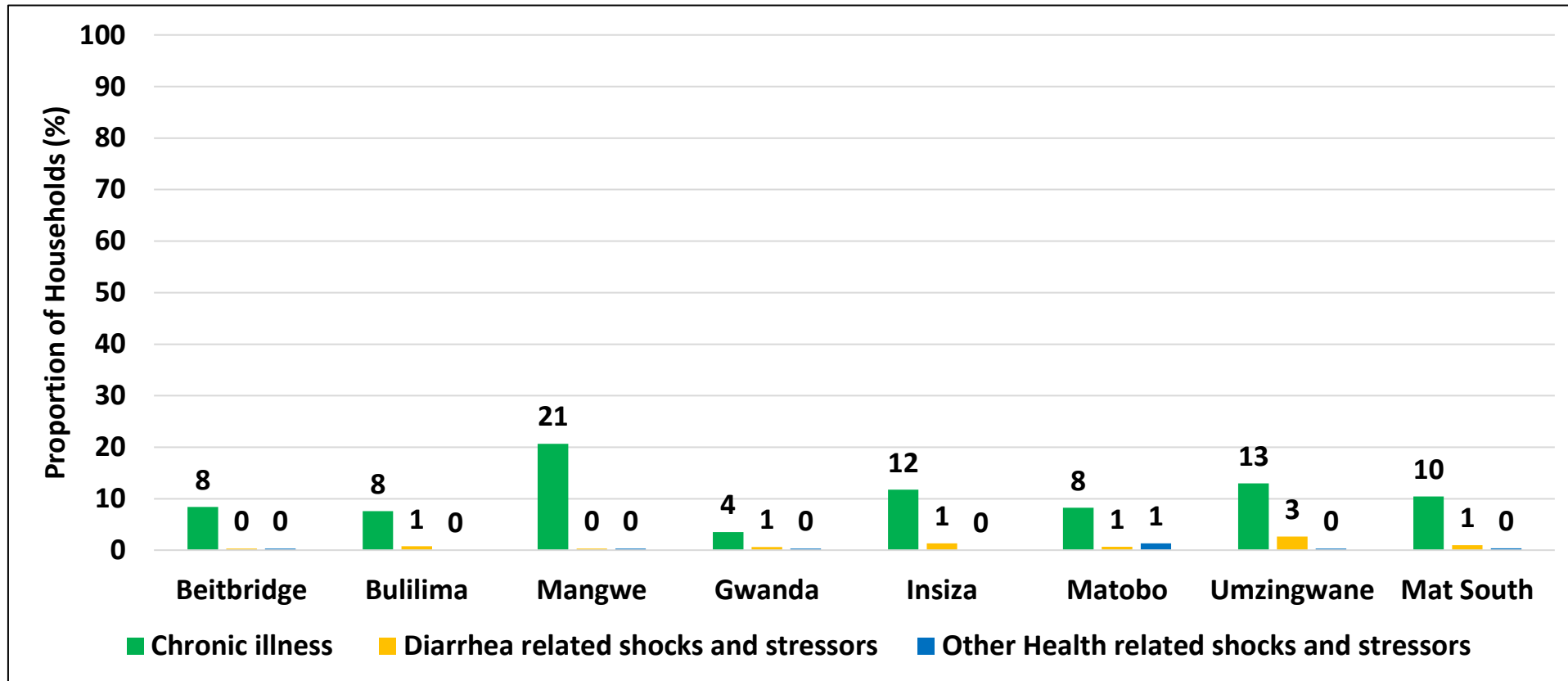
- The average number of shocks and stressors experienced by households decreased from 3.6 in 2024 to 2.9 in 2025.
- Insiza (4) had the highest average number of shocks.

Households that Experienced Shocks and Stressors



- Prolonged mid-season dry spells (57%) and cash shortage (45%) were the most prevalent shocks reported by households.

Health Related Shocks and Stressors



- Chronic illness was the most reported health shock and stressor (10%).
- Mangwe had the highest proportion of households that reported chronic illness as a shock and stressor (21%).

Economic and Social Shocks and Stressors

Shock and Stressor Type	Beitbridge (%)	Bulilima (%)	Mangwe (%)	Gwanda (%)	Insiza (%)	Matobo (%)	Umzingwane (%)	Mat South (%)
Gender Based Violence	1	0	1	0.3	1.3	0.3	1	0.7
Divorce/separation	0.7	0.4	3.3	0.6	5.7	0.3	1.7	1.8
Drug and substance abuse	0	0.4	0.7	0.3	2.3	0	1	0.7
Death of main income earner in the household	2	1.9	3.3	1.3	2.3	1.3	2.7	2.1
Loss of employment by key household member	1.7	0	2.3	0.6	0.3	0	2	1
Cash shortage	31.9	42.2	49	64.7	38.9	33.3	52.7	44.8
Being charged more for using mobile money or swipe	1	0.4	1.7	7.4	9.4	5	11.3	5.3
Cereal price changes-sharp increase	5.4	36.5	19.7	18.3	32.6	29	22	23.1
Stock theft	7	7.6	1	5.1	4.4	3.6	5.7	4.9
Human wildlife conflict	7	35.4	5.7	11.2	20.8	3	8.7	12.7

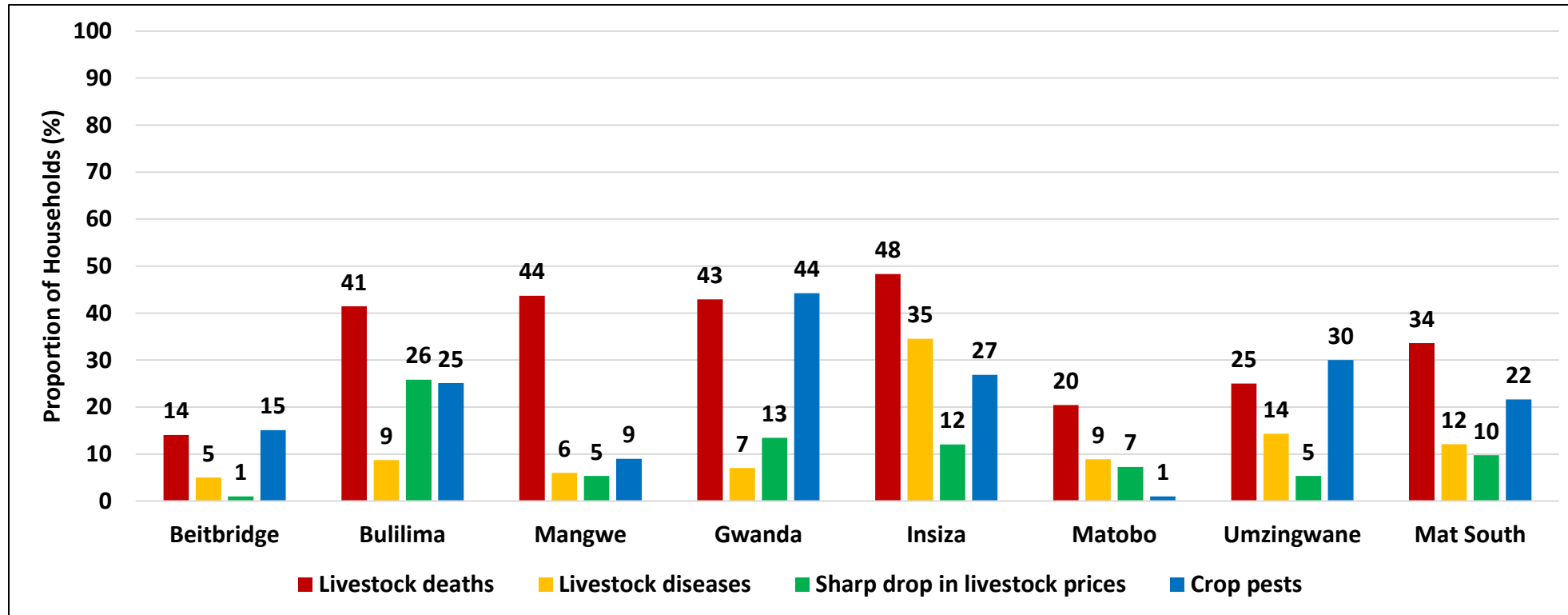
- Cash shortage was the most reported economic shock and stressor (44.8%).
- Gwanda (64.7%) had the highest proportion of households that reported cash shortage.

Climate Related Shocks and Stressors

Shock and Stressor Type	Beitbridge (%)	Bulilima (%)	Mangwe (%)	Gwanda (%)	Insiza (%)	Matobo (%)	Umzingwane (%)	Mat South (%)
Prolonged mid-season dry spell	42.3	60.8	42.3	89.7	72.5	41.6	48.3	56.9
Hailstorm	0	30.4	0	1.9	3.7	1.3	2	5.2
Floods	0	35.4	0.7	0	2	0.3	0.3	5
Waterlogging	2.3	11.8	43	75	59.4	33.7	9	34.1
Veld fires	0	0	0	0	7	0	1.3	1.2

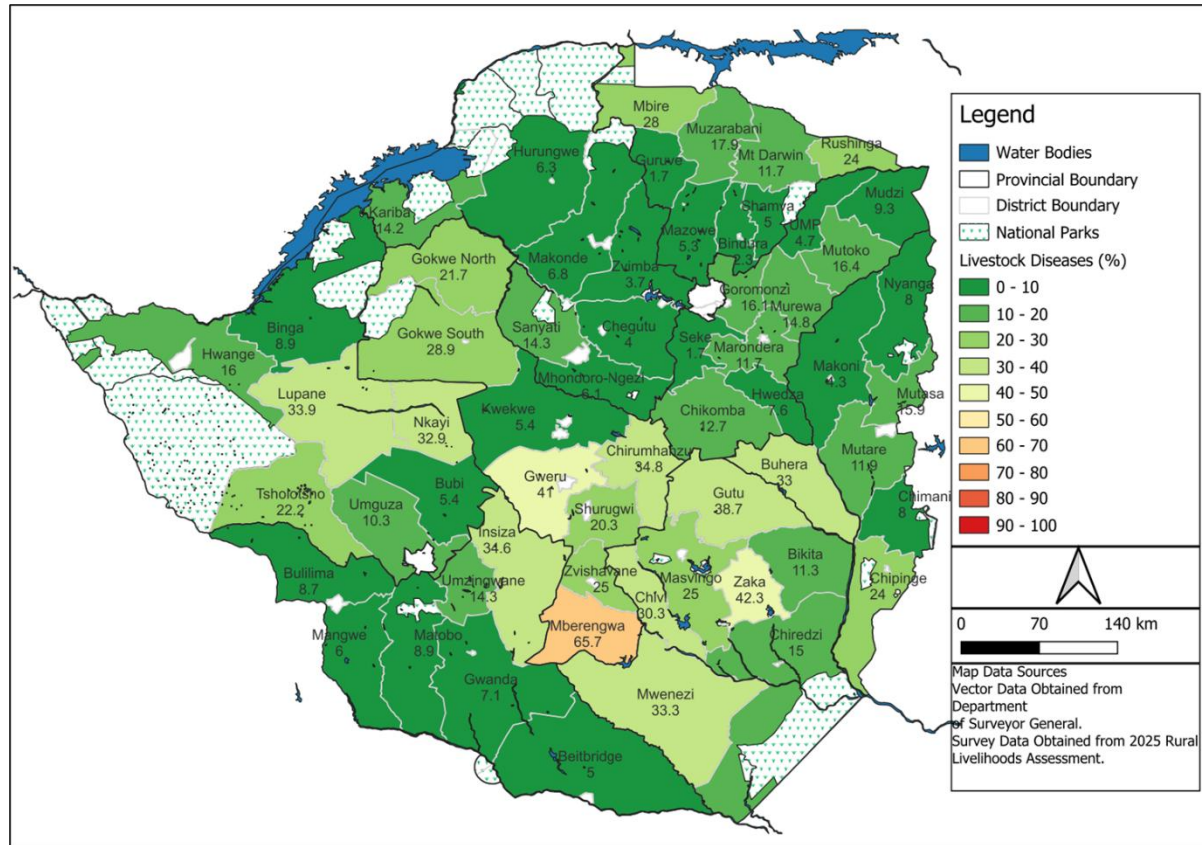
- Prolonged mid-season dry spell (56.9%) was the most reported climate related shock and stressor.
- Gwanda (89.7%) and Insiza (72.5%) had the highest proportion of households that reported prolonged mid-season dry spells as a shock.

Agriculture Related Shocks and Stressors



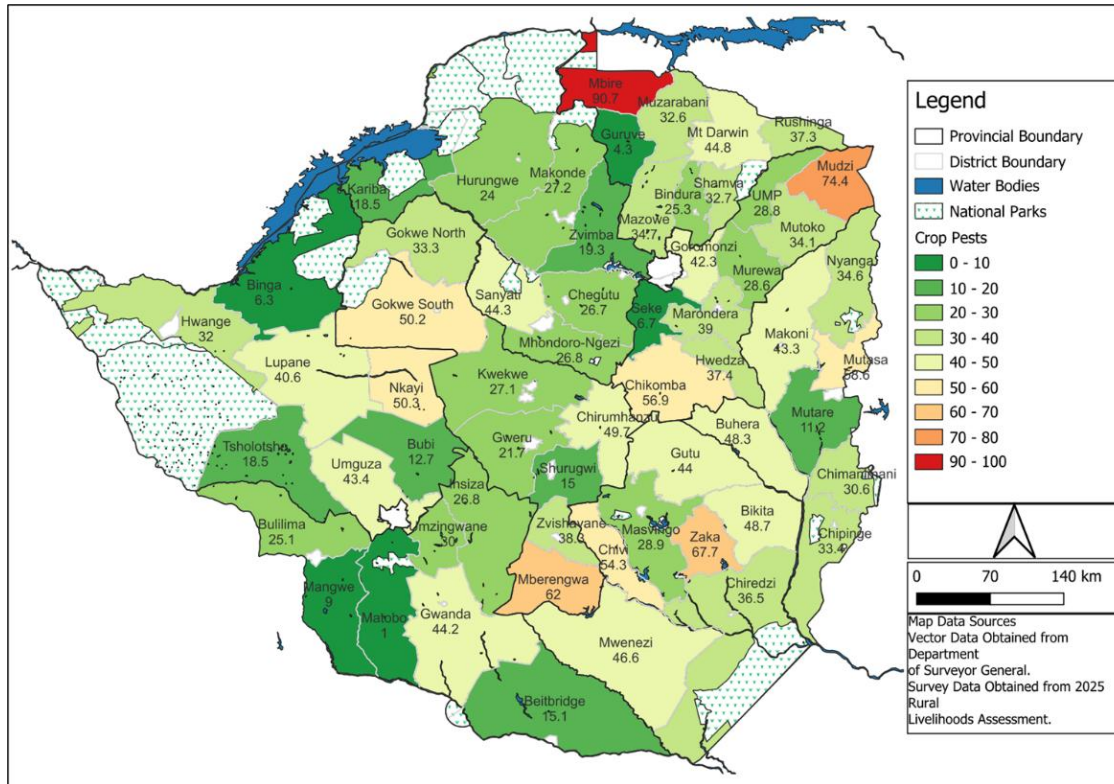
- Livestock deaths (34%) were the most reported agriculture-related shock, whilst sharp drop in livestock prices was the least reported (10%).
- Bulilima (26%) had the highest proportion of households that reported sharp drop in livestock prices as a shock.

Livestock Diseases



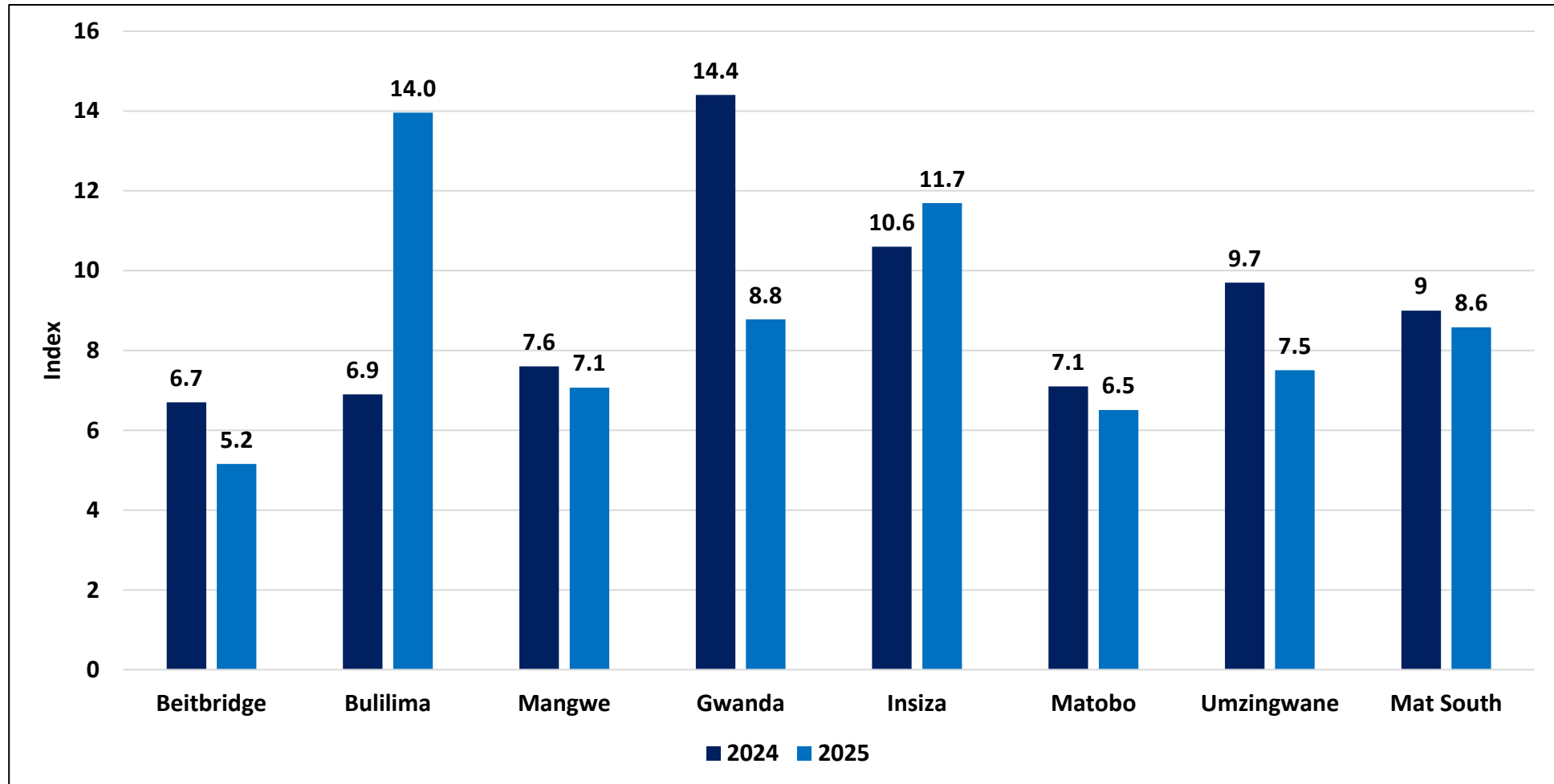
- Insiza (34.6%) had the highest proportion of households reporting livestock diseases as a shock and stressor.

Crop Pests



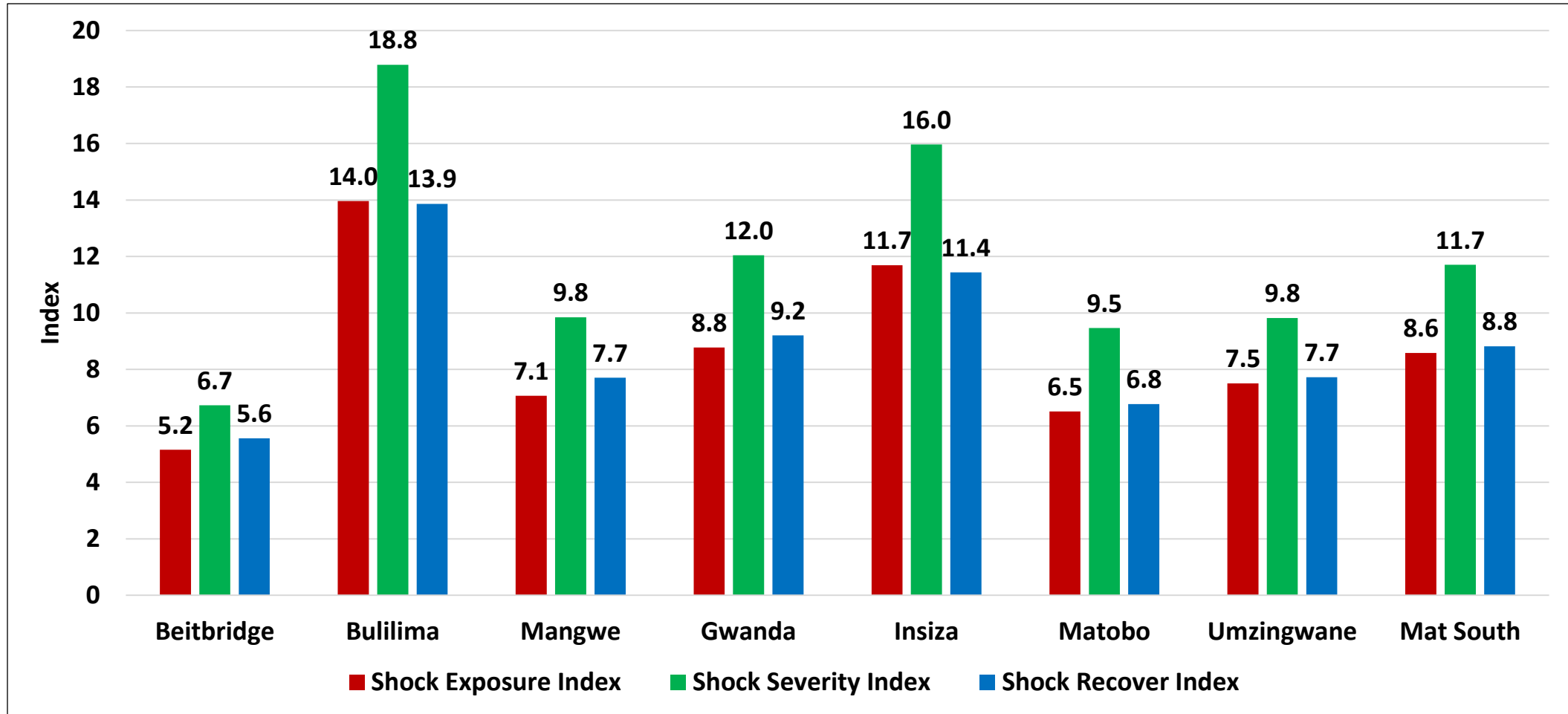
- Gwanda (44%), Umzingwane (30%) and Insiza (27%) had the highest proportion of households reporting crop pests as a shock.

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.
- Shock exposure index decreased as compared to 2024.
- Bulilima (14.0) had the highest shock exposure index in the province and Beitbridge (5.2) had the lowest.

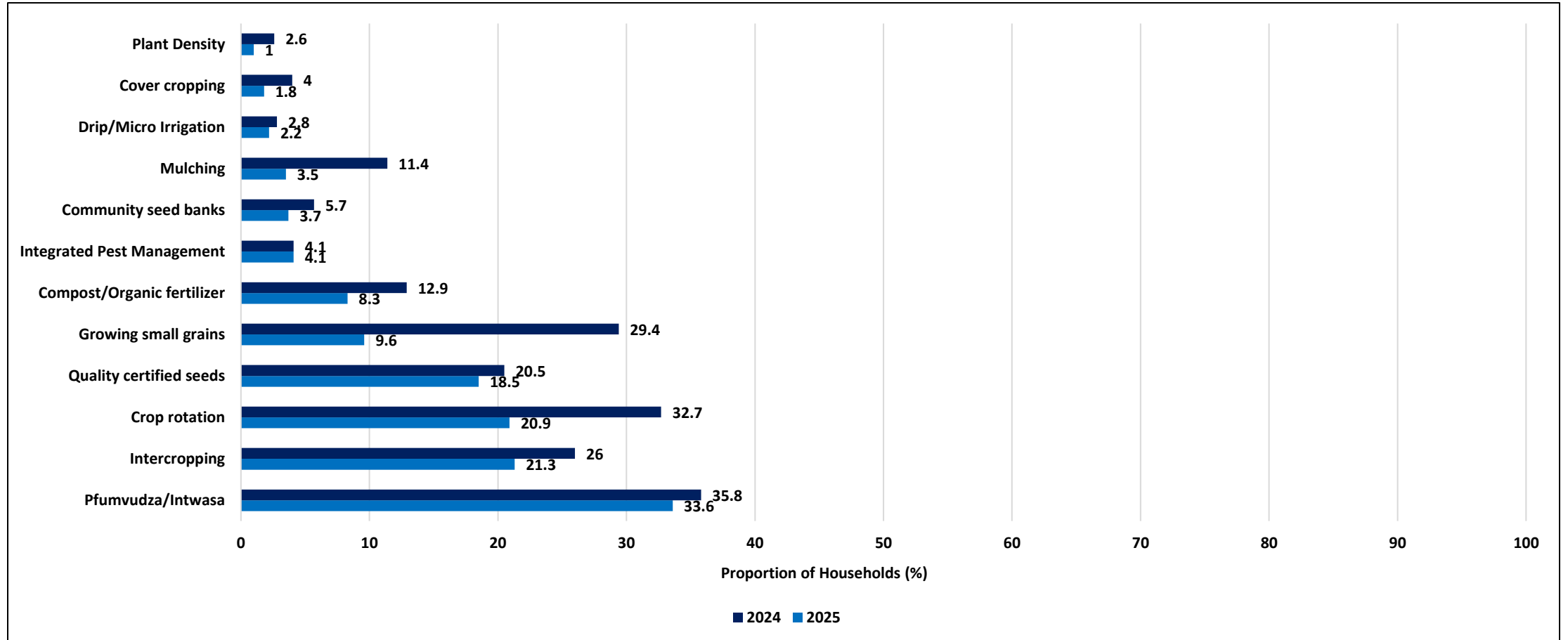
Comparison Between Shock Exposure and Ability to Cope Indices



- Shock Severity Index was 11.7 and shock Recovery Index was 8.8.

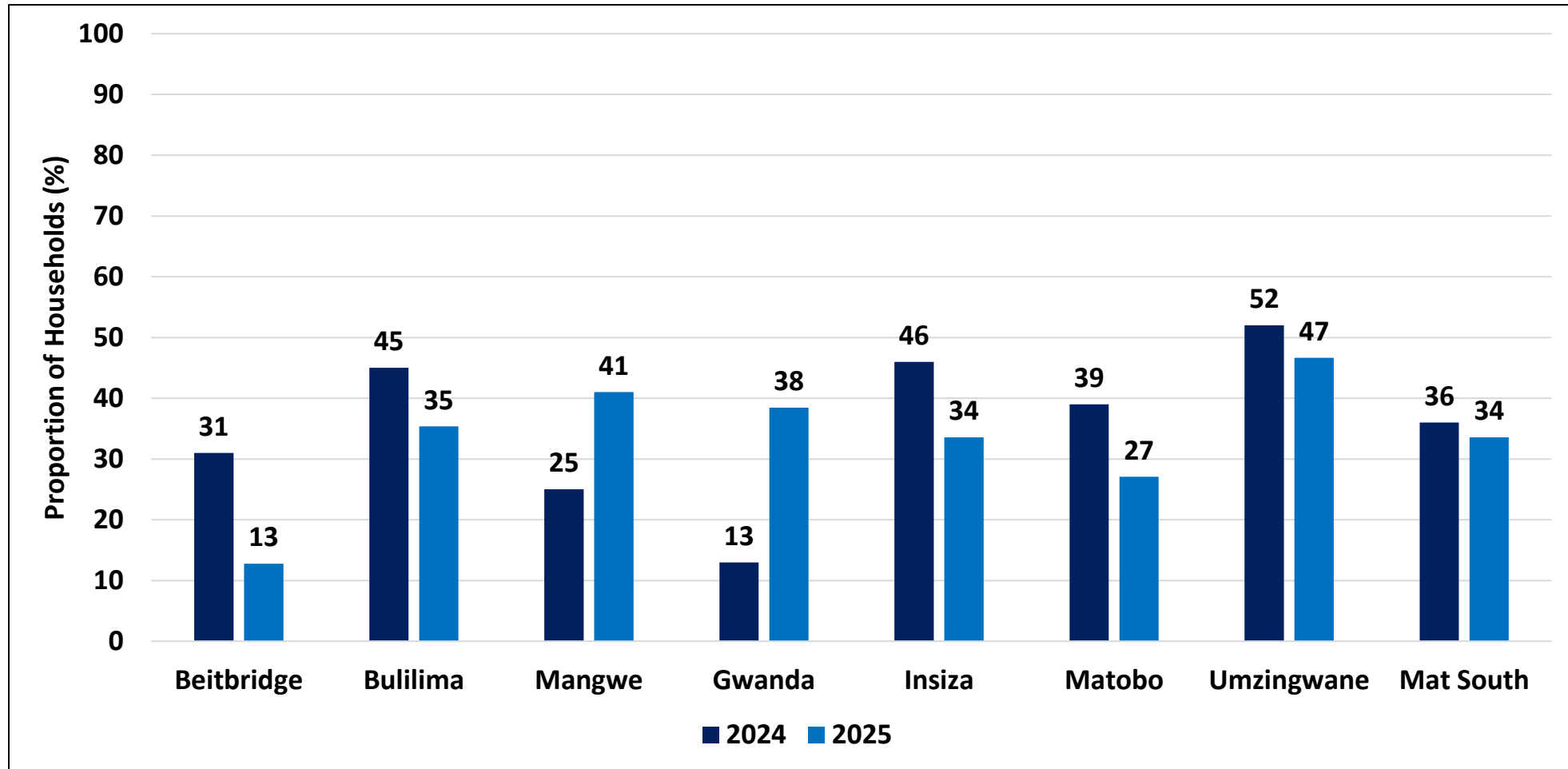
Agriculture Production Technologies

Climate Smart Technologies



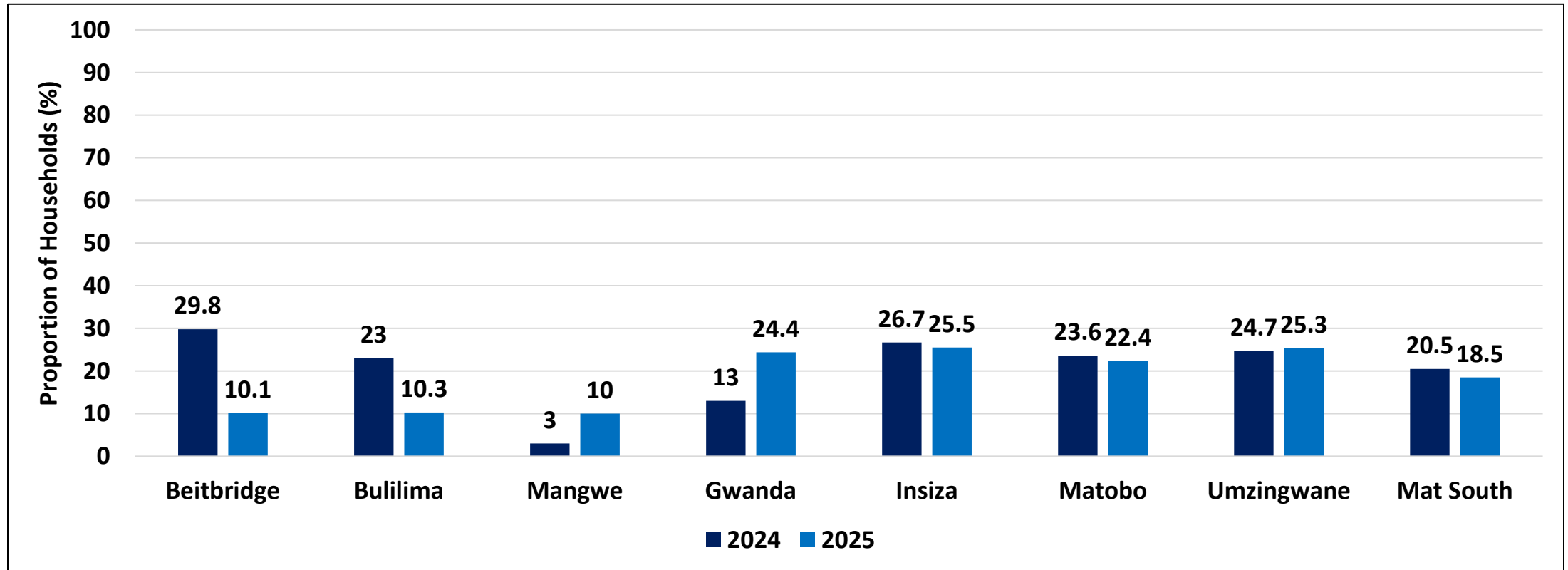
- About 33.6% of households practised Pfumvudza/Intwasa in 2025, a decline from 35.8% reported in 2024.
- There was a decrease in the proportion of households practising crop rotation from 2024 (32.7%) to 2025 (20.9%).

Pfumvudza/Intwasa



- Umzingwane (47%) and Mangwe (41%) had the highest proportion of households that practised Pfumvudza/Intwasa.
- There was a decrease in the proportion of households which practised Pfumvudza/Intwasa from 36% (2024) to 34% (2025).

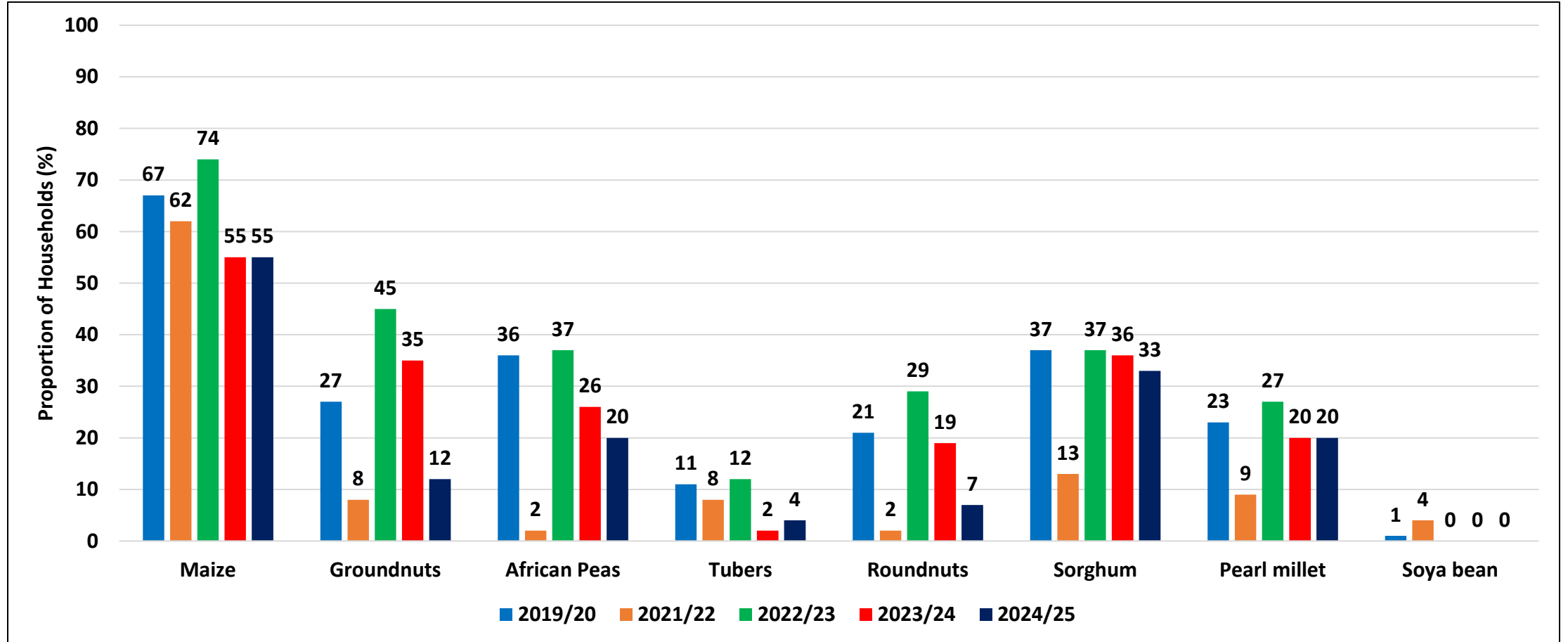
Use of Quality Certified Seed



- Certified seeds are crucial in crop production as they ensure high quality better yields and increased resistance to diseases and pests.
- There was a decrease in the proportion of households which used quality certified seeds from 20.5% (2024) to 18.5% (2025).
- Insiza (25.5%) had the highest proportion of households which used quality certified seeds.

Crop Production

Households which Grew Crops



- There was a decrease in the proportion of households which grew groundnuts, african peas, roundnuts and sorghum.
- The proportion of households that grew maize remained the same (55%).

Proportion of Households Which Grew Crops

District	Maize (%)	Sorghum (%)	Finger Millet (%)	Pearl Millet (%)	Tubers (%)	Cowpeas (%)	Groundnuts (%)	Round nuts (%)	Sugar beans (%)
Beitbridge	45	39	1	16	0	11	6	4	1
Bulilima	37	14	0	43	0	14	14	4	1
Mangwe	22	63	4	43	3	32	12	4	1
Gwanda	71	51	0	19	6	37	25	16	4
Insiza	74	15	1	1	5	10	11	7	2
Matobo	61	36	2	18	1	15	10	6	2
Umzingwane	72	10	1	1	9	19	7	5	3
Mat South	55	33	1	20	4	20	12	7	2

- The proportion of households which grew maize was highest in Insiza (74%), sorghum was highest in Mangwe (63%) and pearl millet was highest in Bulilima (43%) and Mangwe (43%).

Cereals from Casual Labour and Remittances

	Cereals from Casual Labour (kgs)		Cereals from Remittances (kgs)	
	2024	2025	2024	2025
Beitbridge	2.8	2.2	1.4	1.1
Bulilima	0	5.4	0	4.7
Mangwe	11.6	2.4	9.3	4.3
Gwanda	0	13.2	0	2.1
Insiza	1	15.9	0	1.4
Matobo	1.5	2.3	0	0.5
Umzingwane	0.4	2	2.9	6
Mat South	1.1	6.3	0.4	2.8

- Generally, there was an increase in the amount of cereals accessed by households from casual labour and remittances compared to the previous consumption year.
- On average, households reported to have accessed 6.3kgs of maize from casual labour and 2.8kgs from remittances.

Cereal Stocks as at 1 April 2025

	Maize (kgs)		Sorghum (kgs)		Finger Millet (kgs)		Pearl Millet (kgs)	
	2024	2025	2024	2025	2024	2025	2024	2025
Beitbridge	0	8.5	0.2	7	0	0	0	8.6
Bulilima	0	5.8	0	0.5	0	0	0	9
Mangwe	1	24.4	1.1	13	0	0	0.2	9.5
Gwanda	0	17	0	4.3	0	0	0	2.4
Insiza	4.4	72.8	0	5.1	0	0	0	0.1
Matobo	0.6	7.2	0	1	0	0	0	0.2
Umzingwane	6.3	127.8	0	8	0	0.4	0	2.6
Mat South	0.8	38	0	5.6	0	0.1	0	4.5

- On average, households had 38kgs of maize in stock on the 1st of April 2025, an increase from 0.8kgs reported in 2024.
- Umzingwane (127.8kgs) had the highest maize stocks.

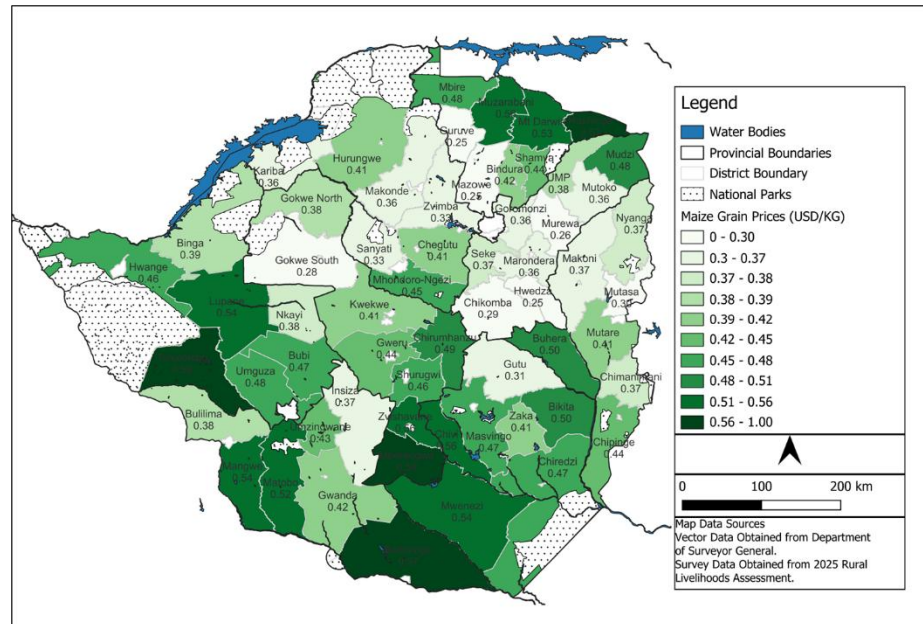
Season Harvest

	Maize (kgs)		Sorghum (kgs)		Finger Millet (kgs)		Pearl Millet (kgs)		Total (kgs)	
	2024	2025	2024	2025	2024	2025	2024	2025	2024	2025
Beitbridge	37	64	62	58	1	2	17	23	117	146
Bulilima	0	19	0	7	0	0	4	33	4	60
Mangwe	68	49	53	42	3	2	26	28	150	120
Gwanda	14	88	13	43	0	0	0	29	26	160
Insiza	50	230	1	12	0	0	5	0	56	243
Matobo	5	109	3	28	0	1	1	11	9	150
Umzingwane	8	261	3	12	0	1	0	3	11	276
Mat South	26	119	19	29	0	1	8	18	53	167

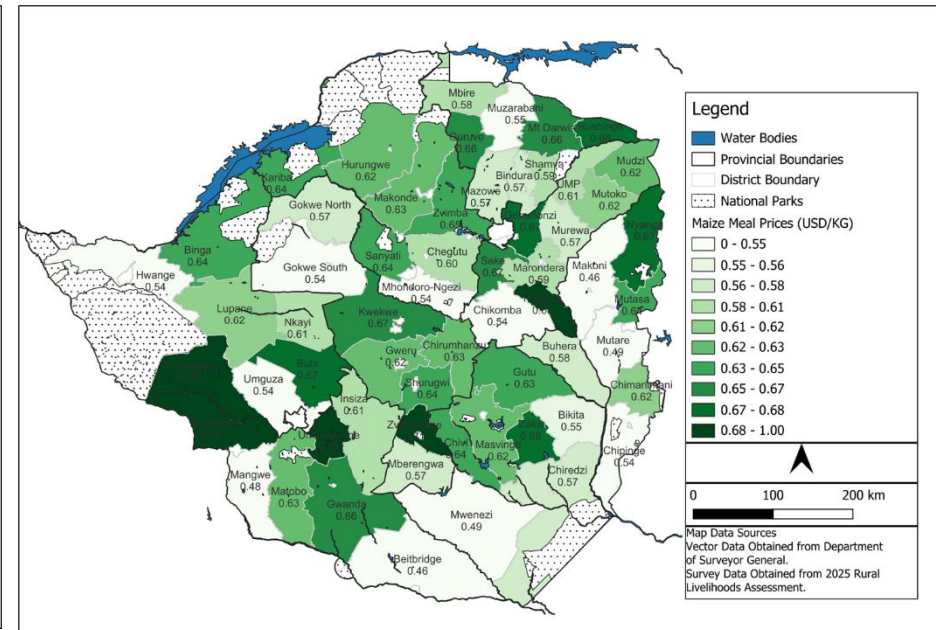
- There was an increase in the amount of cereals harvested by households across all districts. This may be attributed to a favourable rainfall season.
- On average, households harvested 119kgs of maize and 29kgs of sorghum.
- Umzingwane (261kgs) had the highest average harvest for maize.

Maize Grain and Maize Meal Prices

Maize Grain



Maize Meal



- Maize grain prices ranged from US\$ 0.37 to US\$ 0.57 per kg.
- Beitbridge had the highest price US\$ 0.57 per kg while Insiza had the lowest price at US\$0.37 per kg.
- Maize meal prices ranged from US\$ 0.46 to US\$ 0.78 per kg.

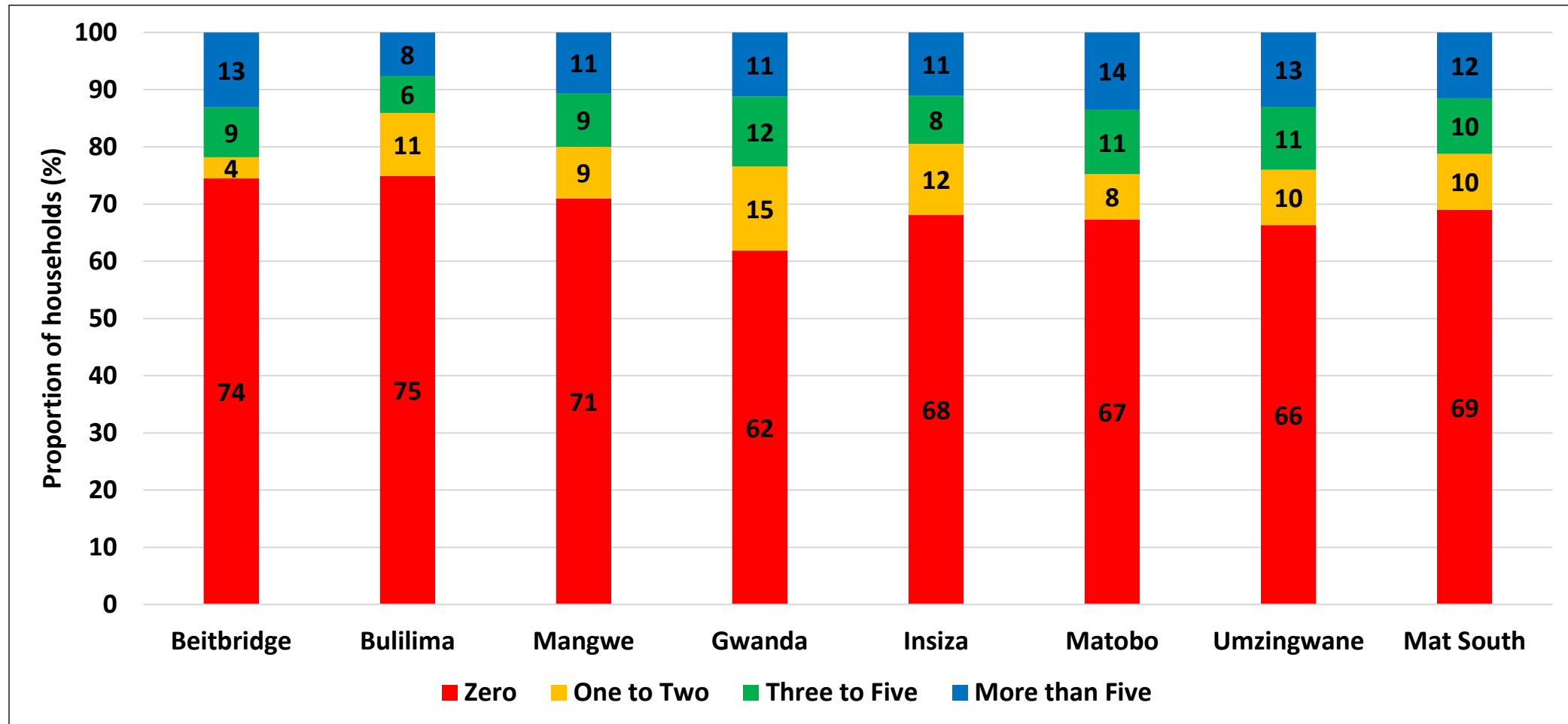
Livestock Production

Households which Owned Livestock

Province	Cattle (%)	Donkey (%)	Sheep (%)	Goats (%)	Pigs (%)	Poultry (%)	Rabbits (%)
Beitbridge	26	29	2	58	0	48	0
Bulilima	25	18	1	33	0	23	0
Mangwe	29	23	6	58	0	67	0
Gwanda	38	44	4	71	0	59	0
Insiza	32	13	0	34	0	49	0
Matobo	33	27	4	48	0	49	0
Umzingwane	34	6	0	29	0	45	0
Mat South	31	23	3	48	0	49	0

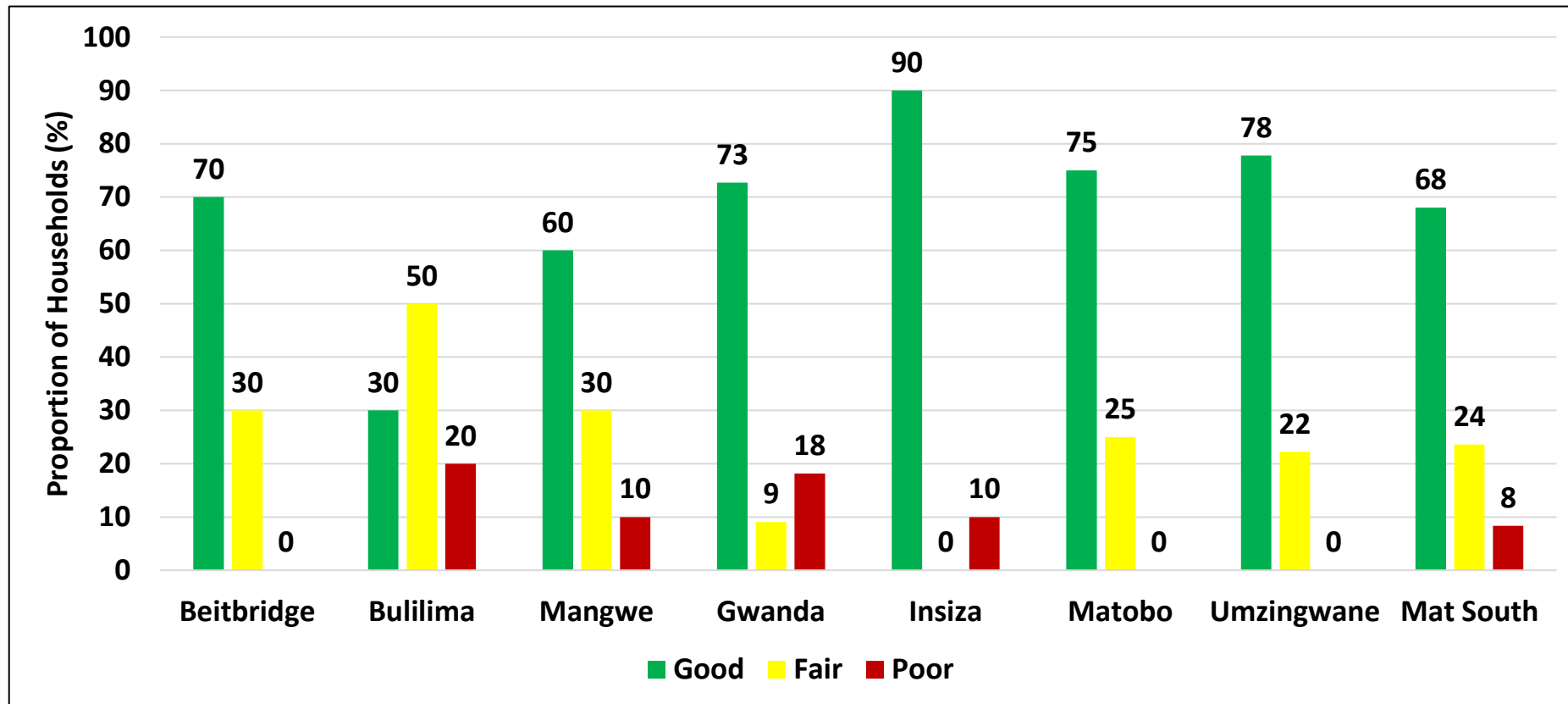
- About 31% of the households owned cattle in the Province.
- Gwanda had the highest proportion of households which owned cattle (38%), donkeys (44%) and goats (71%).
- Mangwe had the highest proportion of households which owned poultry at 67%.

Cattle Ownership



- About 69% of the households did not own any cattle.
- The proportion of households which owned more than 5 cattle was 12%.

Livestock Condition

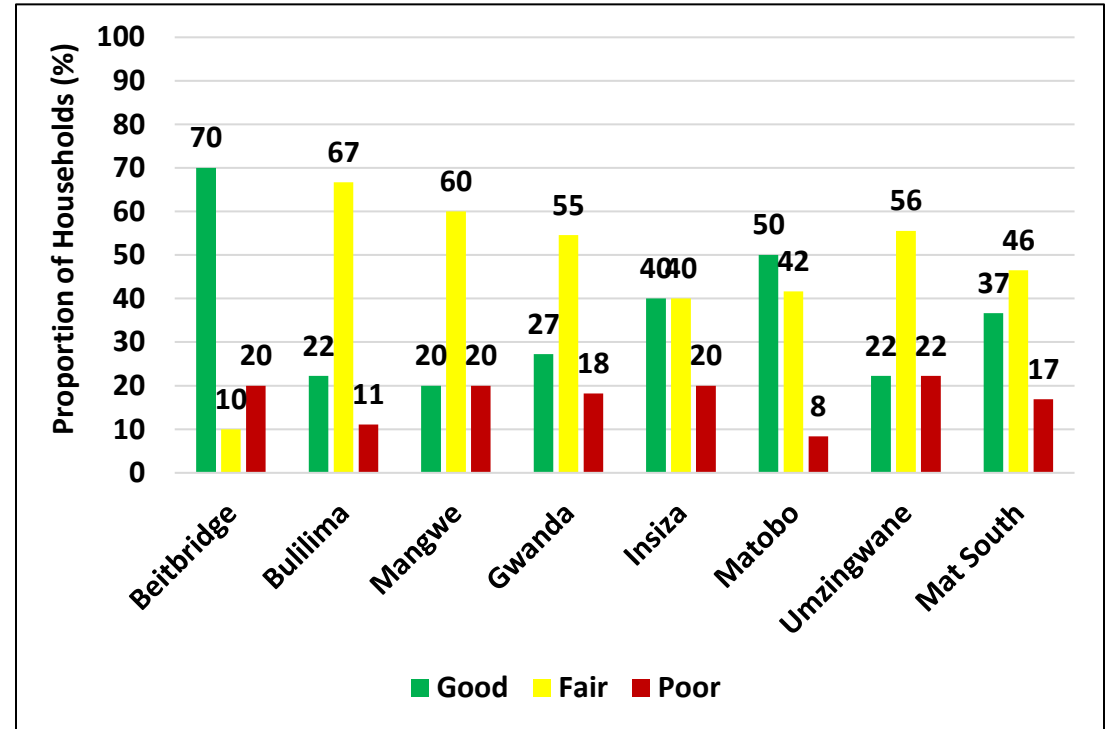
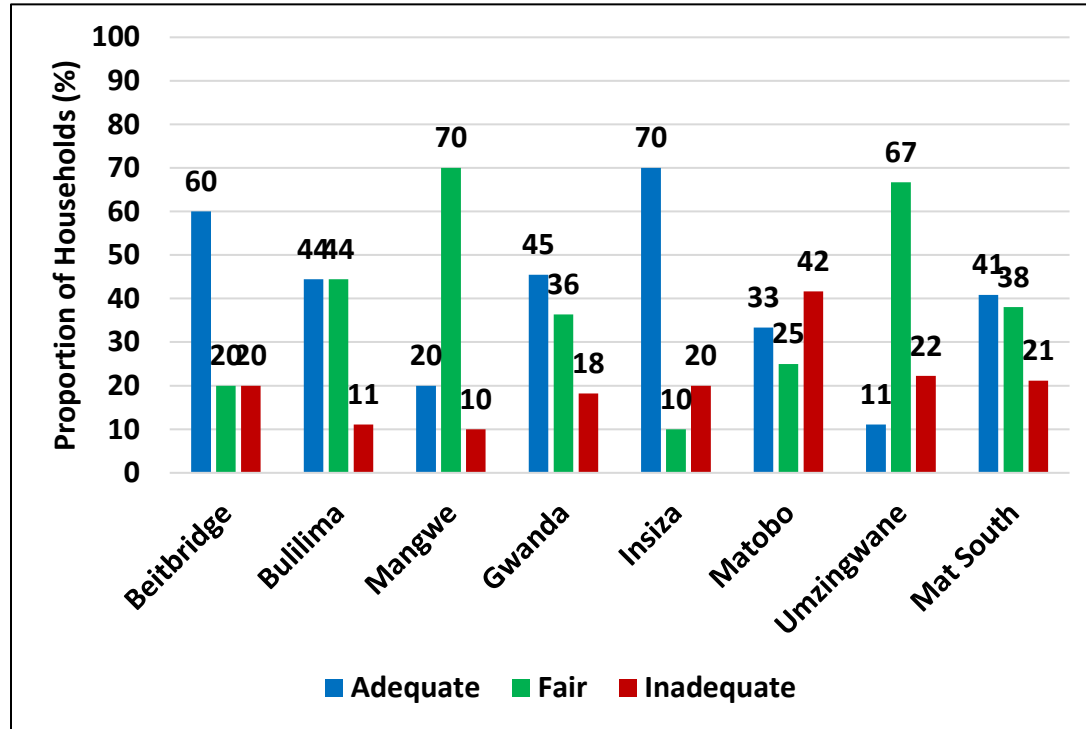


- About 8% of the communities indicated that their livestock were in poor condition.

Pasture Availability and Quality

Availability

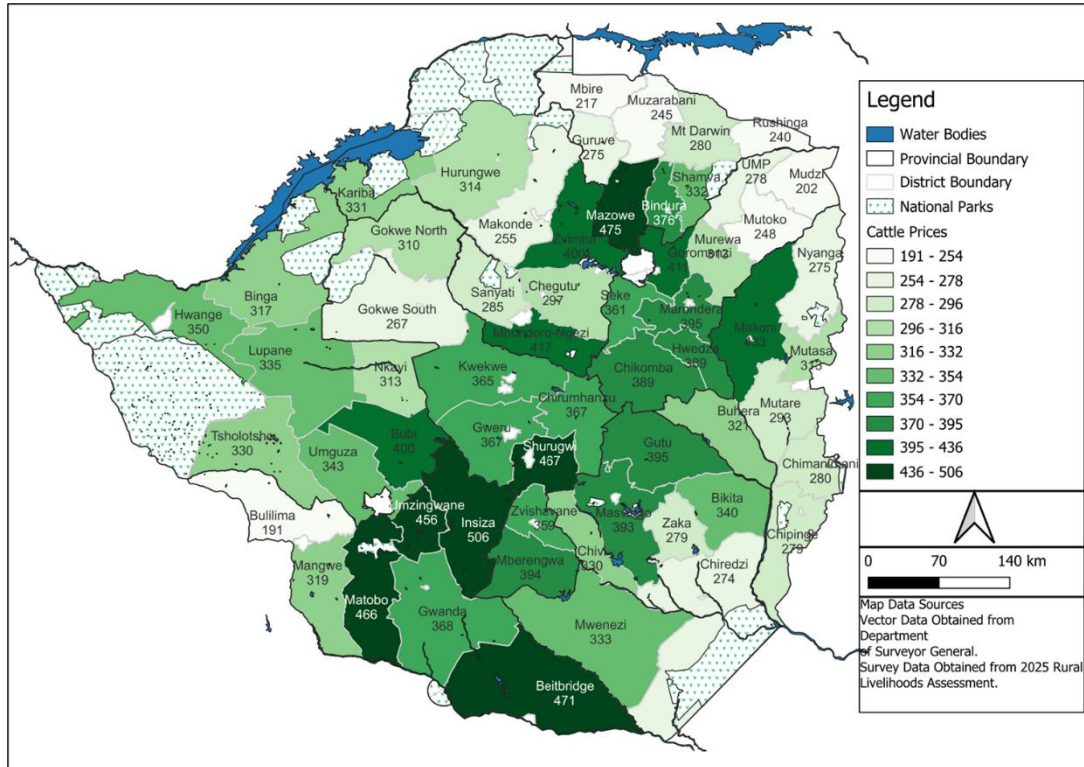
Quality



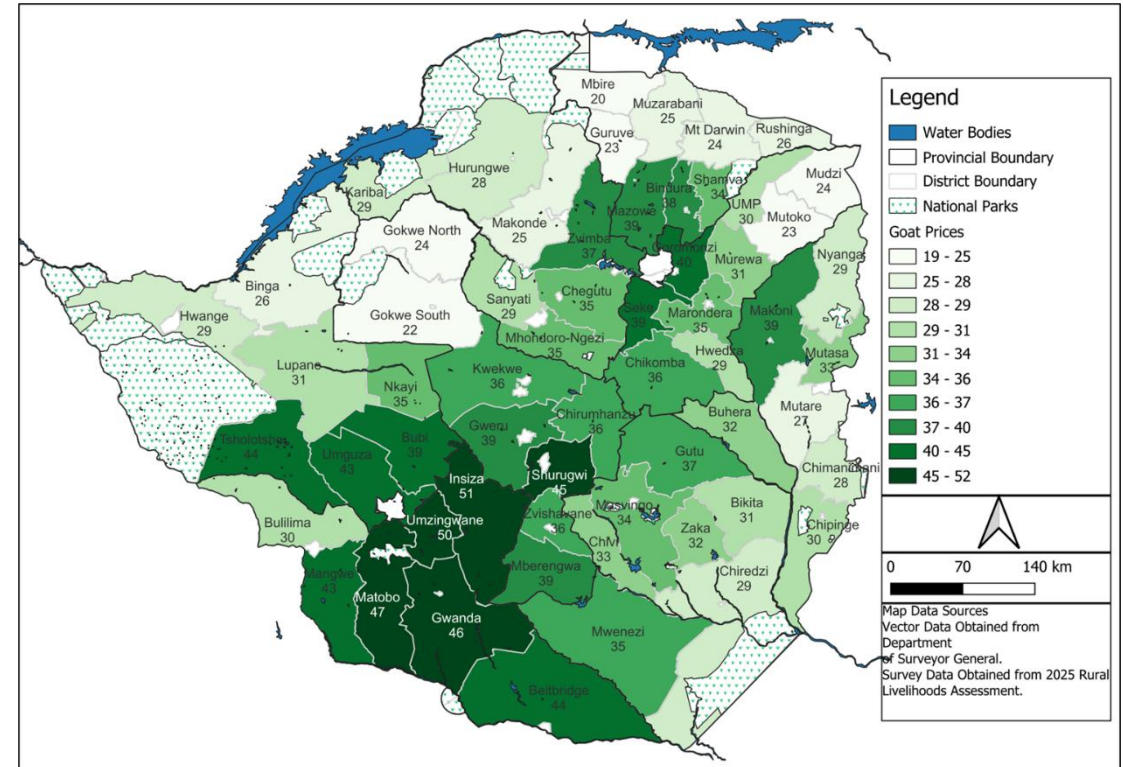
- Most communities indicated that pasture availability (41%) was adequate and pasture quality (37%) was good at the time of the assessment.

Livestock Prices

Cattle Prices



Goat Prices



- Cattle prices ranged from USD 191 to USD 506. Insiza had the highest price of USD 506.
- Goat prices ranged from USD 30 to USD 51. Insiza had the highest price of USD 51.

Access to Information and Critical Services

Access to Agricultural Extension

District	Training-cropping advice (%)	Training - Livestock services (%)	Training-Weather and climate advice (%)	Extension Visit (%)	Other training (%)
Beitbridge	24.9	16.7	9.0	8.6	0.9
Bulilima	56.0	69.8	69.0	25.0	16.4
Mangwe	45.1	33.6	24.1	24.5	0.8
Gwanda	67.9	17.2	31.4	29.2	0.7
Insiza	24.1	22.2	9.4	20.2	2.5
Matobo	41.4	34.0	28.8	40.5	0
Umzingwane	42.2	34.4	17.2	33.3	6.1
Mat South	43.4	29.4	24.6	25.9	2.8

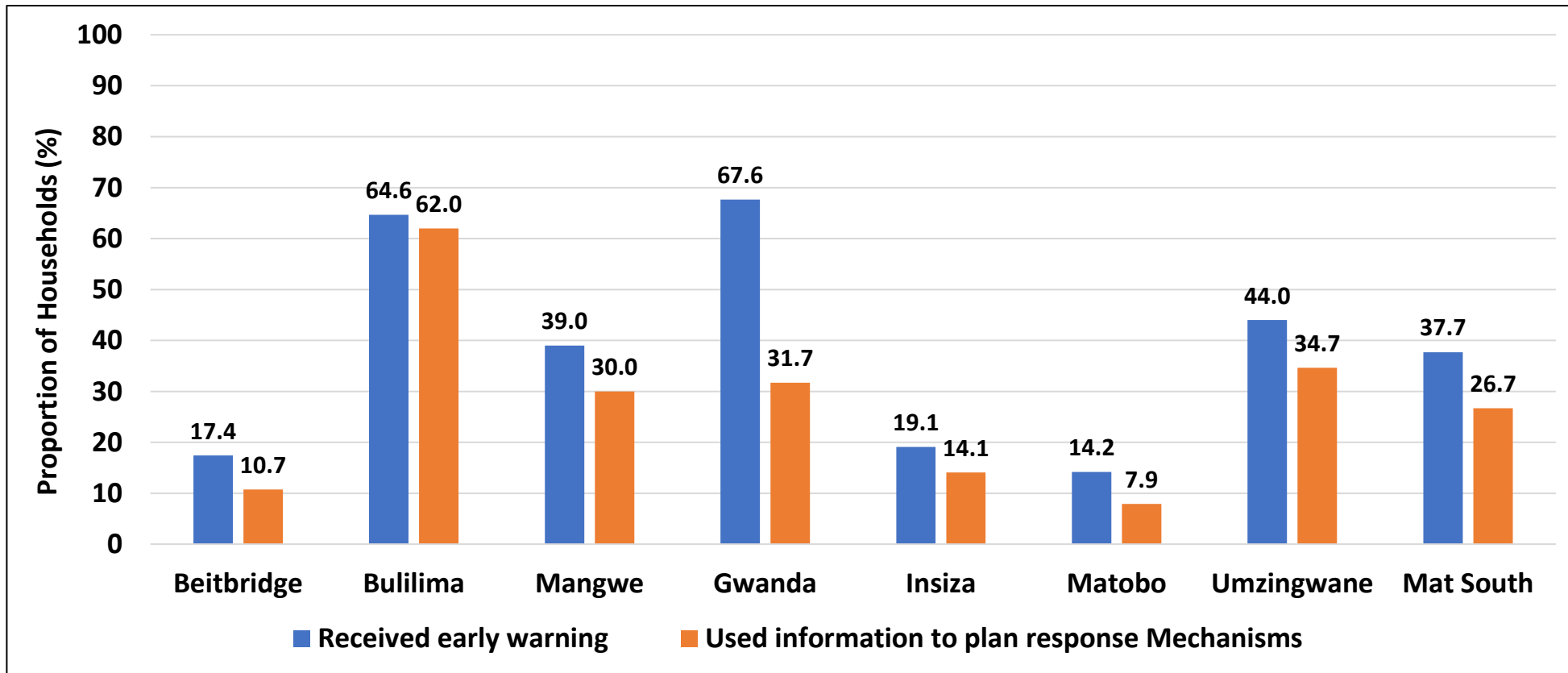
- About 43.4% of the households had received cropping advice during the 2024/2025 agricultural season.

Community Access to Information on Infectious and Contagious Diseases

District	Rabies (%)	Anthrax (%)	Cholera (%)	Typhoid (%)	Dysentery (%)	Salmonella (%)	Listeria (%)	Other (%)
Beitbridge	80	90	20	0	10	10	10	10
Bulilima	20	10	20	0	0	0	10	20
Mangwe	70	80	70	50	50	50	50	10
Gwanda	36.4	36.4	54.5	27.3	18.2	18.2	18.2	18.2
Insiza	50	20	30	10	0	0	0	90
Matobo	75.0	58.3	83.3	41.7	25.0	0	0	16.7
Umzingwane	88.9	22.2	11.1	0	0	0	0	11.1
Mat South	59.7	45.8	43.1	19.4	15.3	11.1	12.5	25.0

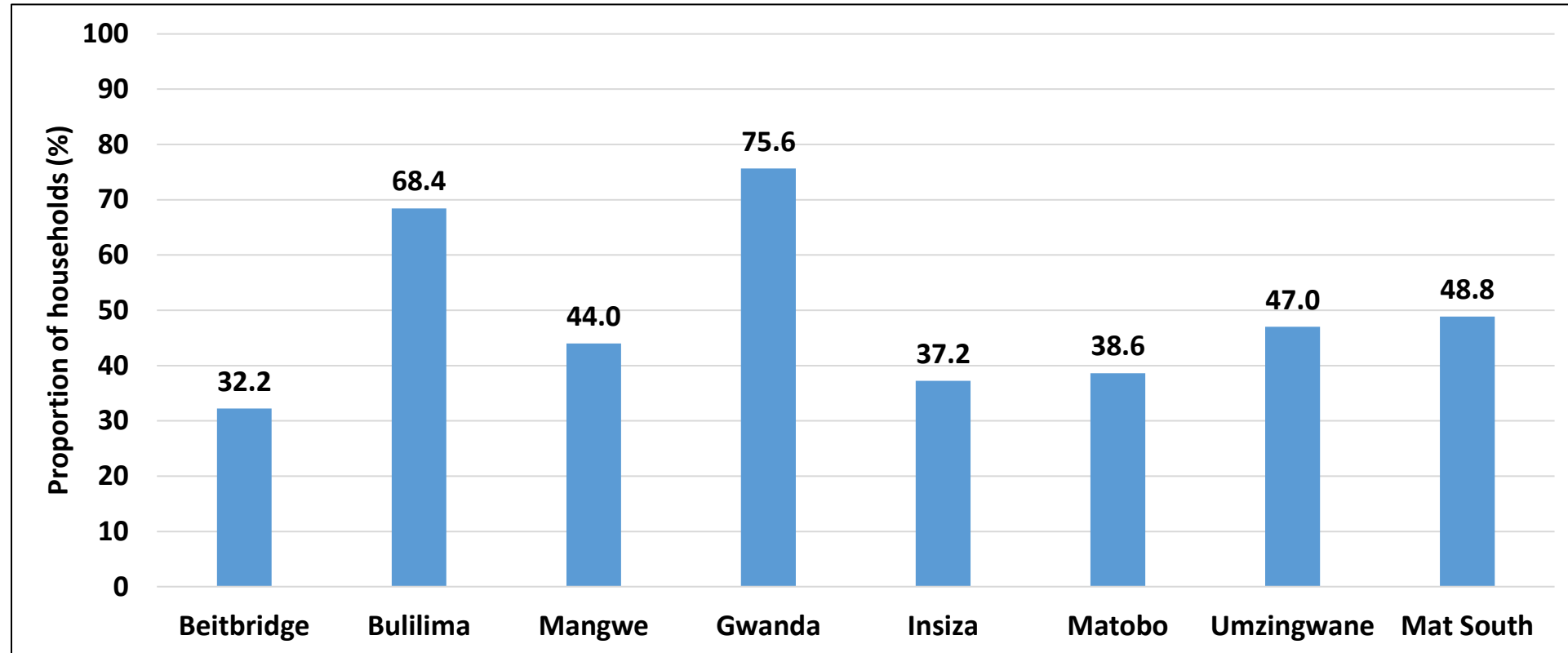
- About 59.7% of the communities had accessed information on rabies.
- Information on Salmonella (11.1%) was the least accessed by communities.

Access to and Use of Early Warning Information



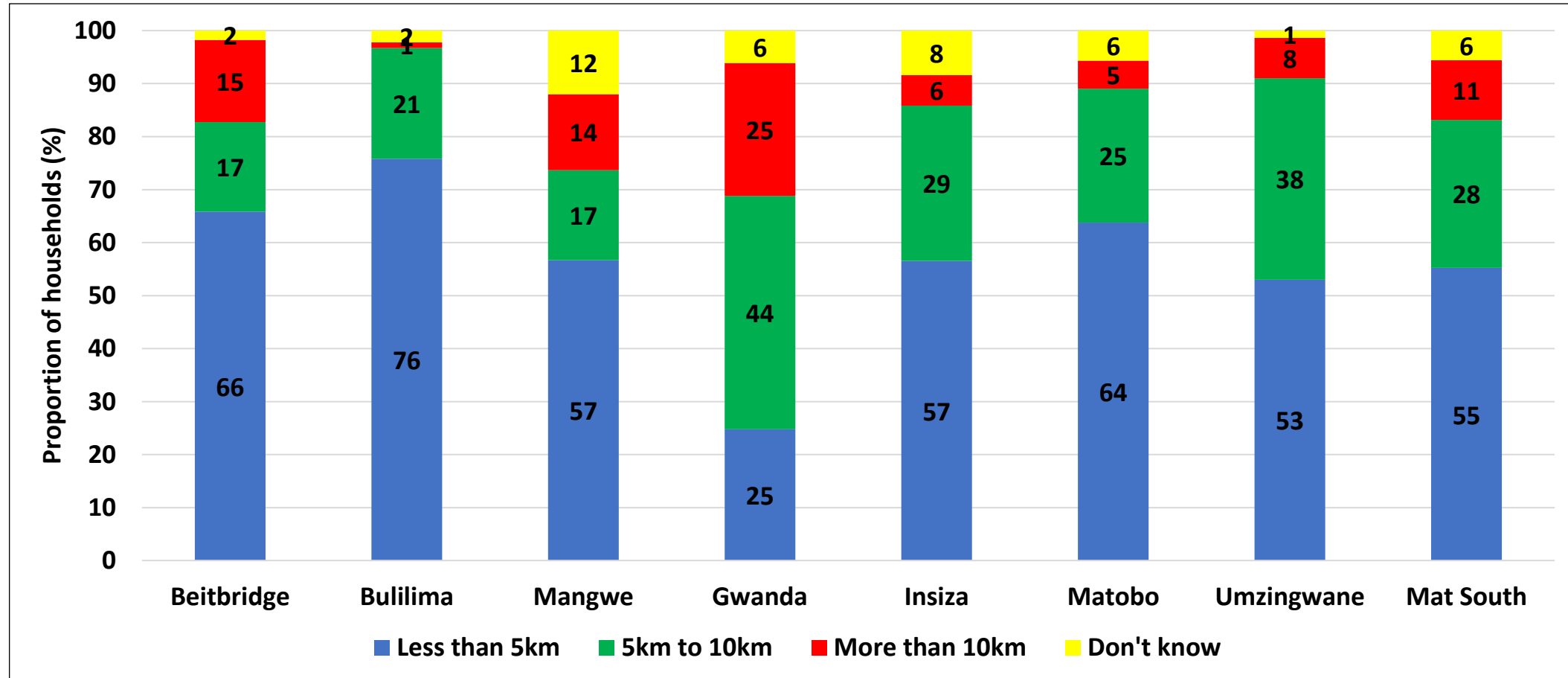
- About 37.7% of the households reported having received early warning information.
- Only 26.7% of these had used the information to plan response mechanisms.

Households that Received Information on Health and Nutrition



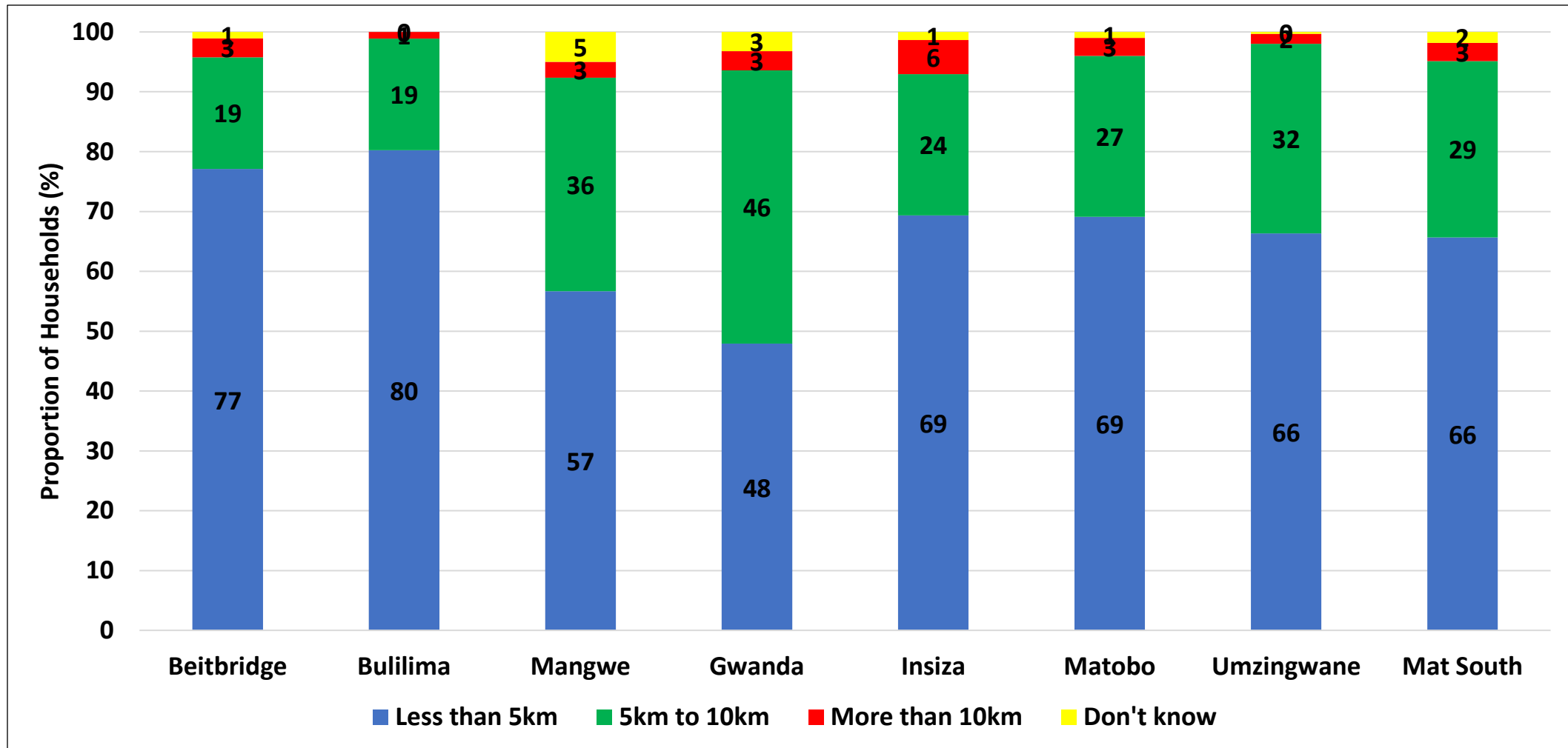
- Access to nutrition and health information empowers communities and influences consumer behavioural changes.
- About 48.8% of households reported having received information about health and nutrition.

Distance to the Nearest Health facility/Clinic



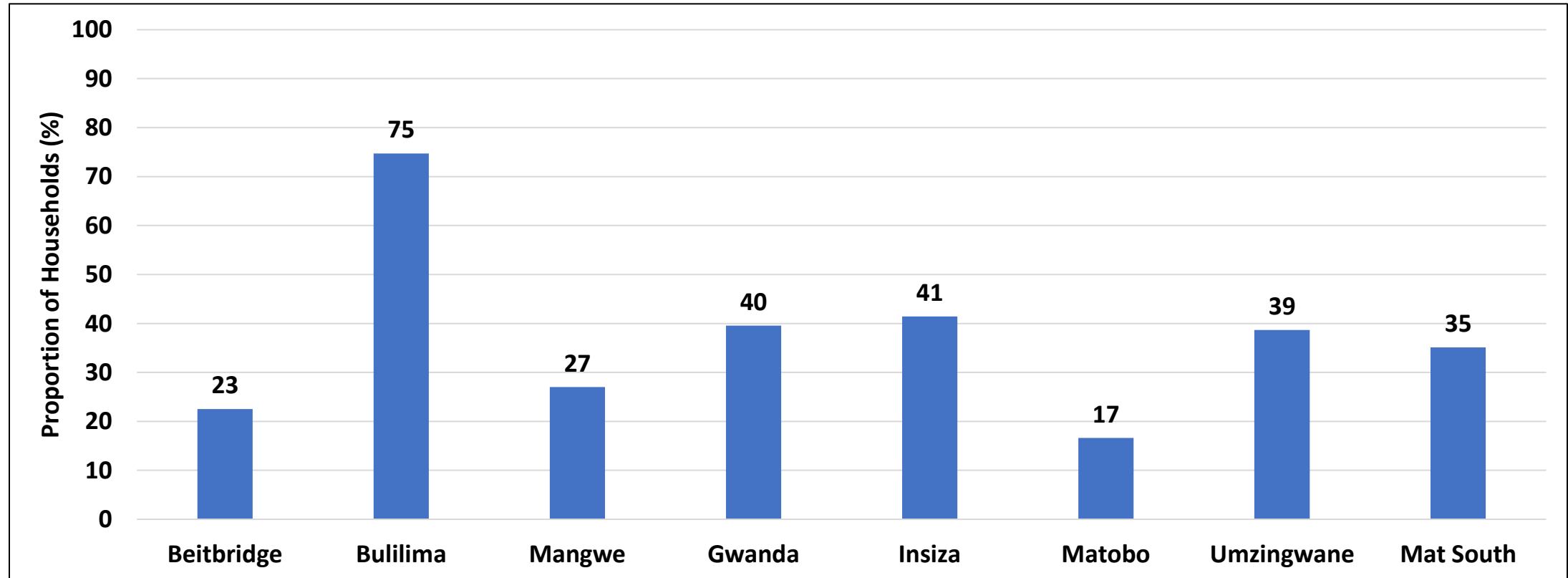
- About 55% of households in the province reported that the approximate distance to the nearest health facility/clinic was less than 5km.
- The proportion of households which reported that the approximate distance was more than 10km was 11%.

Distance to the Nearest Primary School



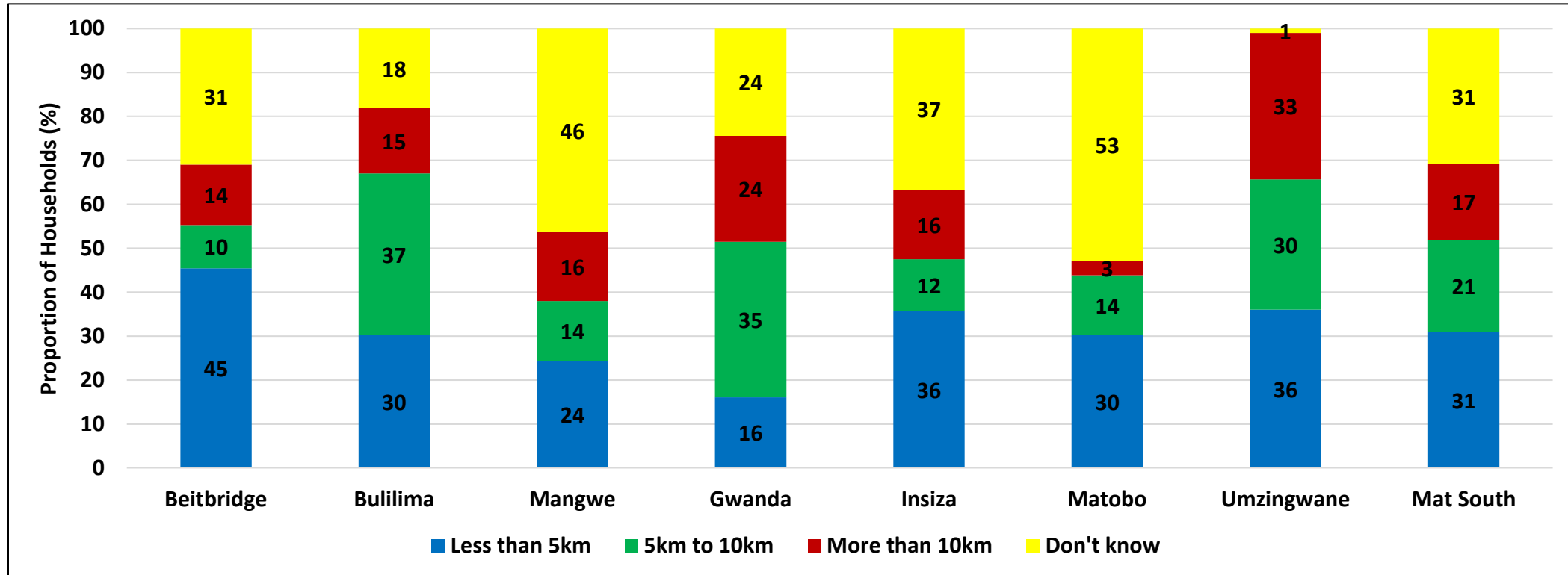
- About 66% of households reported that the approximate distance of the nearest primary school was less than 5km.
- The proportion of households which reported that the approximate distance was more than 10km was 3%.

Access to Information on Services for Victims of Physical and Sexual Abuse



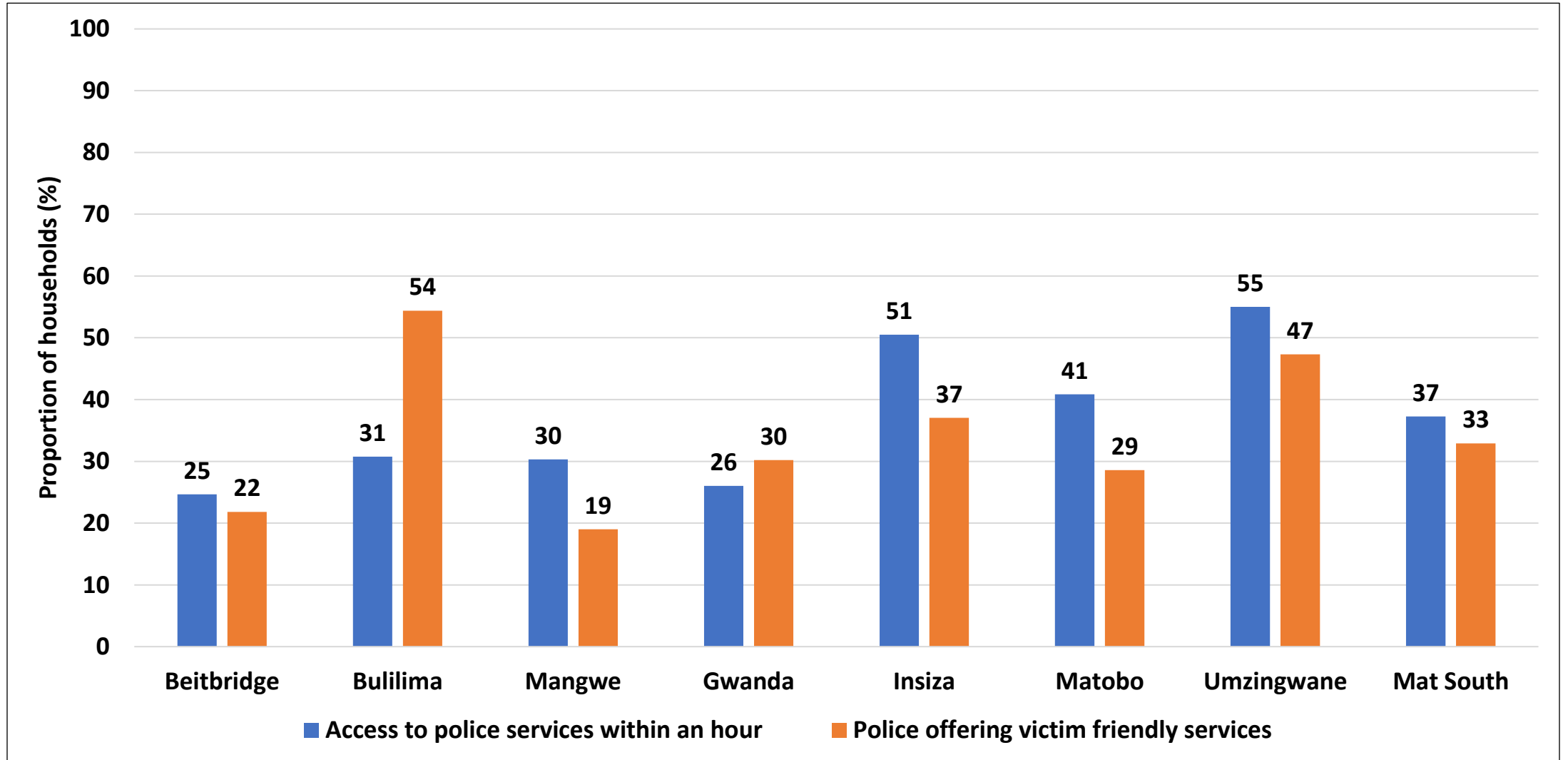
- About 35% of the households had access to information on services available for victims of physical and sexual abuse.

Distance to Facilities Providing Services for Physical and Sexual Abuse



- About 31% of the households could access a facility providing services for victims of physical and sexual violence within a 5km radius.

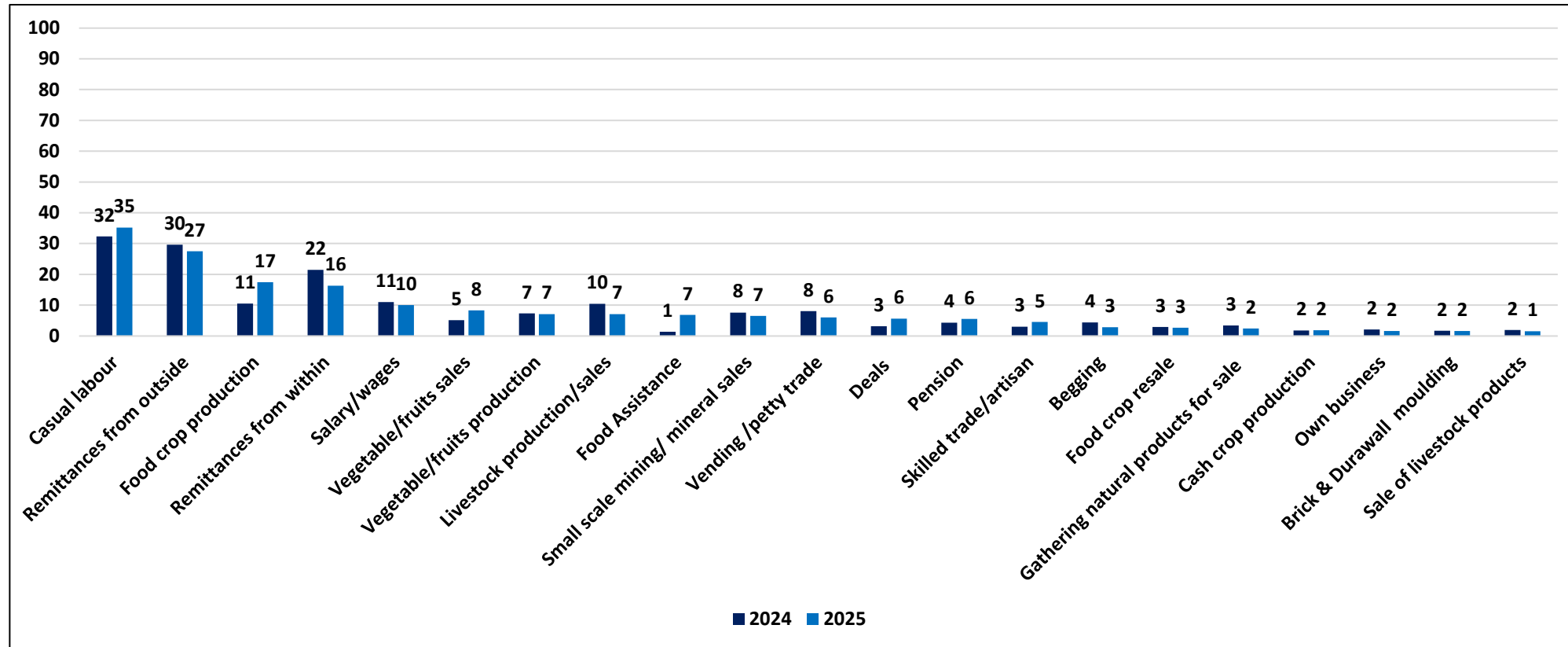
Access to Police Services



- Approximately 37% of households in Matabeleland South reported that they had police service reachable within 1 hour.
- About 33% of the police offer victim friendly services.

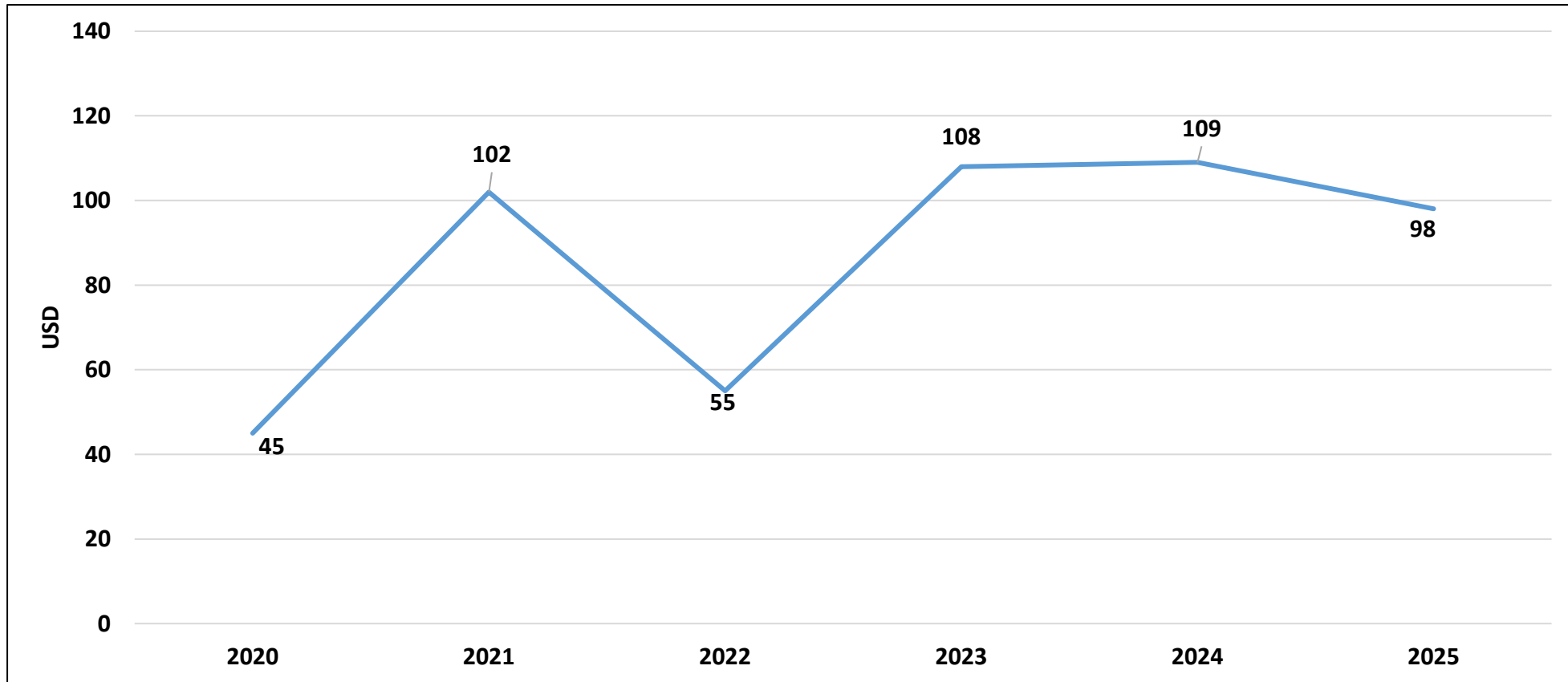
Income and Expenditure

Most Important Income Sources



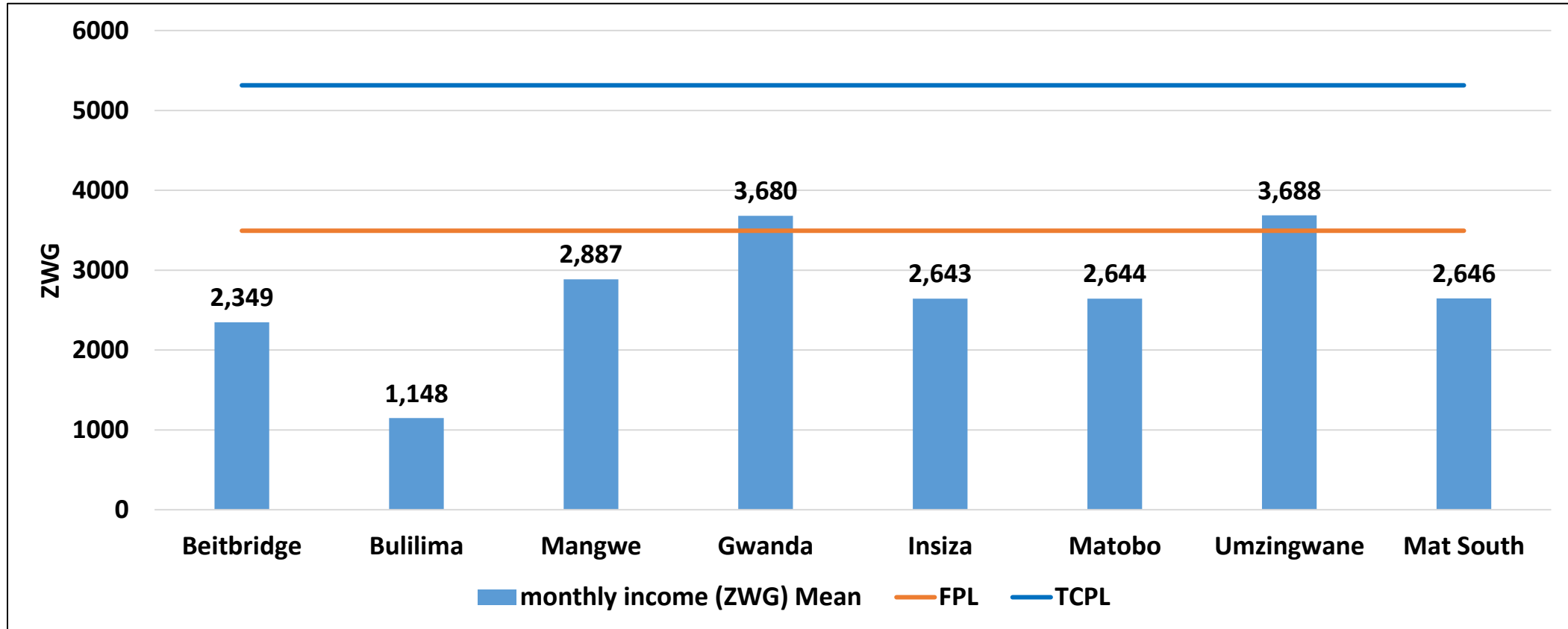
- Income is a proxy for economic status, living standards and wellbeing.
- Most households relied on casual labour (35%), remittances from outside Zimbabwe (27%) and food crop production (17%) in 2025.

Income Trends (USD): 2020-2025



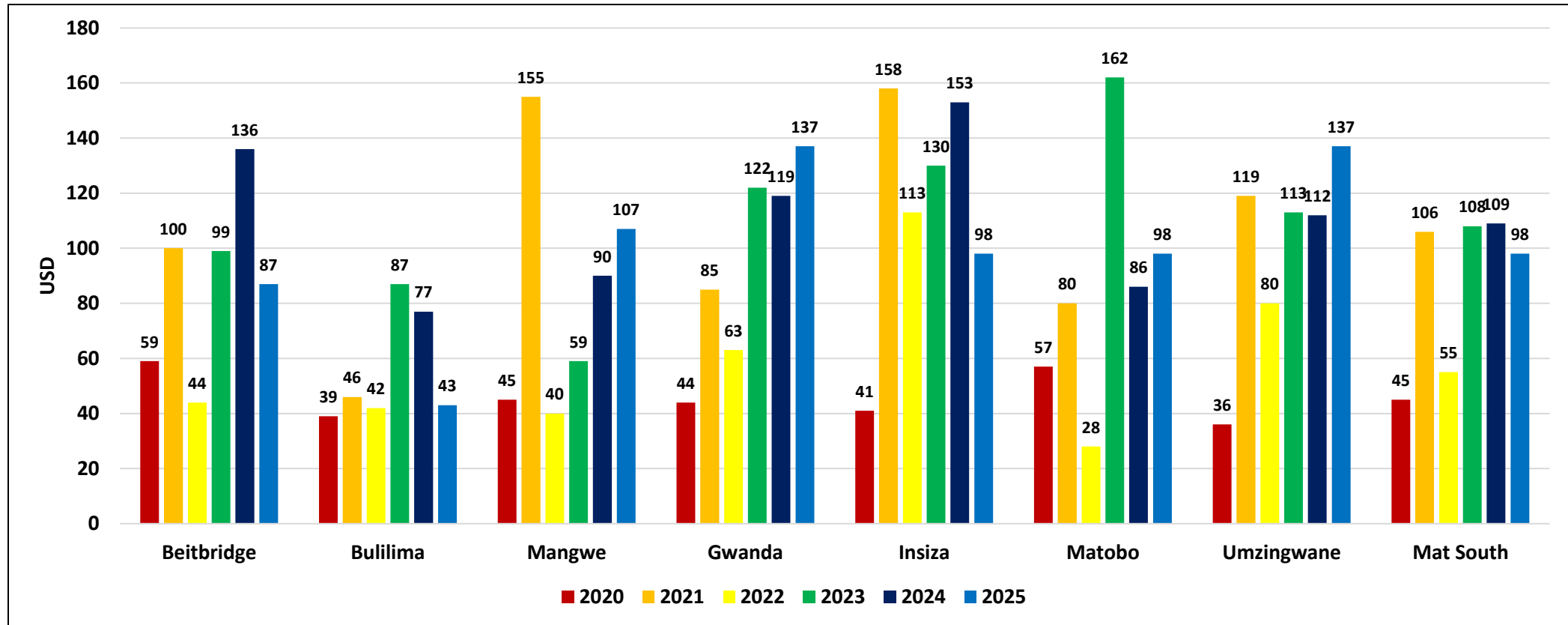
- Compared to base year 2020, rural incomes have been increasing.
- There was 117.8% increase in households' purchasing power as evidenced by incomes increasing from USD 45 in 2020 to USD 98 in 2025.
- This is expected to contribute to a higher material quality of life and standard of living for households.

Average Household Monthly Income (ZWG) For April 2025



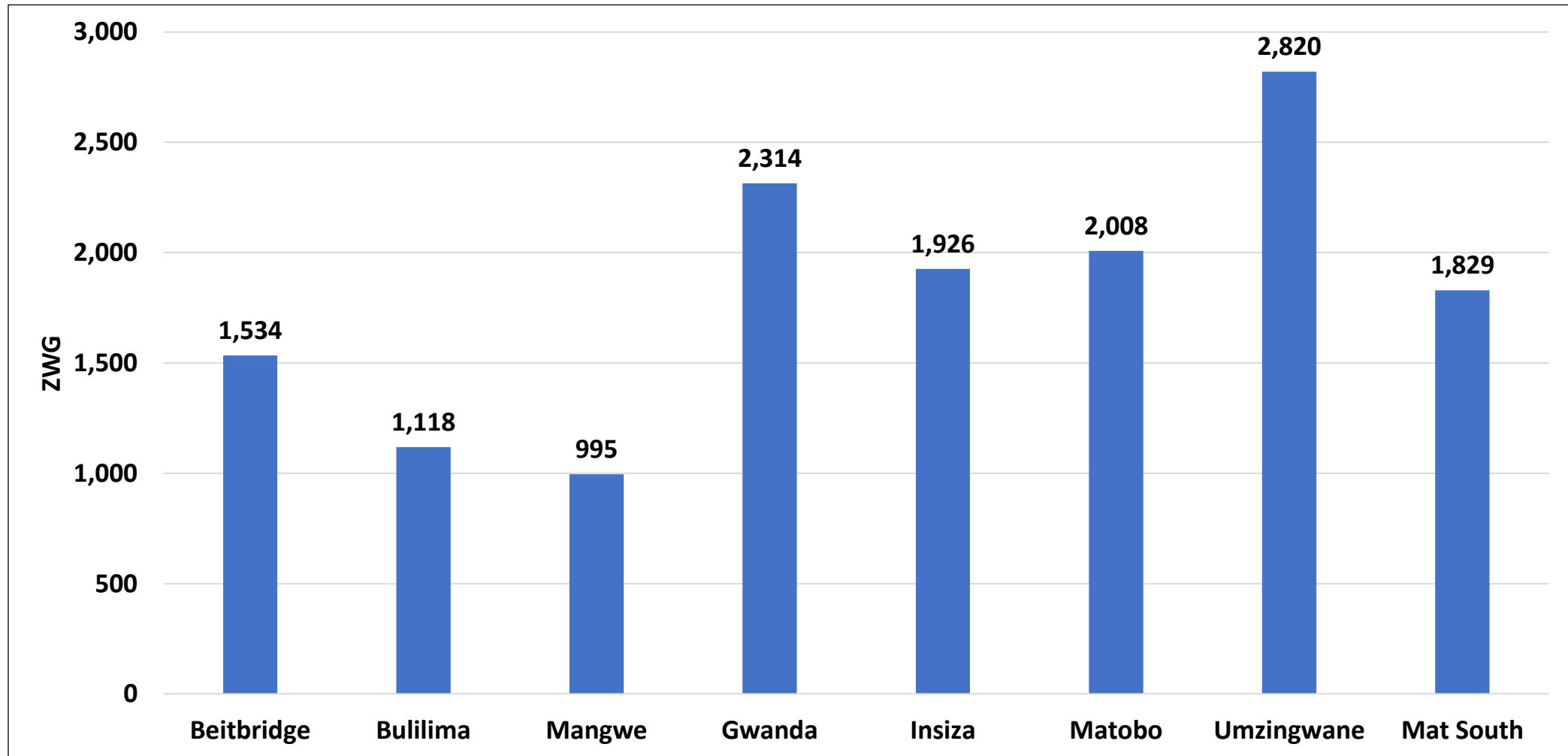
- The average monthly income for Matabeleland South was ZWG 2646. This was below the Food Poverty Line.
- Umzingwane (ZWG 3688) had the highest monthly income.

Average Household Monthly Income (USD) For April 2025



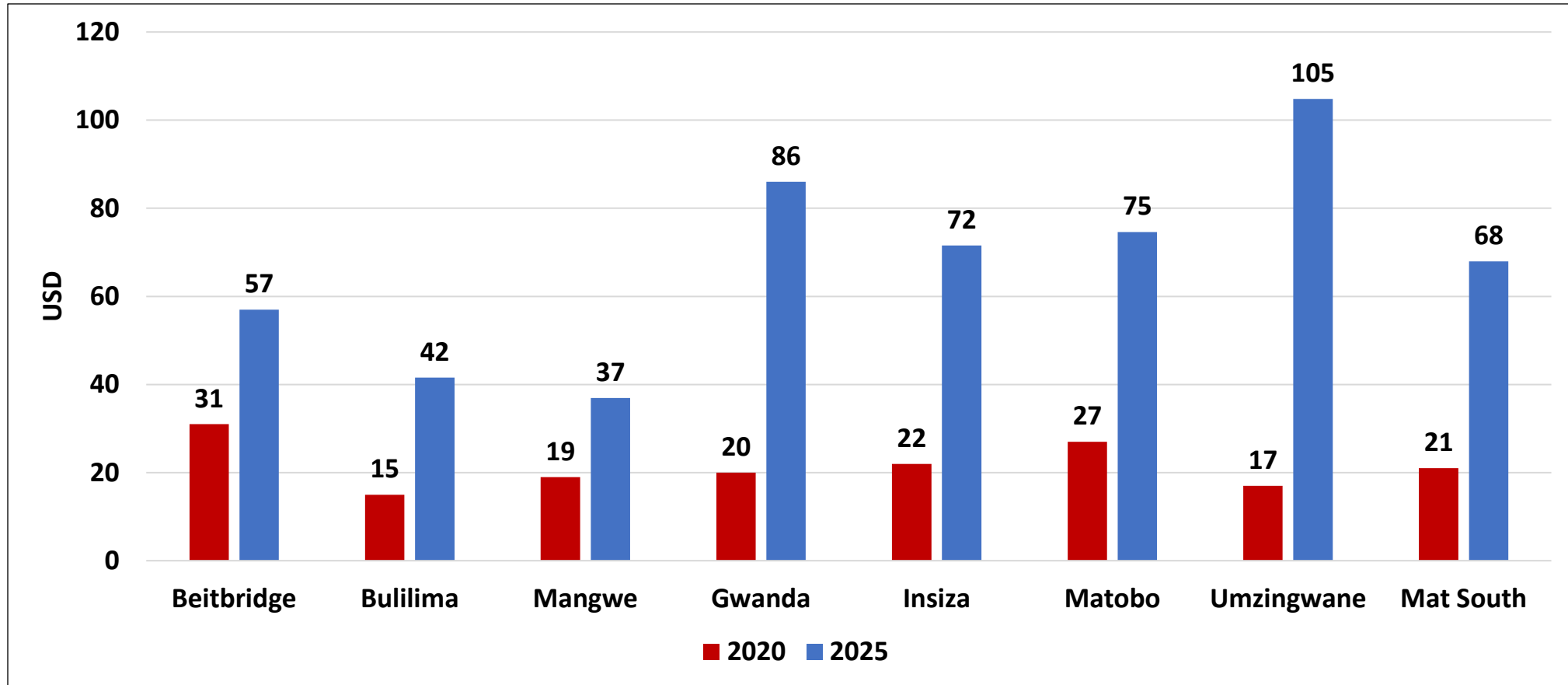
- The average household monthly income increased from USD 45 in April 2020 to USD 98 in April 2025.
- Gwanda and Umzingwane had the highest average household monthly income (USD 137) for April 2025.

Average Household Monthly Expenditure (ZWG) for April 2025



- Umzingwane (ZWG 2820) had the highest monthly expenditure.

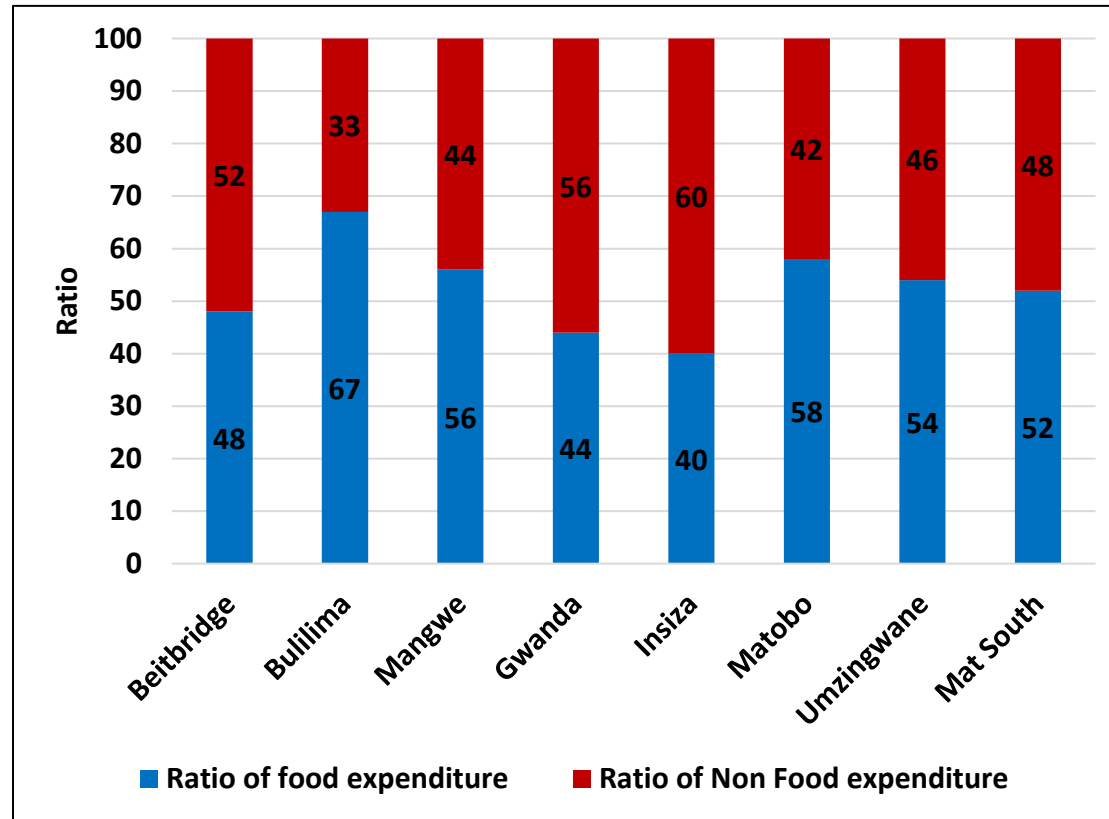
Average Household Monthly Expenditure (USD) for April 2025



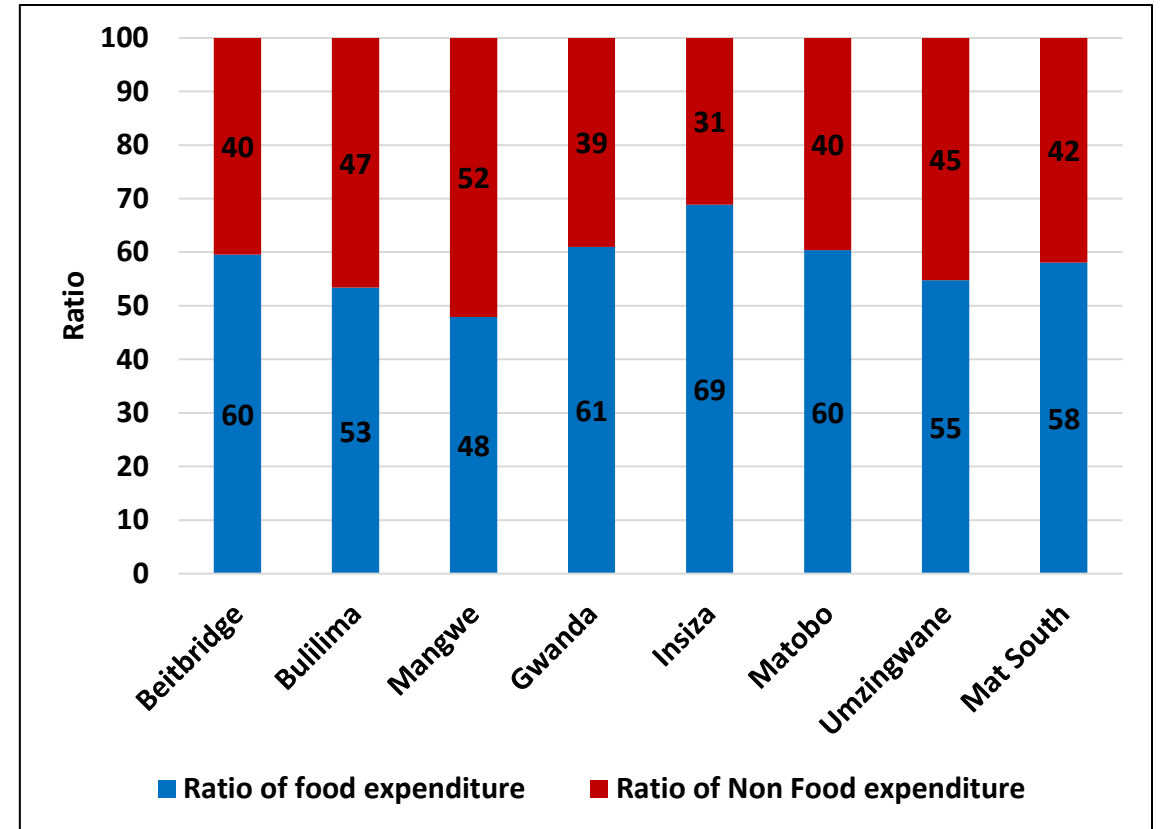
- The average household monthly expenditure for the month of April 2025 was USD68, an increase from USD 21 in 2020.
- Mangwe (USD 37) reported the lowest expenditure.

Food and Non-food Expenditure Ratio

2024



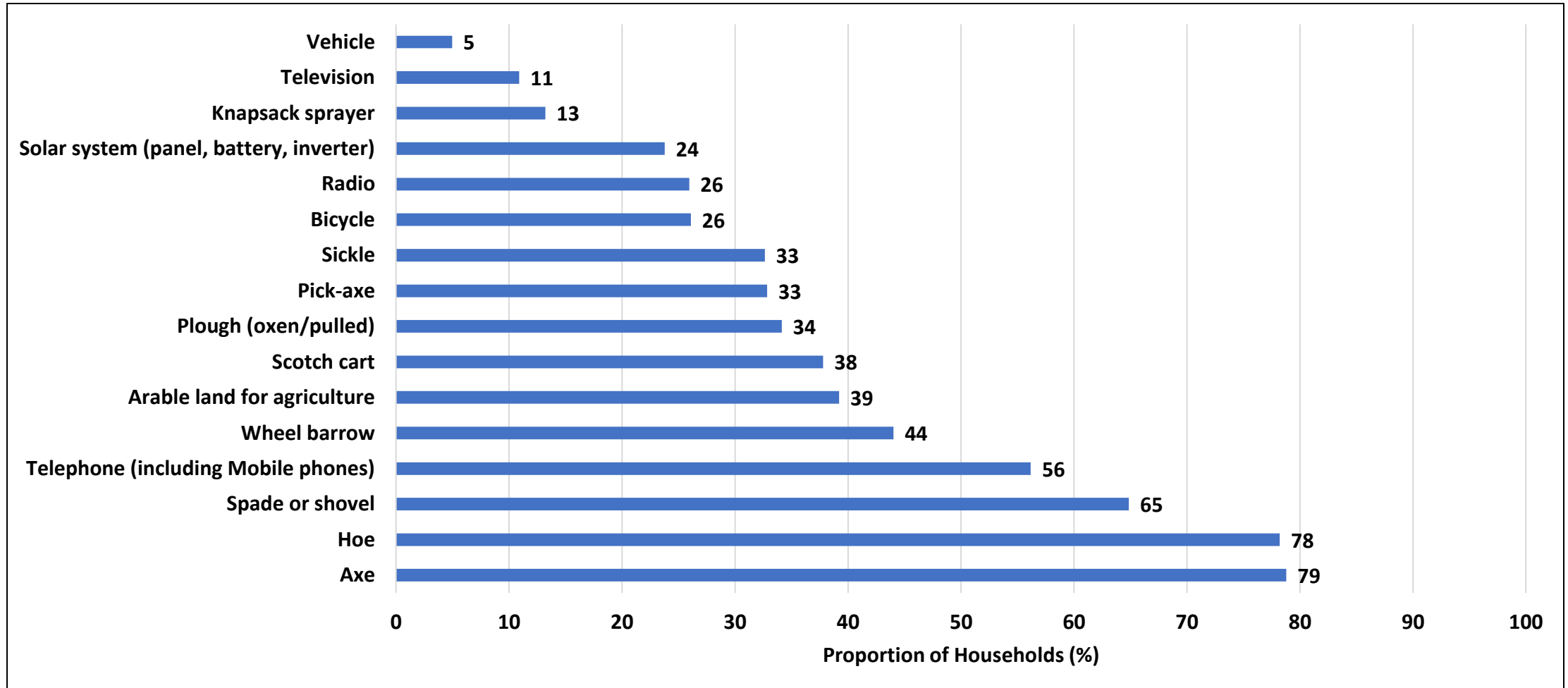
2025



- The food expenditure was 58%.

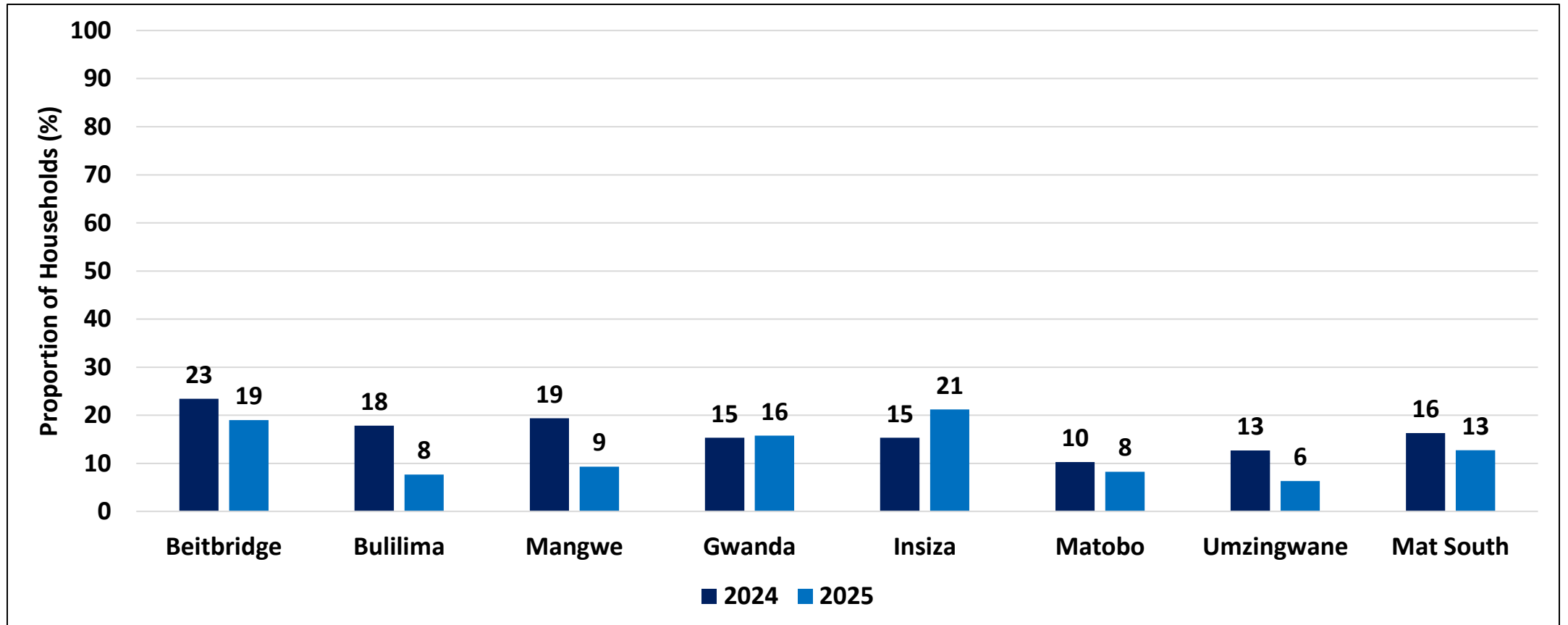
Assets, Loans and Remittances

Assets



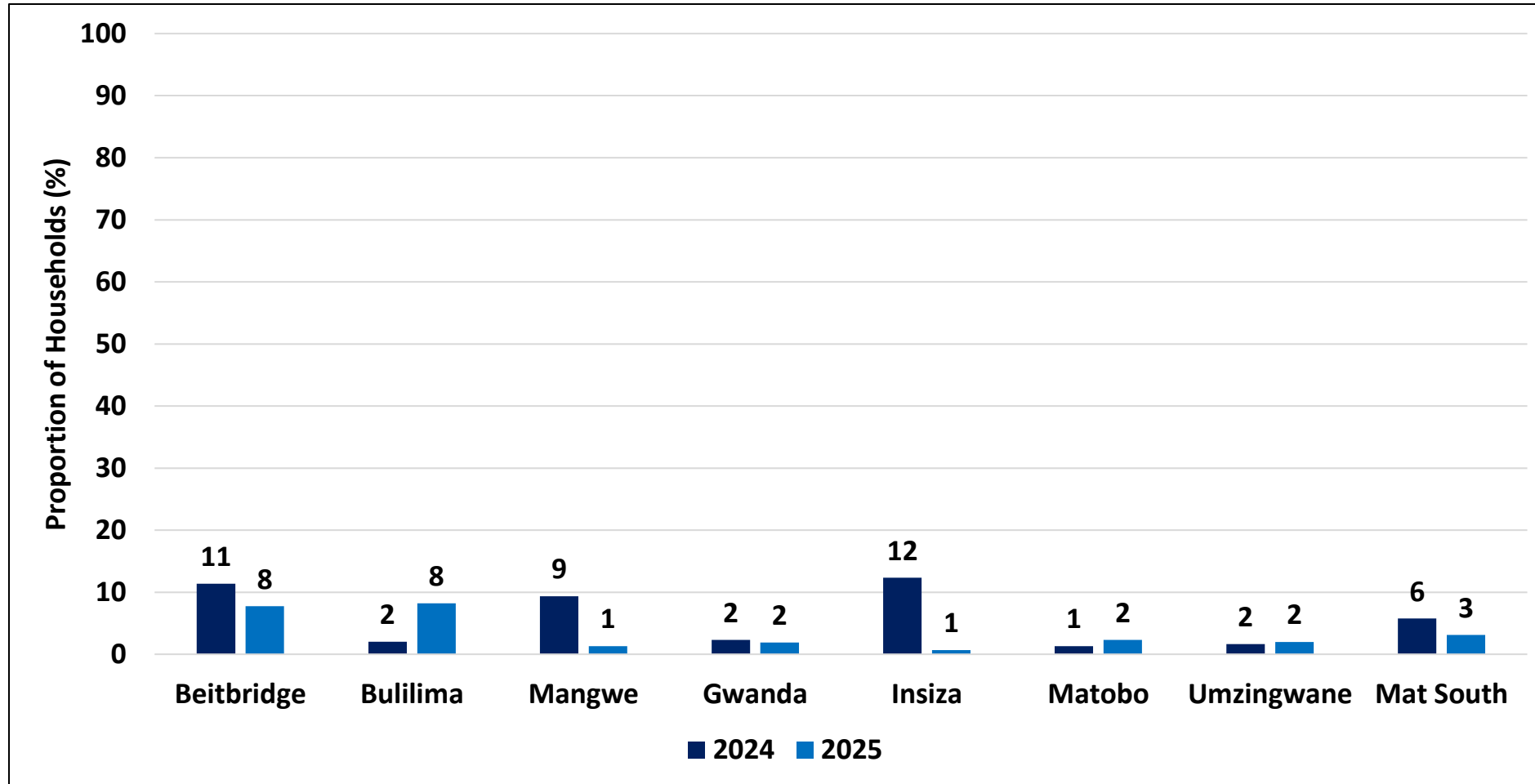
- The most commonly owned assets by households were axes (79%), hoes (78%) and spades (65%).

Households Participating in ISALS/Mukando/Ukuqogelela



- There was a decline in the proportion of households that participated in savings and lending groups from (16%) 2024 to (13%) 2025.
- About 13% of households participated in savings and lending groups.
- Insiza (21%) and Beitbridge (19%) had the highest proportion of households which participated in savings and lending groups.

Households that Accessed Loans



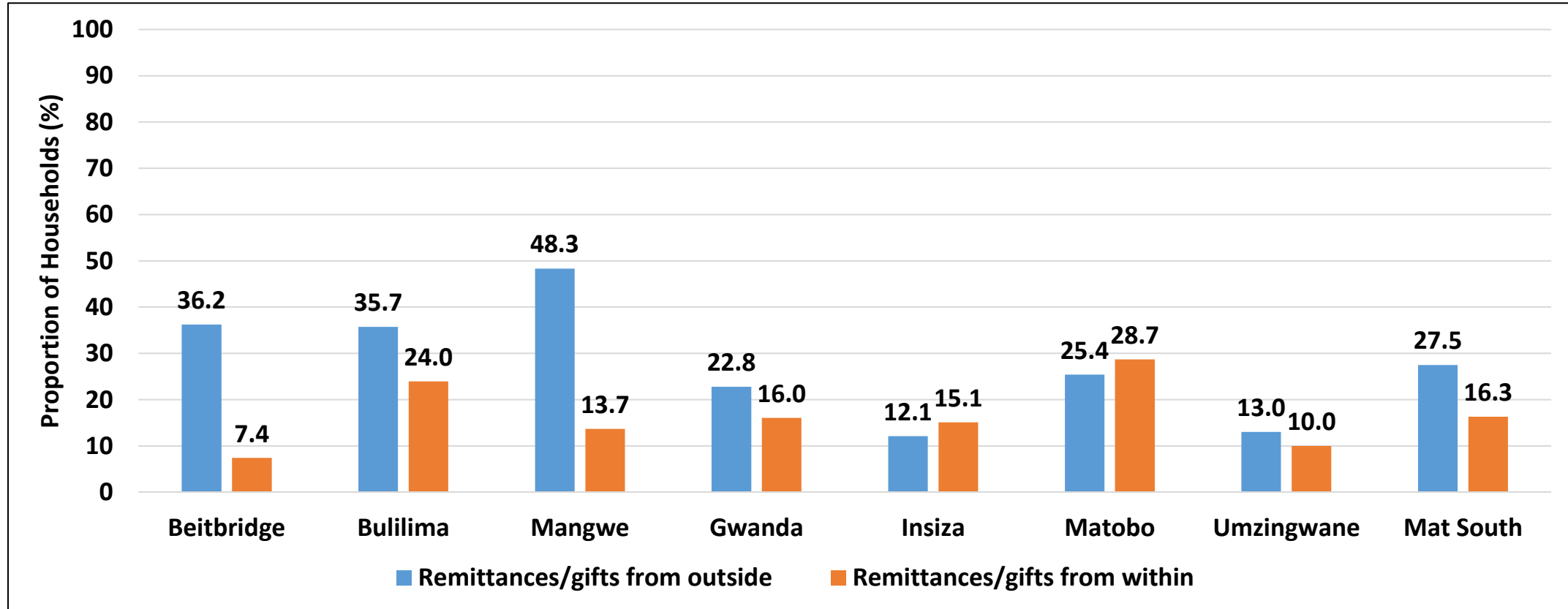
- About 3% of households had received loans.
- Beitbridge (8%) and Bulilima (8%) had the highest proportion of households which received loans.

Sources of Loans

District	ISAL/Mukando/Ukuqoqelela (%)	Friend/relative (%)	Money lender (%)	Banks (%)	Micro finance institutions (%)	Other Financial Services (%)	Farmer's organization (%)	Local trader/shopkeeper (%)
Beitbridge	5.4	0	1.0	0.7	0.7	1.3	0	0.7
Bulilima	4.9	0.4	0.4	0.4	0	0	0.4	0
Mangwe	0.7	0	0.3	0	0	0	0.3	0
Gwanda	1.9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Insiza	0.3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Matobo	2.0	0	0	0	0	0.3	0	0
Umzingwane	0.3	0	0.7	0.3	0.7	0	0	0
Mat South	2.2	0	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.1

- ISAL/Mukando/Ukugoqelela (2.2%) was the main source of loans followed by money lenders (0.3%).

Households which Received Remittances/Gifts



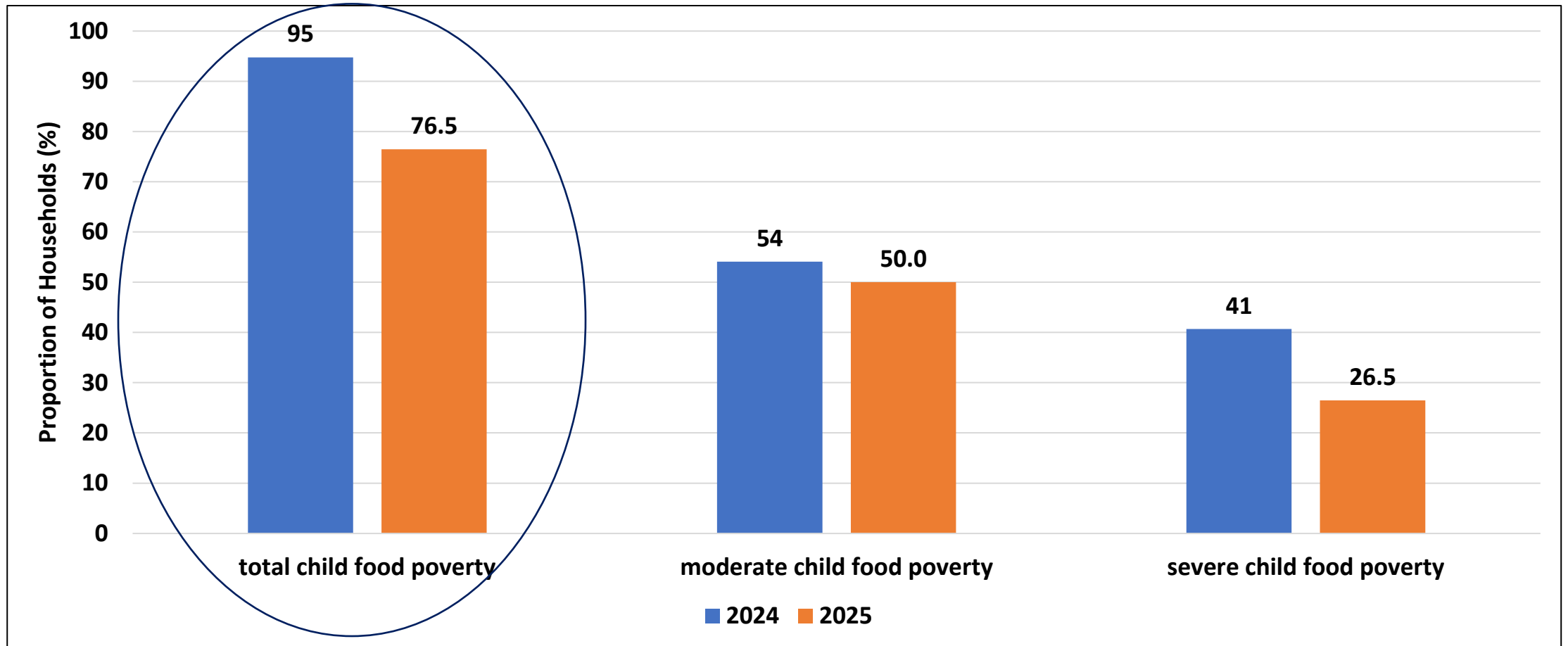
- Remittances/gifts received were mainly from outside the country (27.5%).
- Mangwe (48.3%) had the highest proportion of households that received remittances/gifts from outside the country
- Matobo (28.7%) had the highest proportion of households that received remittances from within the country.

Child Food Poverty

Child Food Poverty

- **Children living in food poverty** is defined as the proportion of children under five years of age consuming foods and beverages from four or fewer of the eight defined food groups.
- **Severe child food poverty** refers to the proportion of children under 5 consuming foods and beverages from zero, one or two out of eight defined food groups during the previous day.
- **Moderate child food poverty** refers to the proportion of children under five 5 consuming foods and beverages from three or four out of eight defined food groups during the previous day.

Child Food Poverty



- There has been an improvement in the proportion of children who did not meet a minimum dietary diversity from 95% in 2024 to 76.5% in 2025.
- Attention needs to be given to the 26.5% of children who were in severe food poverty

Child Health

Vitamin A Supplementation

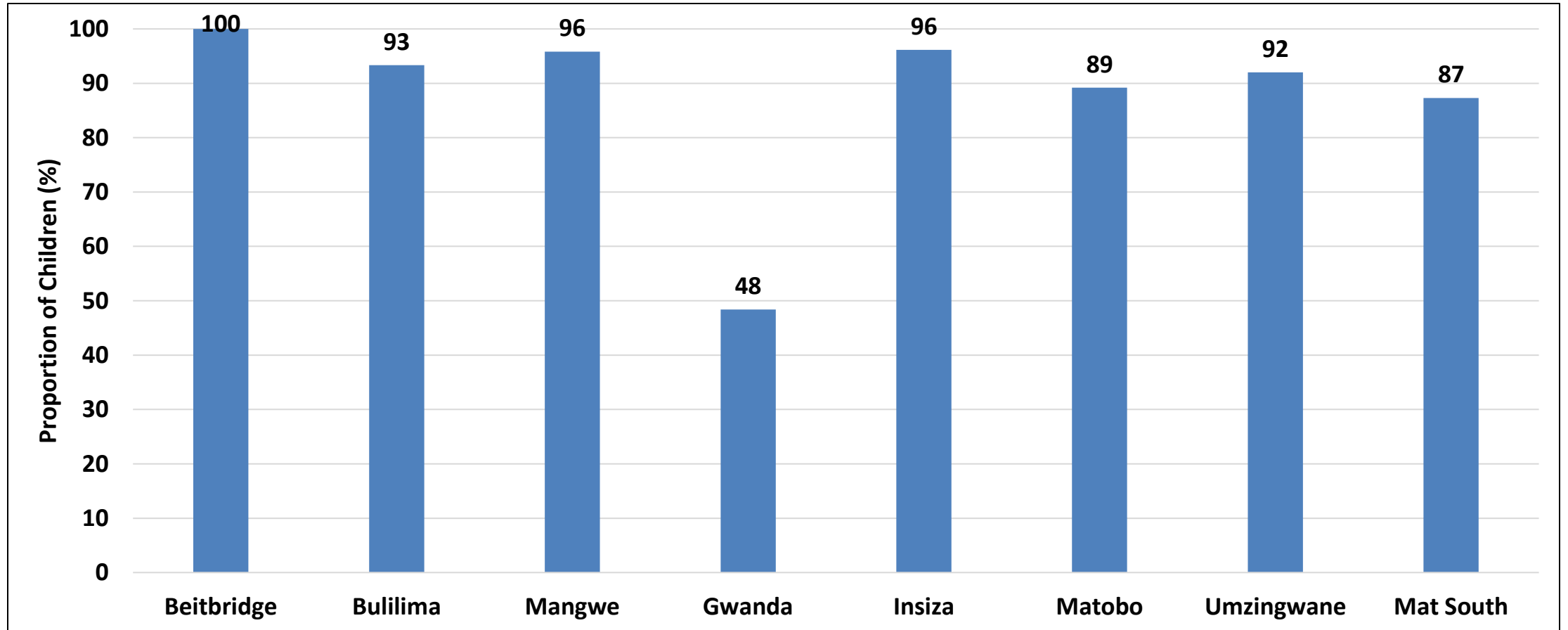
Vitamin A Supplementation for Children 6-59 Months

The Zimbabwe VAS Schedule

- The World Health Organization recommends Vitamin A Supplementation (VAS) once every six months for children in the age group of 6-59 months.
- VAS is proven to reduce all cause mortality, incidence of diarrhea and measles in children.

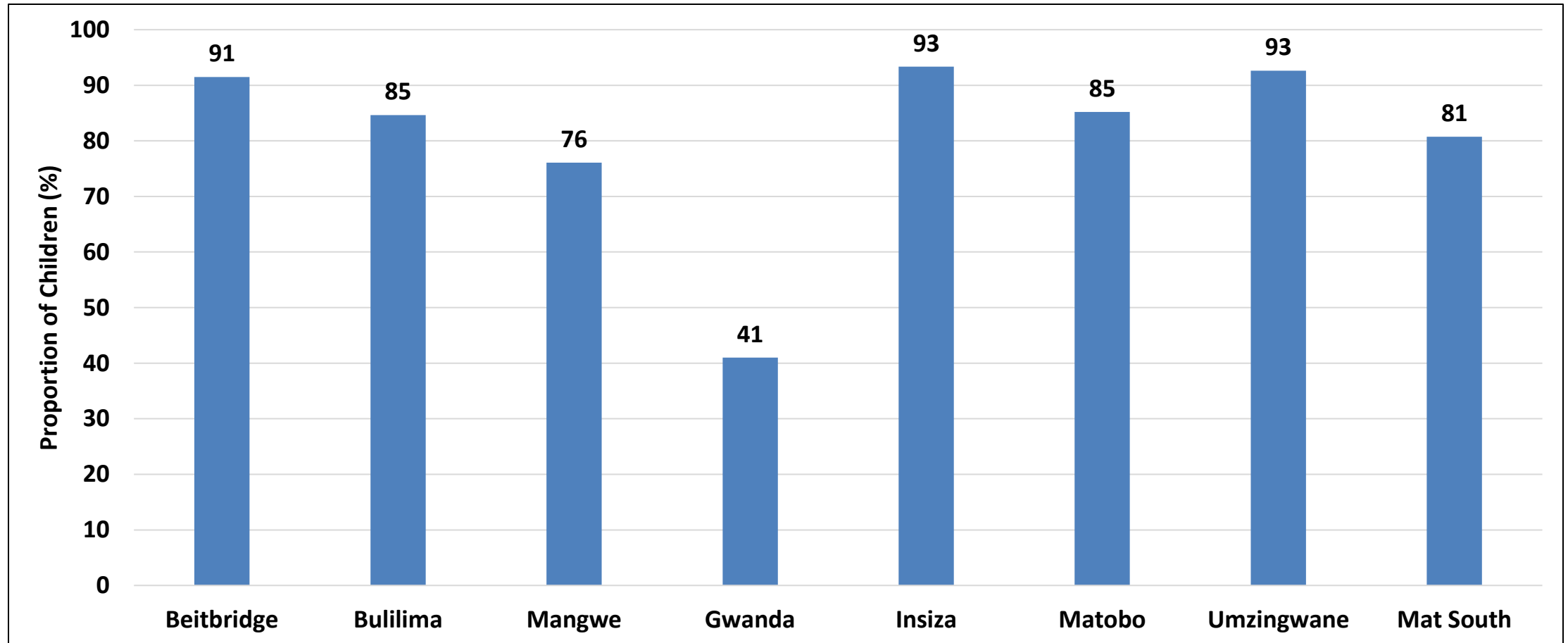
Age Group	Vitamin A Dosage	Timing for Administration
Below 6 months	Do not give	N/A
6-11 months	100 000 IU	Once at age 6 months
12-59 months	200 000 IU	Once every 6 months from age 6 months, until child reaches 5 years.

Vitamin A Supplementation for Children 6-11 Months



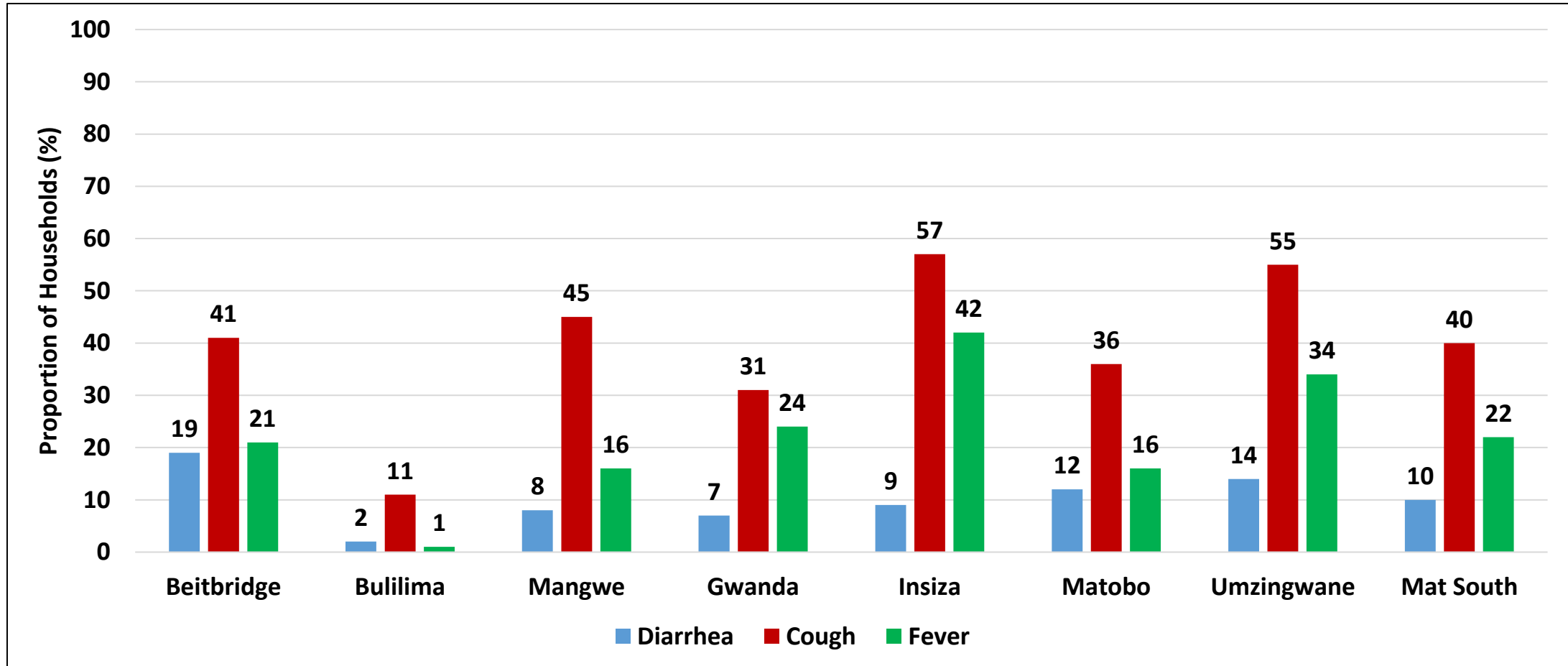
- The proportion of children (6-11 months) who received Vitamin A supplementation in Matabeleland South was 87%.
- Gwanda had the lowest proportion (48%).

Vitamin A Supplementation for Children 12-59 Months



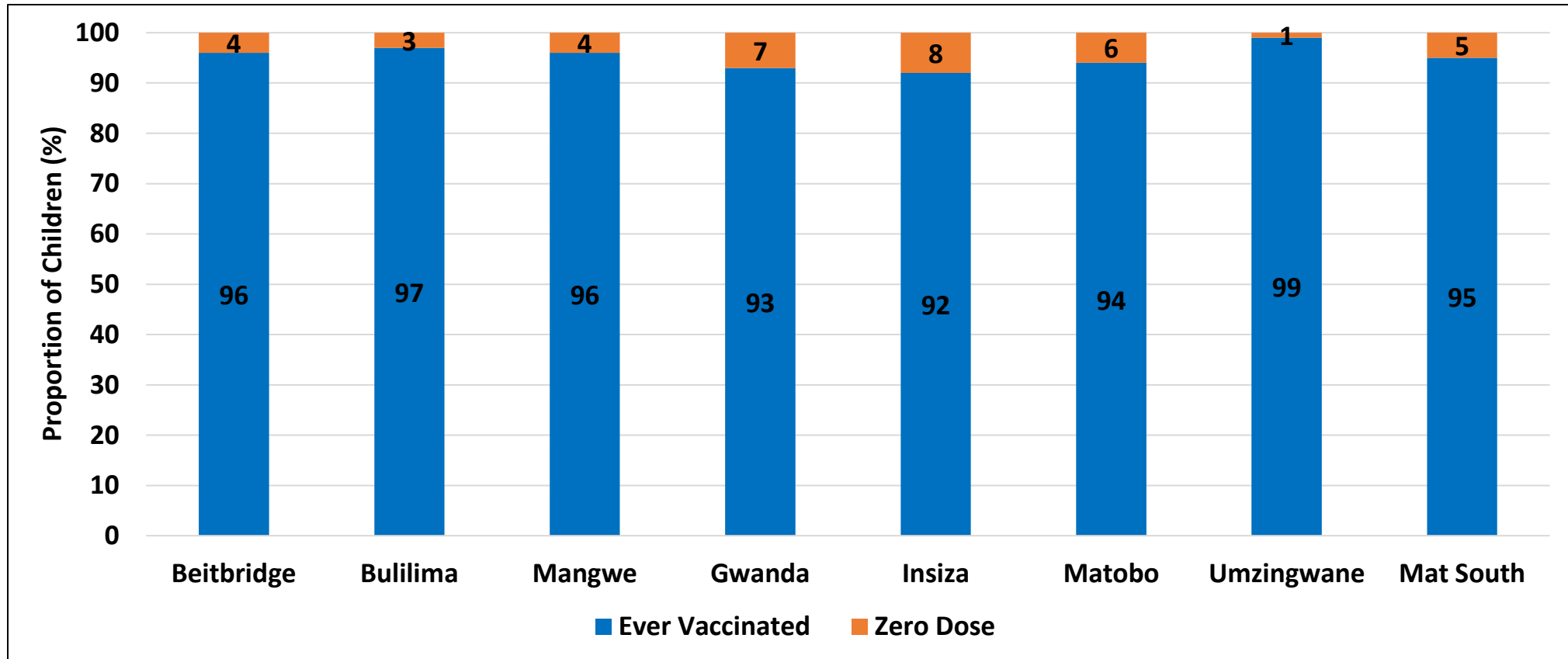
- The proportion of children (12-59 months) who received Vitamin A supplementation in Matabeleland South was 81%.
- Gwanda reported the lowest proportion at 41%.

Child Illness 6-59 Months



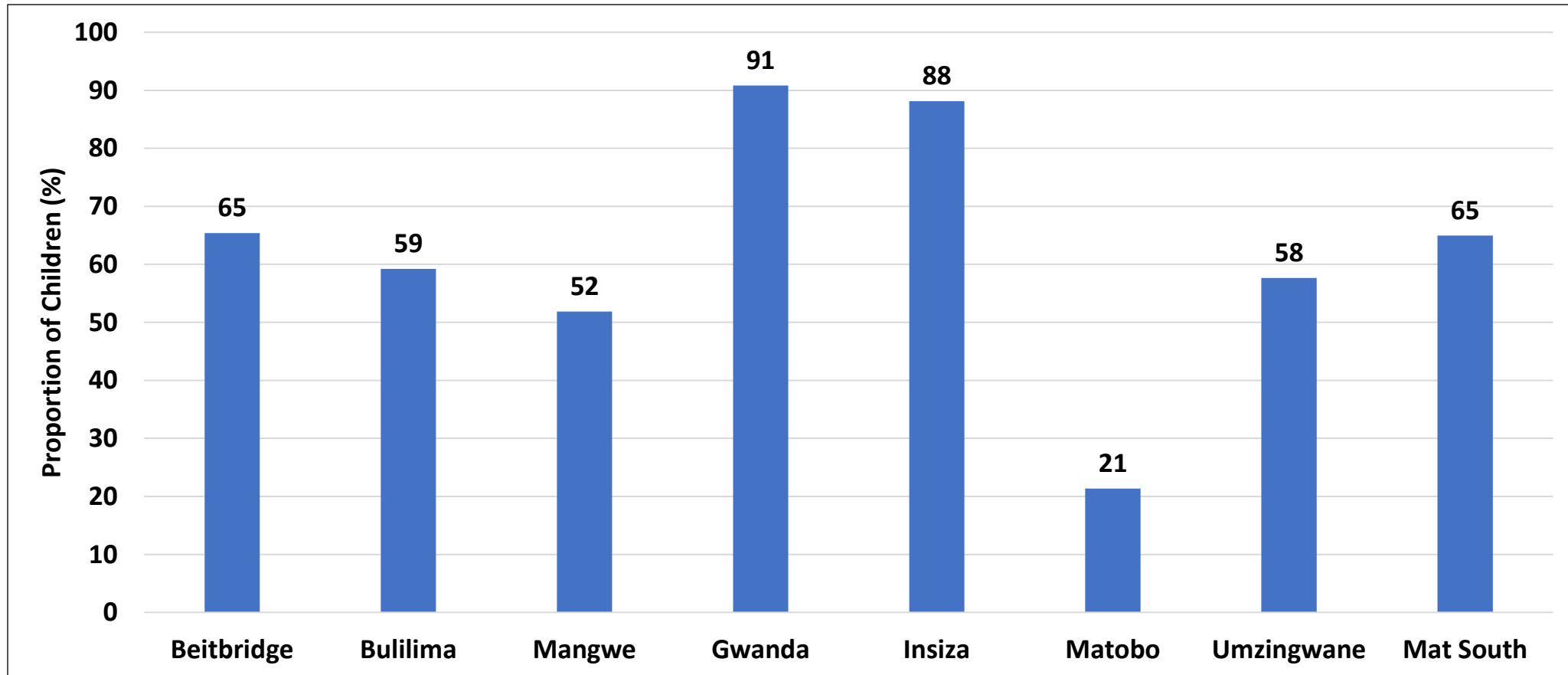
- The proportion of households that reported having children (6-59 months) having had diarrhea, cough, and fever was 10%, 40% and 22% respectively. Bulilima reported the lowest proportions of these illnesses.

Vaccination Status of Children (0-59 Months)



- The proportion of children who were ever vaccinated was 95% in Matabeleland South.
- Insiza had the highest proportion of children who had never received any dose

Children Receiving Hot Meals at School



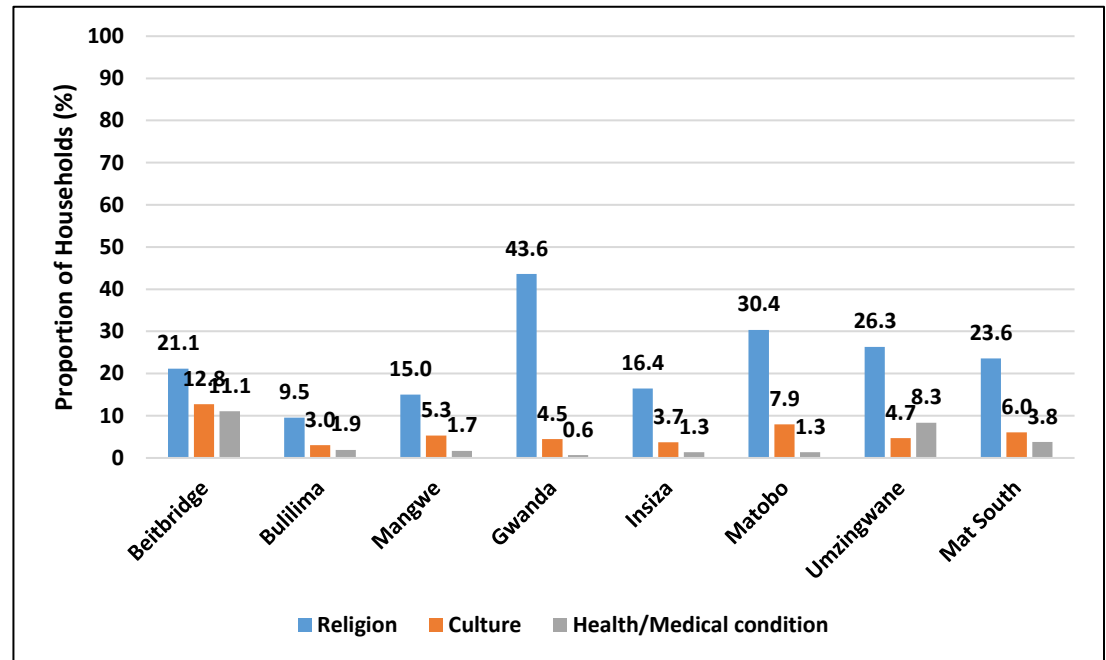
- The proportion of children (4 to 12 years old) who received a hot meal at school was 65%.
- The highest proportion of children who received a hot meal was reported in Gwanda (91%) and the lowest was reported in Matobo (21%).

Taboos

Household Food Taboos

District	Certain meat and meat products not consumed (%)	Certain fruits not consumed (%)	Traditional cereals not consumed (%)	Certain insects not consumed (%)	Age and gender restrictions on consumption of particular foods (%)	Other (%)	No taboos or restrictions (%)
Beitbridge	39.3	23.8	23.5	13.1	2.7	1.7	46.6
Bulilima	11.0	0	1.5	1.5	.4	1.1	55.1
Mangwe	19.3	1.3	0.7	4.0	.7	1.3	79.0
Gwanda	44.9	1.0	0.0	2.9	3.5	.6	54.5
Insiza	21.1	0	0.3	0.7	0	1.3	78.9
Matobo	35.0	0.7	0	1.0	1.0	0.7	63.4
Umzingwane	38.7	2.0	0.3	5.3	0	1.3	58.7
Mat South	30.3	4.1	3.8	4.1	1.2	1.2	62.4

Reasons for Taboos



- About 30.3% of the households had taboos on consumption of certain meat and meat products which may have negative effect on individual dietary diversity options ultimately affecting the quality of diets.
- Religion (23.6%) was the most reported reason for dietary related taboos.

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)

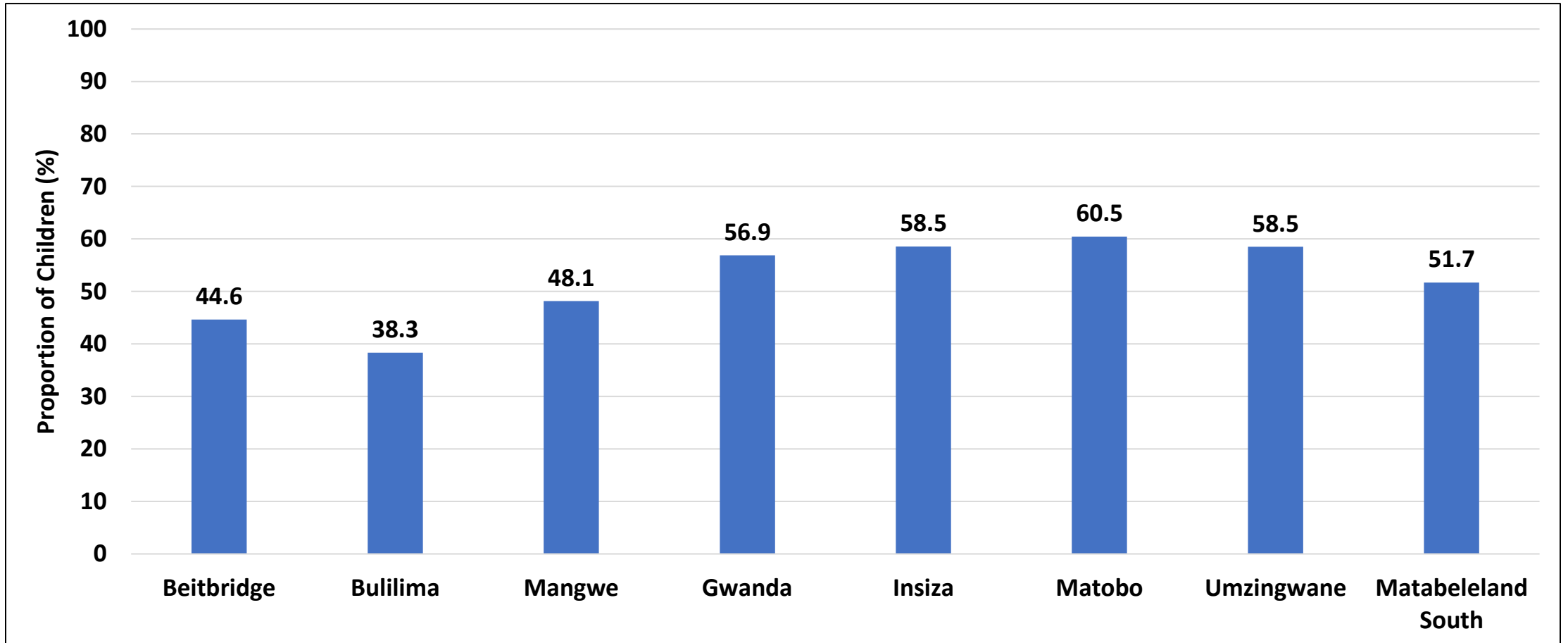
- WHO indicates that low vegetable and fruit consumption is associated with increased risk of noncommunicable diseases (NCDs).
- Non-consumption of vegetables or fruits on the previous day represents an unhealthy practice.
- Indicator definition: percentage of children 6–23 months of age who did not consume any vegetables or fruits during the previous day.

Notes

UNHEALTHY FOOD CONSUMPTION 6–23 MONTHS (UFC)

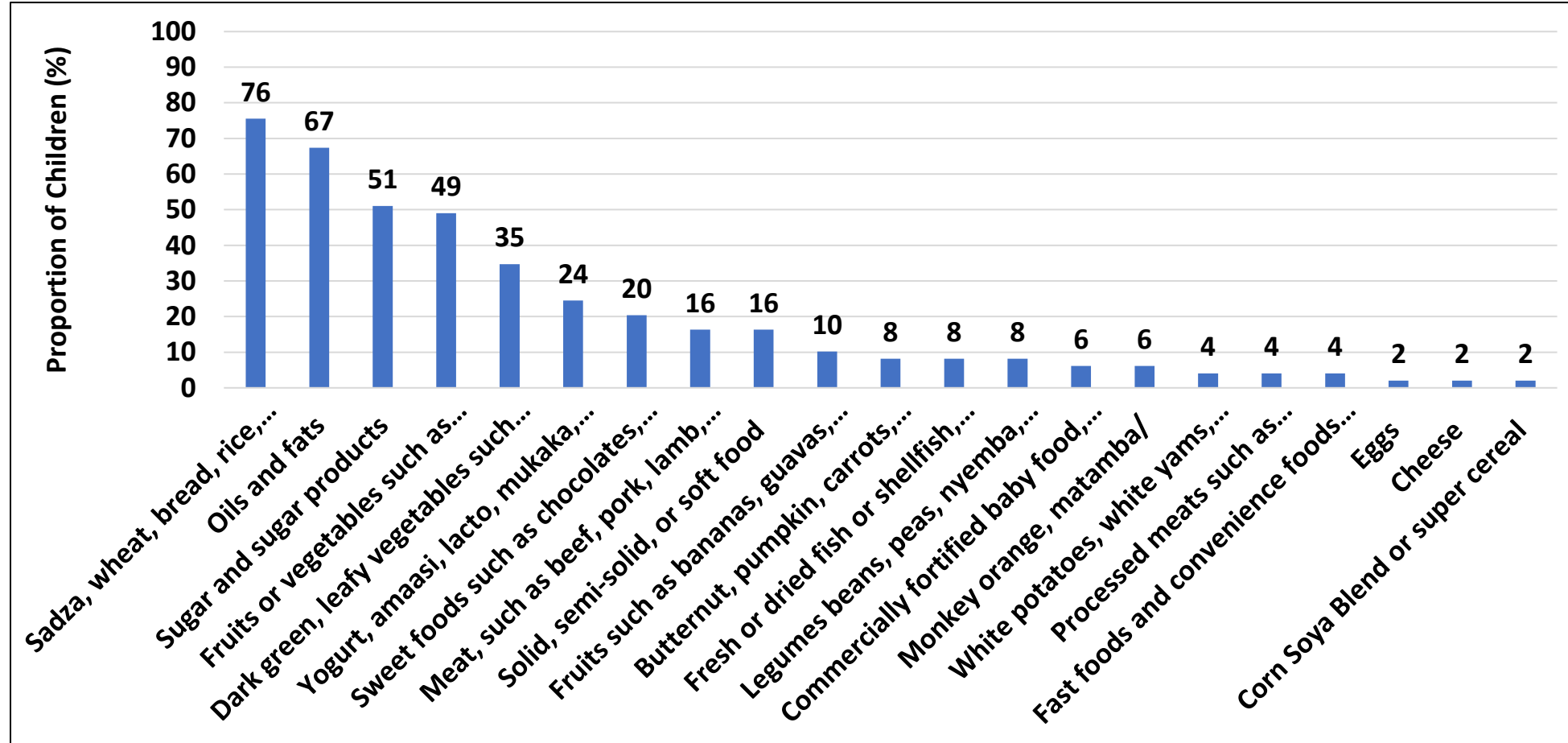
- In many low- and middle-income countries, diet patterns are shifting towards higher intakes of added sugars, unhealthy fats, salt and refined carbohydrates.
- A variety of guidance documents indicate the need to avoid or limit these types of foods when feeding IYC.
- Recent national guidance for feeding 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.*

Continued Breastfeeding Beyond 1 year



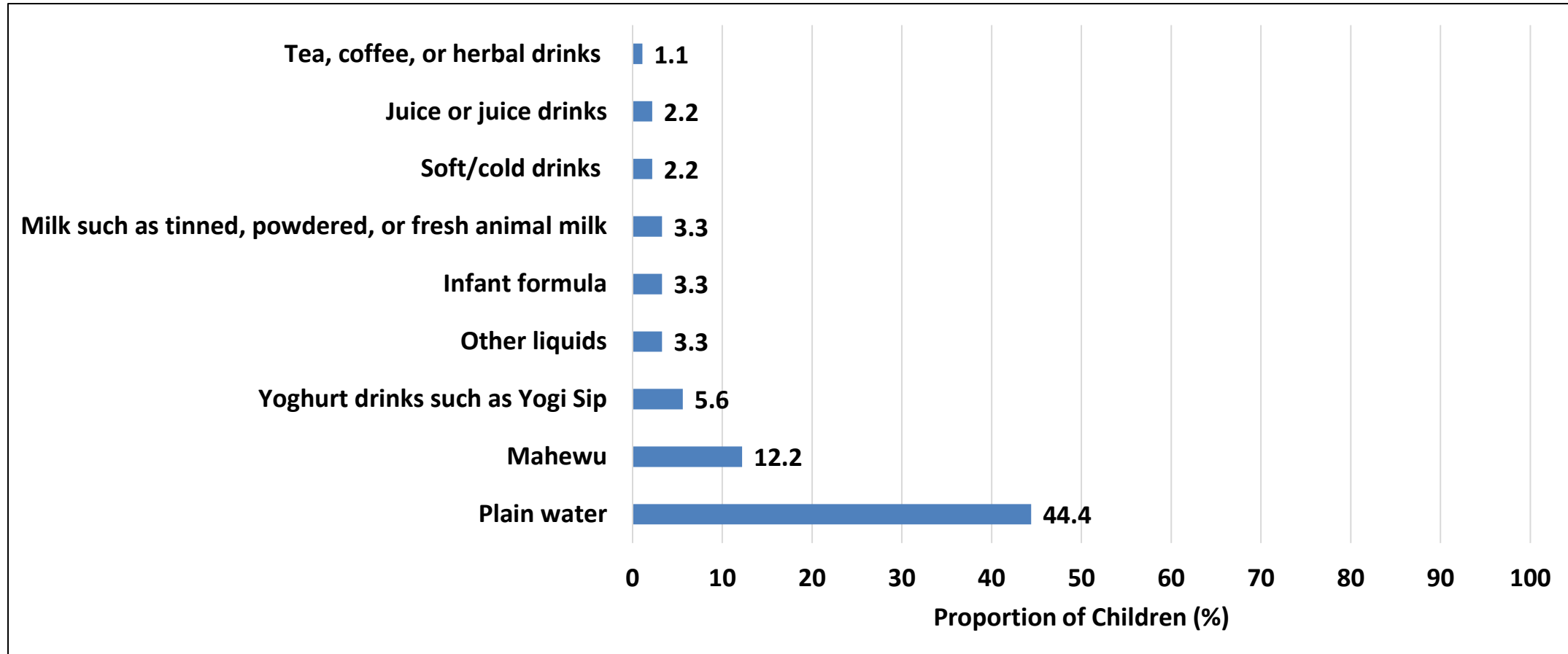
- The provincial average for continued breastfeeding was 51.7%. Bulilima reported the lowest proportion at 38.3%.

Foods Fed to Infants 0-5 months



- The most common foods that were consumed by infants 0-5 months included sadza, wheat (76%), oils and fats (67%), sugar and sugar products (51%), vegetables (tomatoes, onions) 49% and dark green vegetables(35%).

Liquids Consumed by Infants 0-5 months

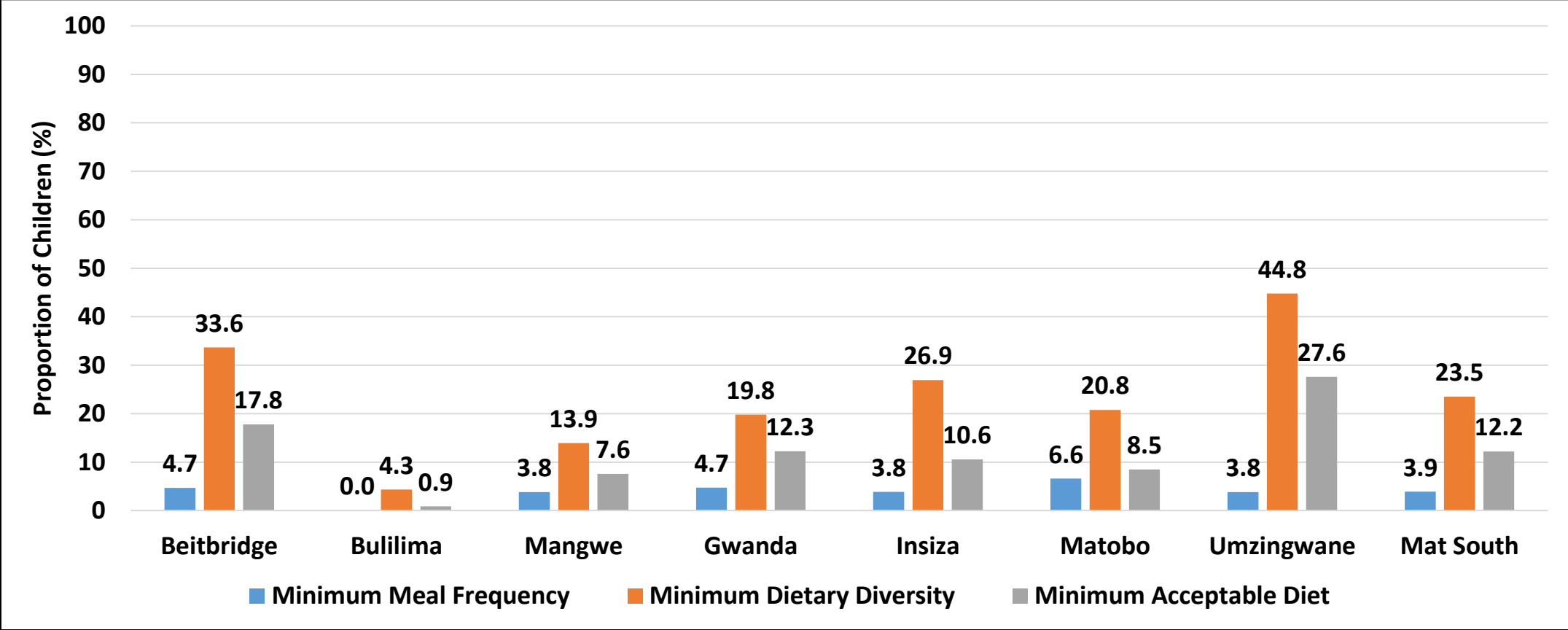


- Plain Water (44.4%) and mahewu (12.2%) were the main liquids given to infants 0-5 months.

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



- Provincial averages for Minimum Meal Frequency (MMF), Minimum Dietary Diversity (MDD), and Minimum Acceptable Diet (MAD) were 3.9%, 23.5% and 12.2% respectively. Bulilima reported the lowest proportions.

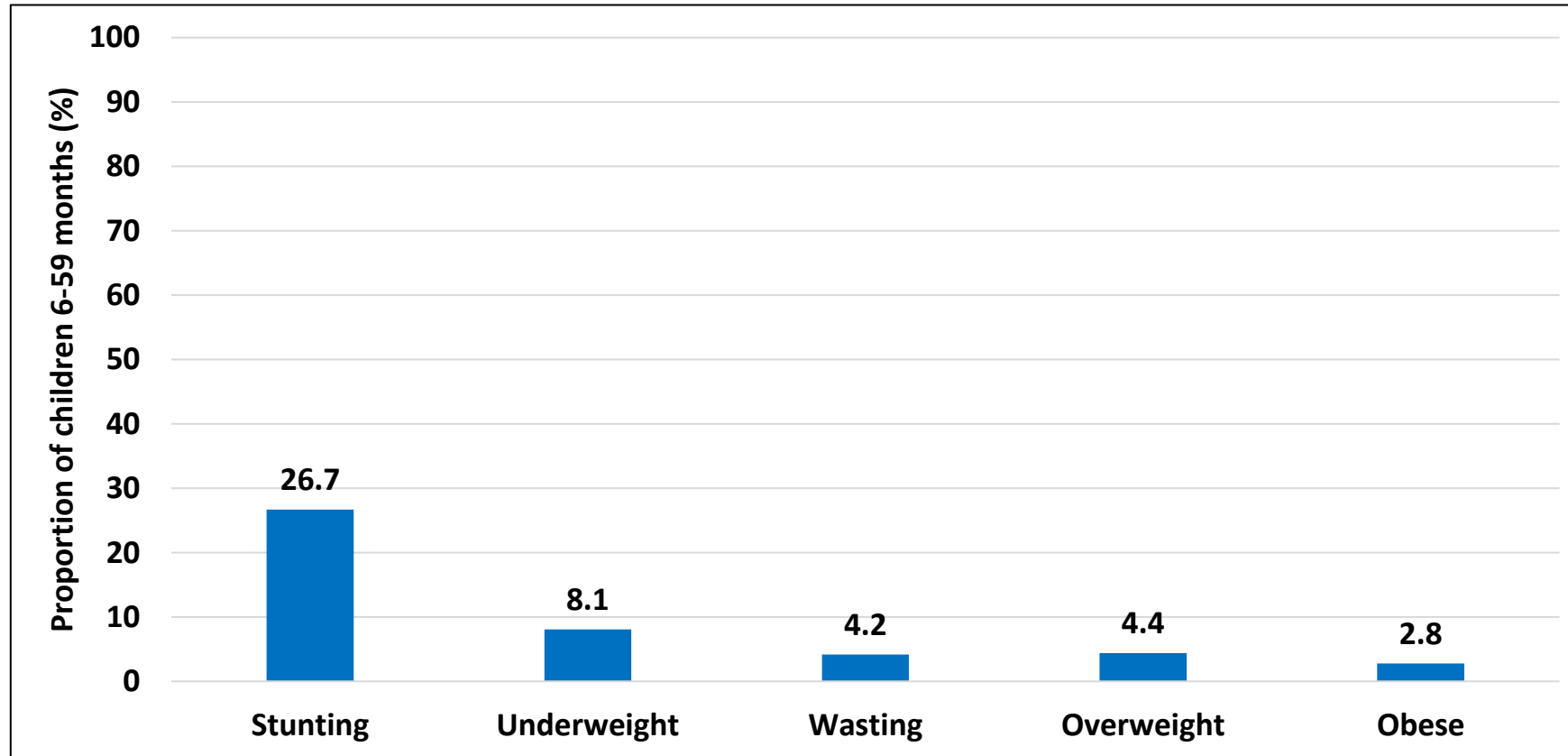
Nutrition Status

Child Nutrition Status

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

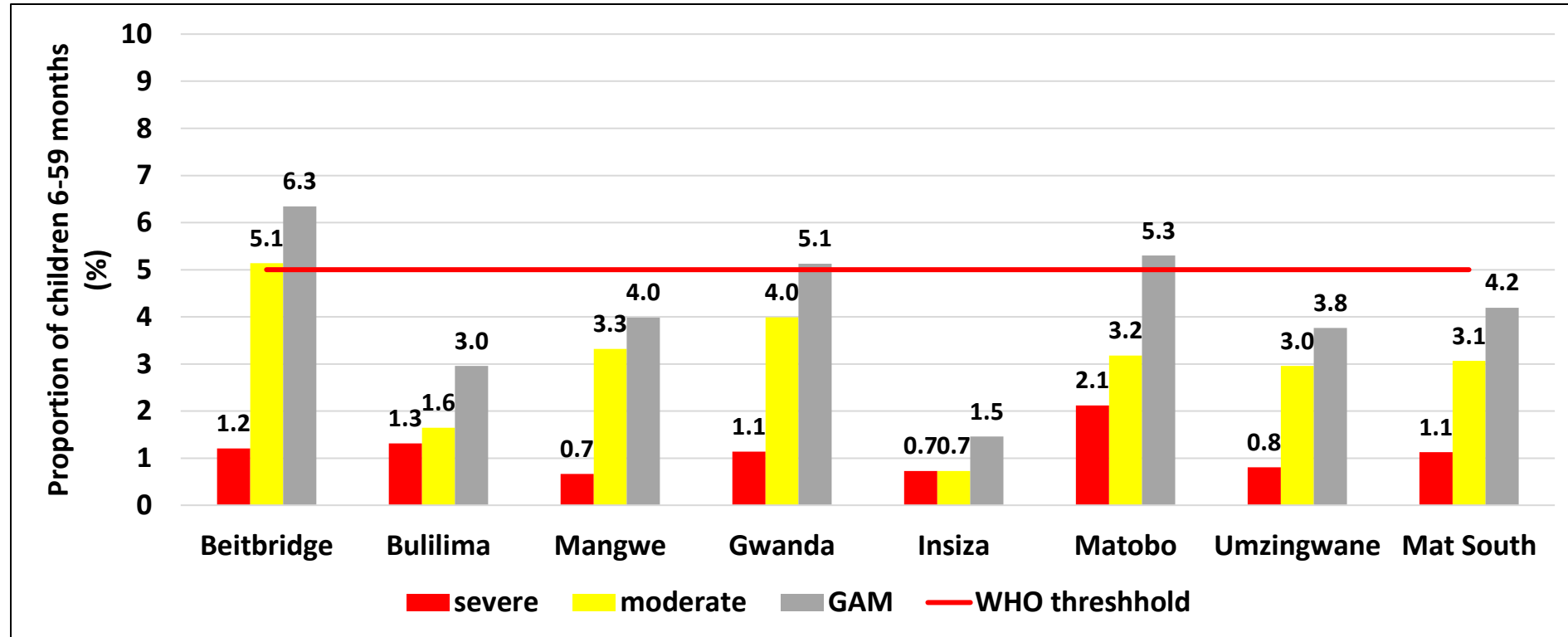
Indicator	Indicator definition (WHO standards, 2006)	Provincial prevalence (%)	Prevalence cut-off values for public health significance
Stunting	Height/Length for age <-2 SD of the WHO Child Growth Standards median	26.9	<2.5%: Very Low 2.5-<10%: Low 10-<20%: Medium 20-<30%: High ≥30%: Very High (DeOniset al., 2019)
Global Acute Malnutrition	Weight for height <-2SD of the WHO Child Growth Standards median and/oedema	3.0	<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	0.7	0% = acceptable >0%: Unacceptable
Underweight	Weight for age <-2SD of the WHO Child Growth Standards median and/oedema	7.8	
Overweight	Weight for height >+2 SD of the WHO Child Growth Standards median	2	<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



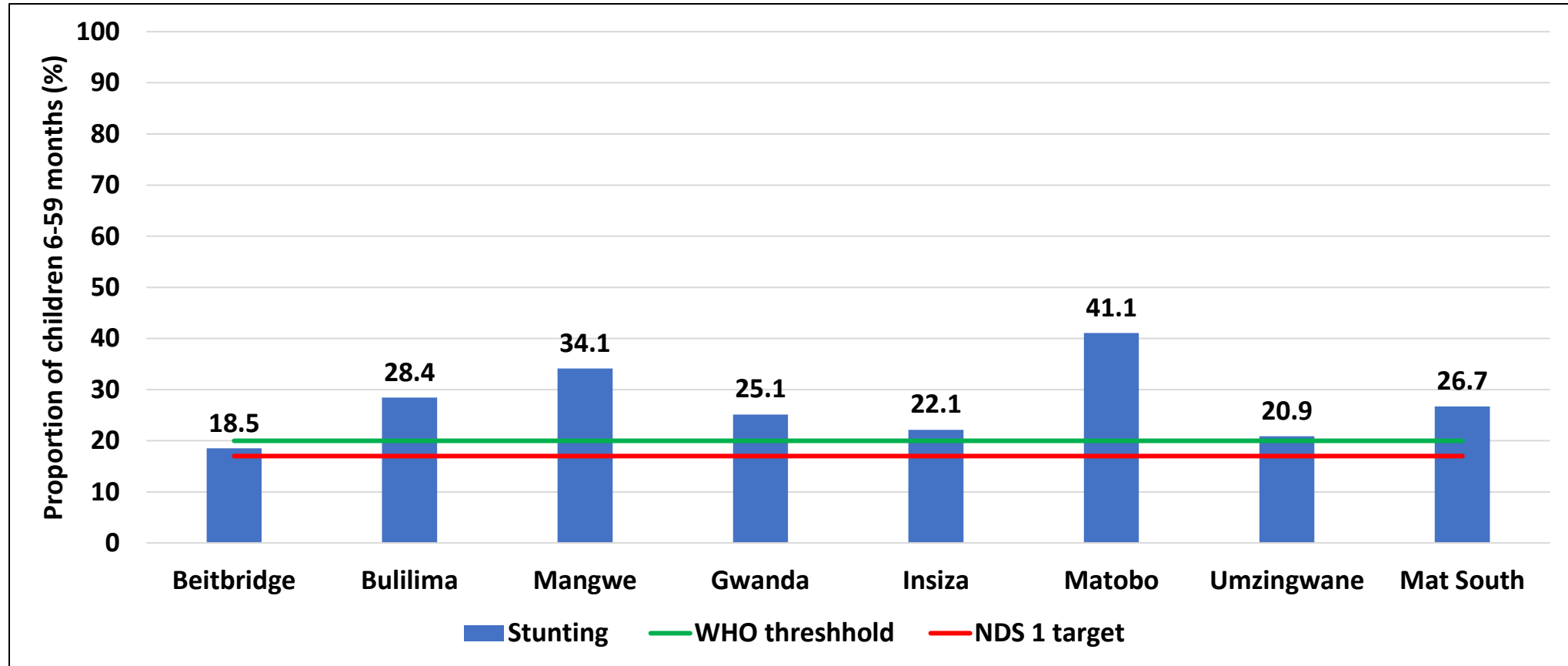
- The prevalence of wasting was 4.2 which is acceptable and is below the World Health Organization threshold of 5%. Stunting prevalence remains high (26.7%) according to the World Health Organization classification. It is also off the NDS1 target of 17%.

Prevalence of Wasting for Children Aged 6-59 Months



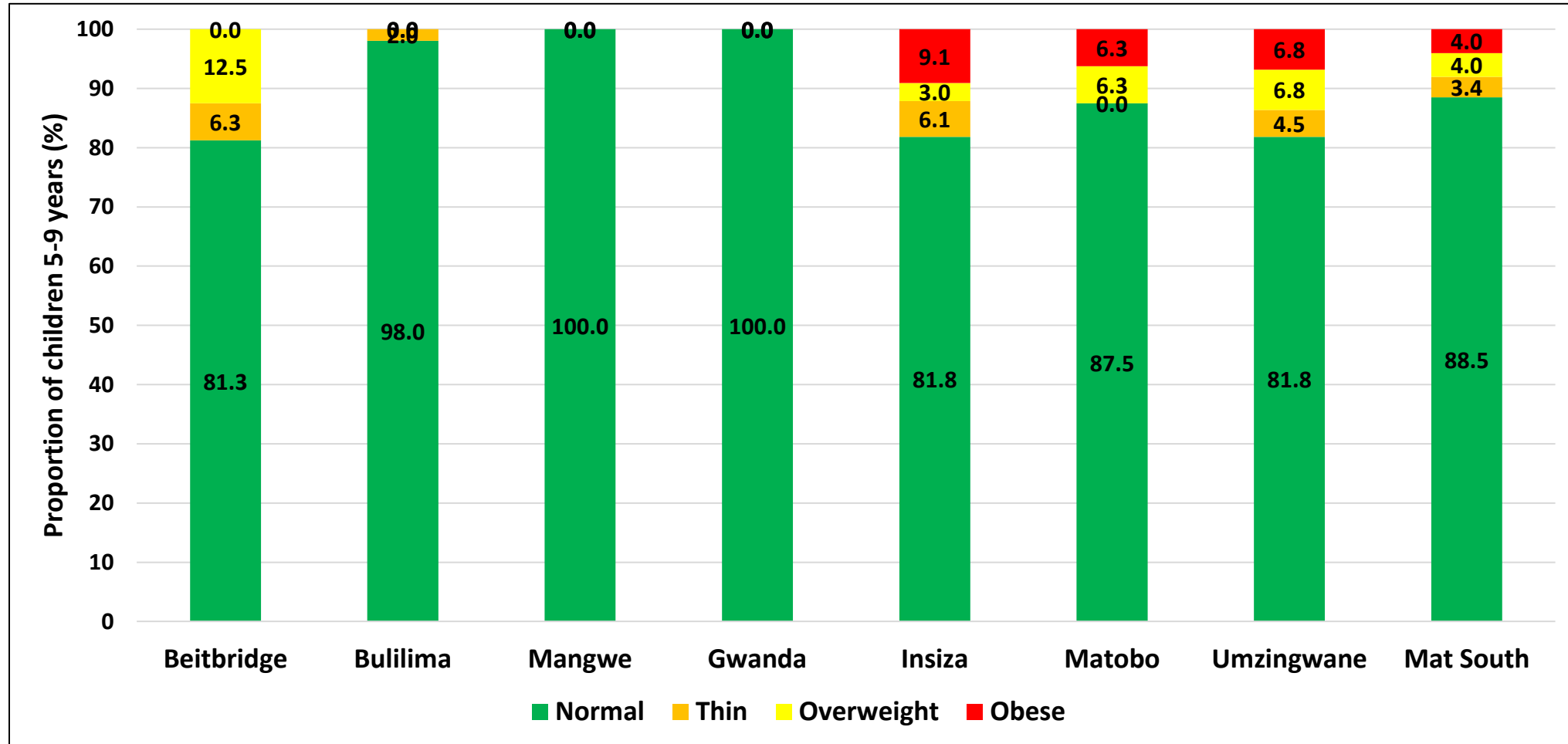
- The provincial prevalence for Global Acute Malnutrition (wasting) was 4.2%, with Beitbridge (6.3%), Gwanda (5.1%) and Matobo (5.3%) reporting the highest.
- The provincial Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM) prevalence (1.1%) was in line with the national target for SAM of 2.5%.

Prevalence of Stunting for Children 6-59 Months



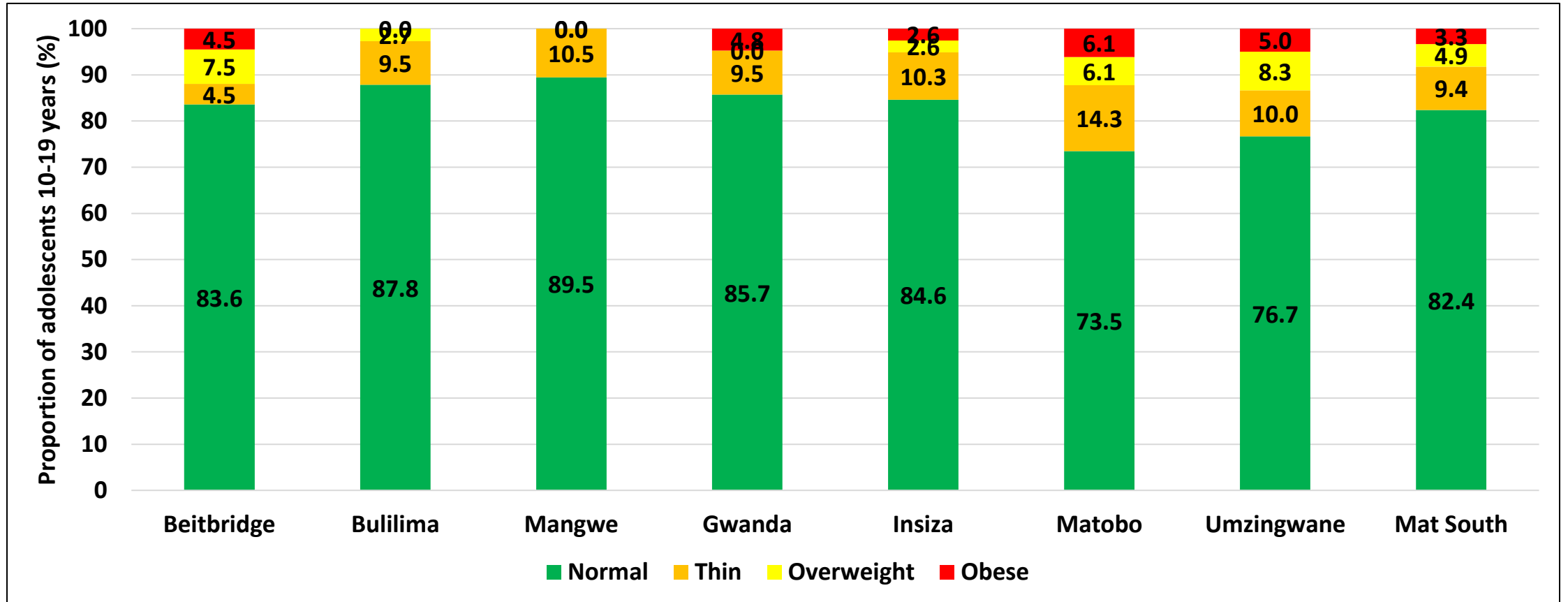
- Most districts recorded stunting levels above the WHO threshold of at least 20% classified as high (20-30%).
- Stunting levels were highest in Matobo (41.1%) followed by Mangwe with (34.1%).

Nutrition Status of Children 5-9 Years (BMI-for-Age)



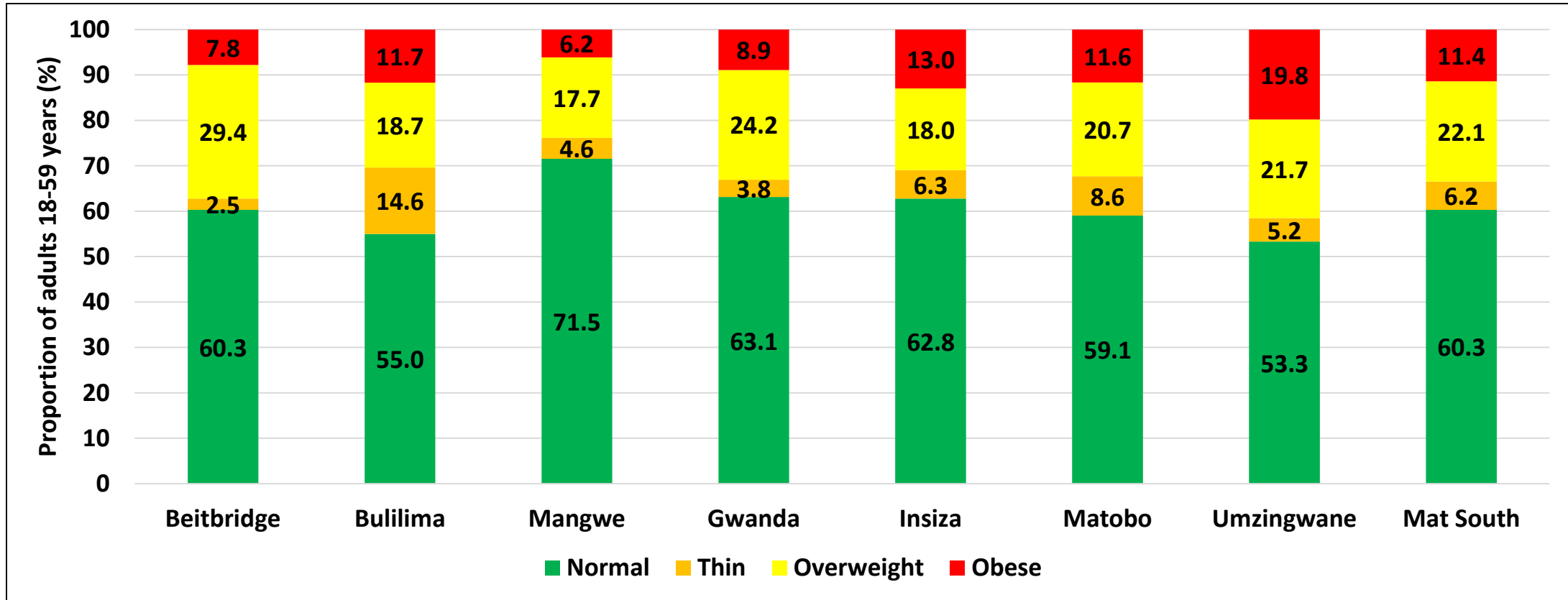
- About 4% of the children aged 5 to 9 years were obese and 4% were overweight.

Nutrition Status of Adolescents 10-19 Years



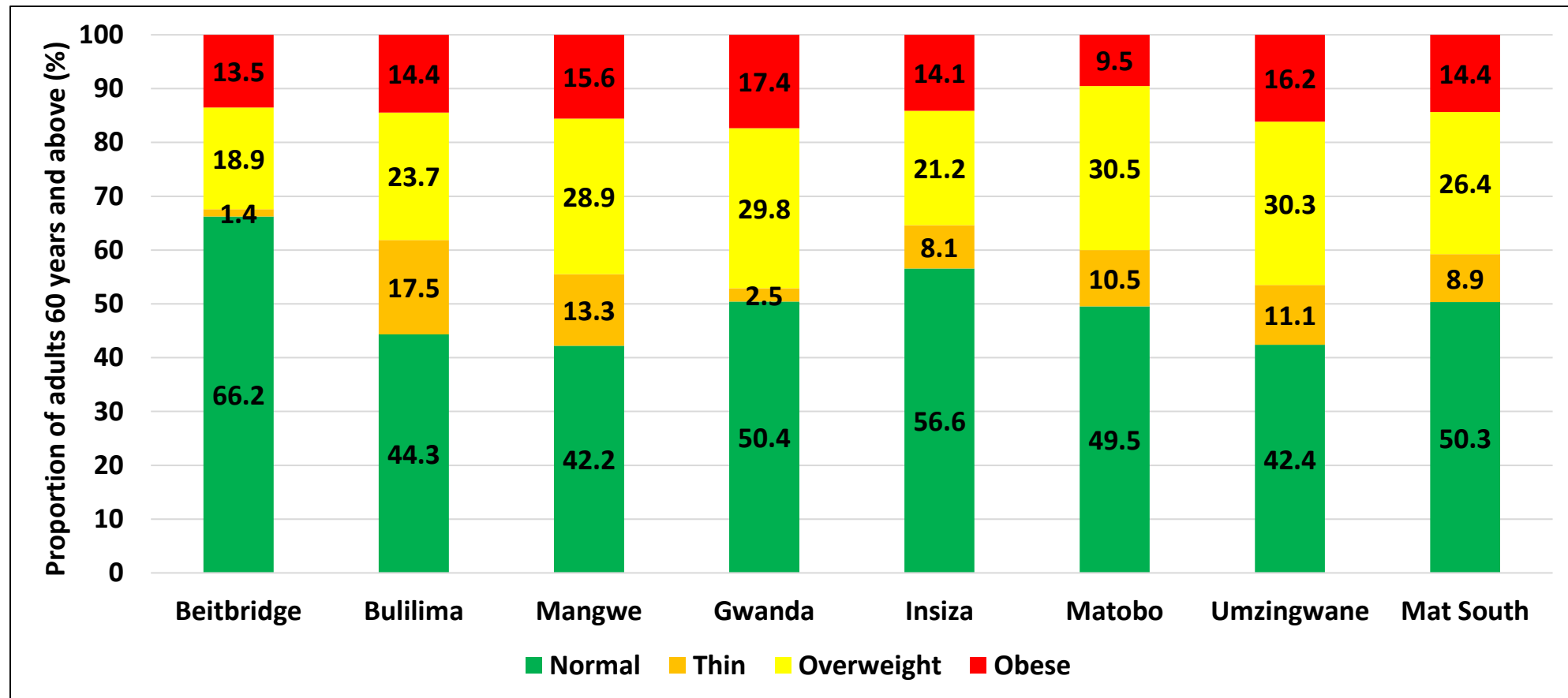
- At least 8.2% of the adolescents were overweight and obese.

Nutrition Status for Adults 18-59 Years (BMI)



- Body mass index was used to classify adults aged 18 years and above. Having excess fat deposits in the body leads to to serious health consequences such as cardiovascular disease (mainly heart disease and stroke), type 2 diabetes, musculoskeletal disorders like osteoarthritis and some cancers (endometrial, breast and colon).
- In Matabeleland South, about 33.5% of the adults aged 18-59 years were overweight and obese.

Nutrition Status for Adults 60 Years and above (BMI)



- About 40.8% of adults above 60 were overweight and obese, whilst 50.3% were normal.

Food Security

Food Security Analytical Framework

- Food security exists when all people at all times, have **physical, social and economic** access to food which is safe and consumed in sufficient quantity and quality to meet their dietary needs and food preferences and it is supported by an environment of adequate sanitation, health services and care allowing for a healthy and active life (Food and Nutrition Security Policy, 2012).
- The four dimensions of food security as give in Figure 3 are:
 - **Availability** of food
 - **Access to food**
 - The safe and healthy **utilisation** of food
 - The **stability** of food availability, access and utilisation

Food Security Analytical Framework

- Household cereal security was determined by measuring a household's potential access to enough cereal to give each member 2100 kilocalories per day in the consumption period 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026.
- 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 2025/26 consumption year from the following possible income sources;
 - Cereal stocks from the previous season;
 - Own food crop production from the 2024/25 agricultural season;
 - Potential income from own cash crop production;
 - Potential income from livestock ;
 - Potential income from casual labour and remittances;
 - Income from other sources such as gifts, pensions, gardening, formal and informal employment.

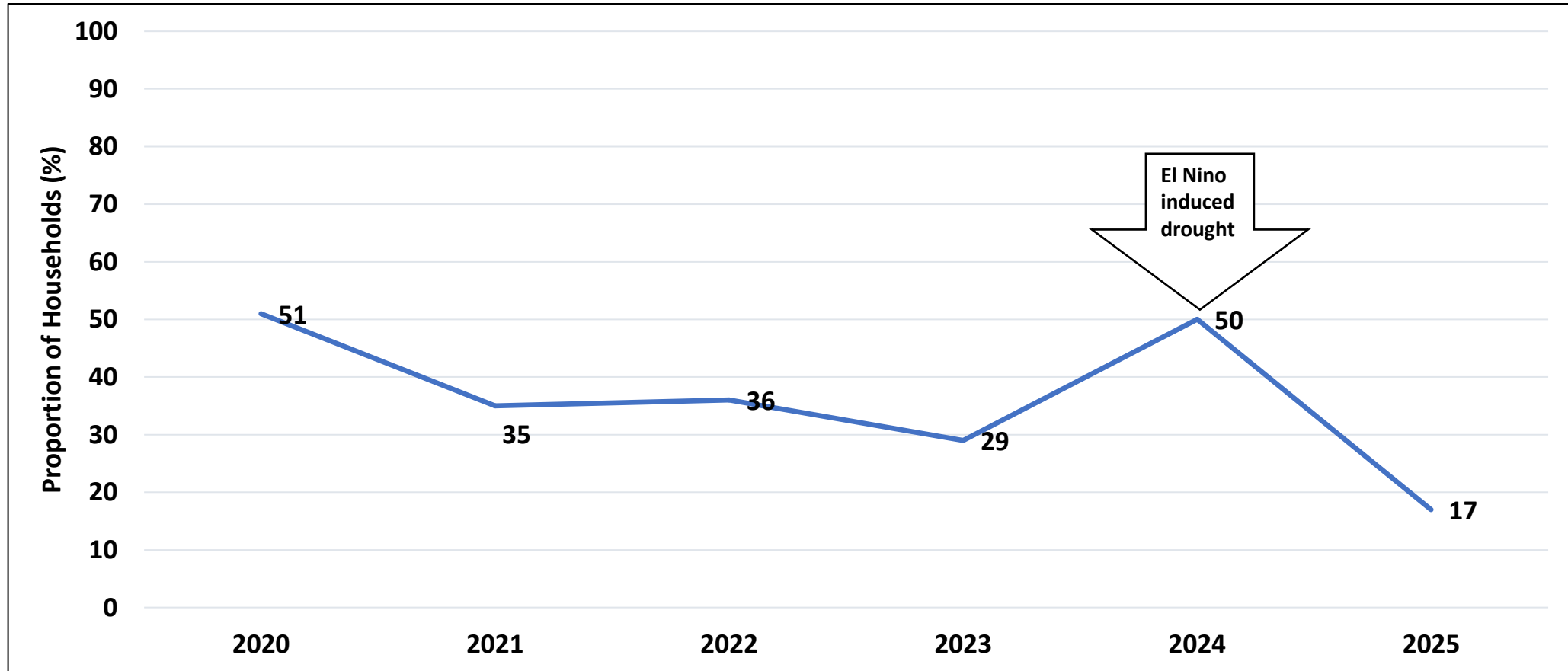
Food Security Analytical Framework

- 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

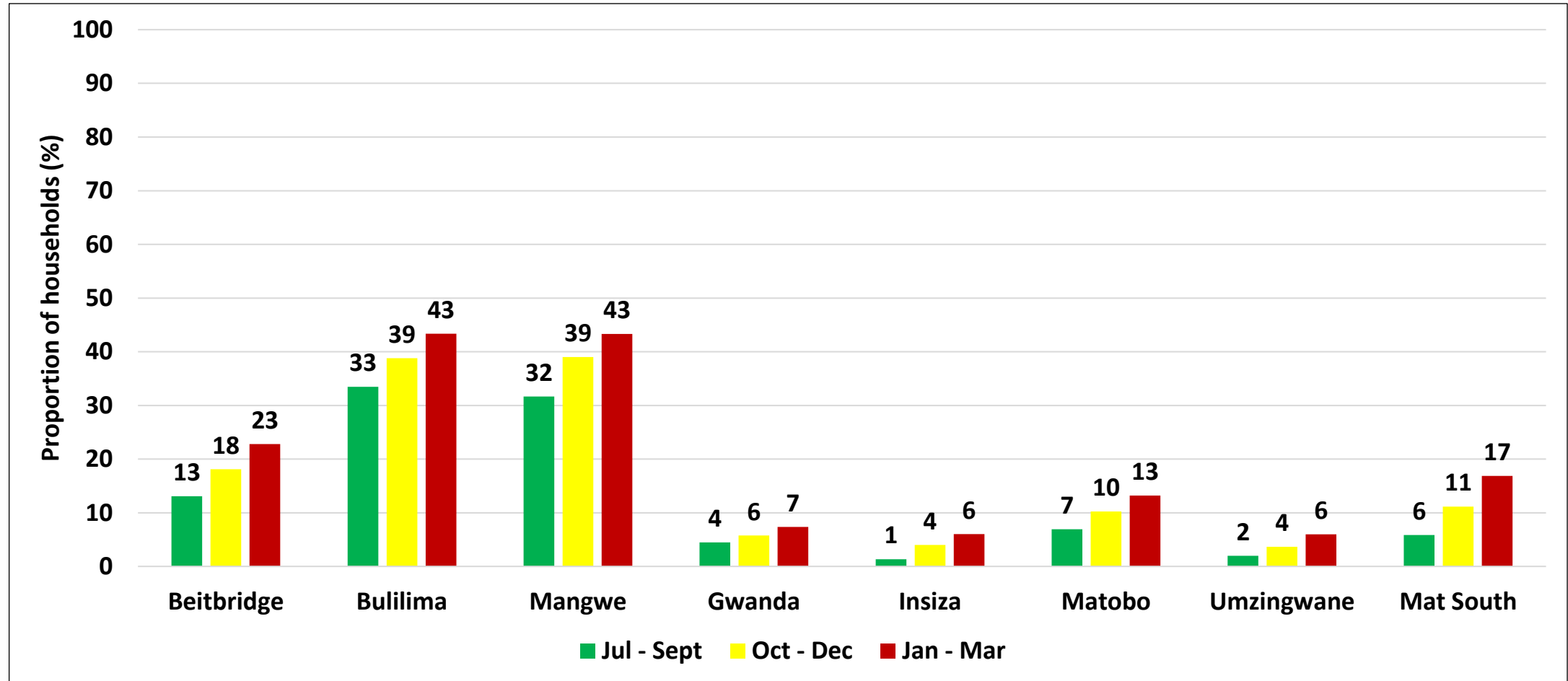
- During the peak hunger period (January to March 2026) it was estimated that approximately **17%** of the rural households will be cereal insecure.
- The 17% of rural households translated into approximately **120,514** individuals requiring a total of **11,021 MT** of cereal (Maize Grain) from the National Strategic Grain Reserves.

Cereal Insecurity Trends: 2020-2025



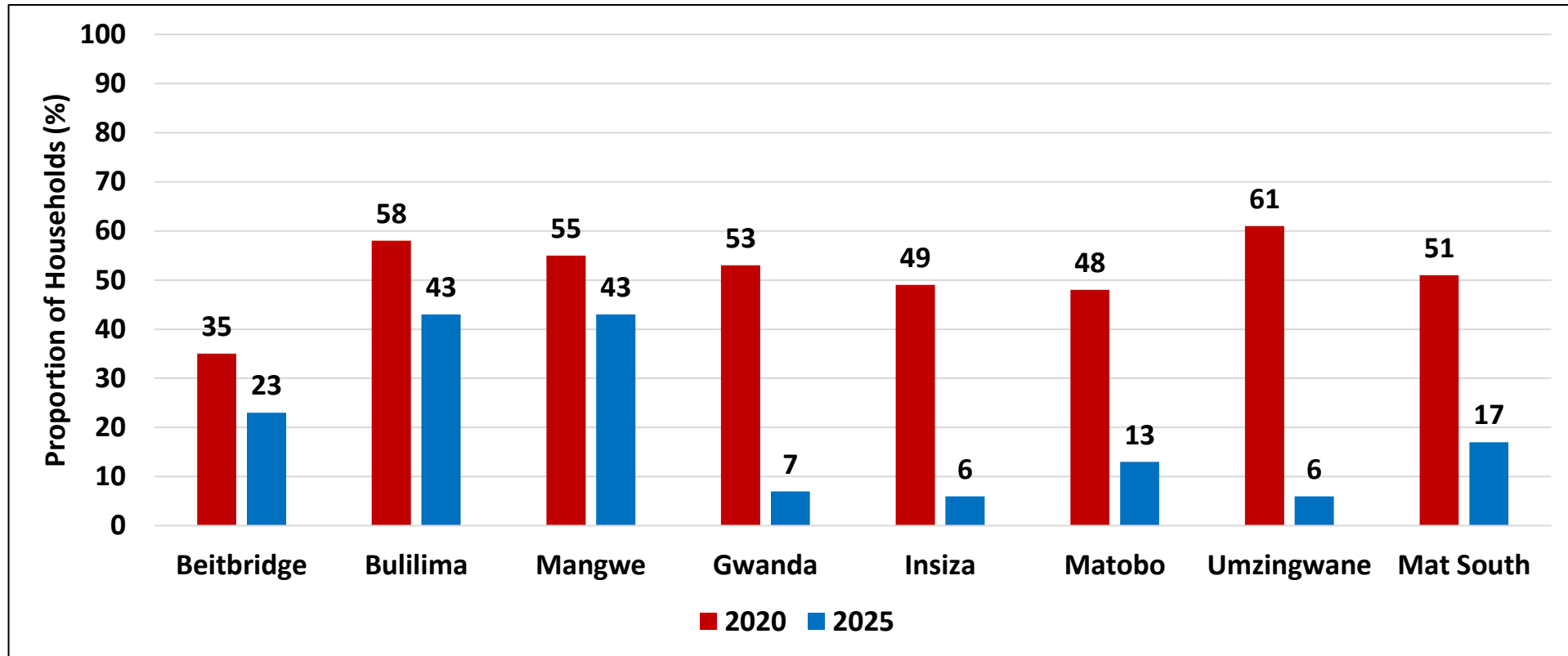
- There was a 66.7% drop in cereal insecurity from 51% in 2020 to 17% in 2025.
- Government is complimented for implementing shock responsive interventions.

Cereal Insecurity Progression by Quarter



- About 6% of the rural households in Matabeleland South were projected to be facing food access challenges in the July to September quarter, a figure which will rise to approximately 11% in the October to December quarter and finally peaking to 17% in the January to March 2026 quarter.

Cereal Insecurity (Peak Hunger Period)



- The proportion of food insecure households during the peak hunger period is projected to be low compared to 2020.

Cereal Insecure Population by Quarter

	Food Insecure Population		
	Jul – Sept 2025	Oct – Dec 2025	Jan – Mar 2026
Beitbridge	12,302	17,034	21,450
Bulilima	28,642	33,198	37,104
Mangwe	20,761	25,569	28,410
Gwanda	5,589	7,185	9,181
Insiza	1,650	4,949	7,424
Matobo	6,632	9,791	12,633
Umzingwane	1,437	2,635	4,312
Mat South	77,013	100,361	120,514

- Bulilima (37,104) and Mangwe (28,410) were projected to have the highest populations of cereal insecure people during the peak hunger period.

Cereal Requirements (MT) by Province by Quarter

	Cereal Requirements			
	Jul – Sept 2025	Oct – Dec 2025	Jan – Mar 2026	July 2025 to March 2026
	MT	MT	MT	Total MT
Beitbridge	455	630	794	1879
Bulilima	1,060	1,228	1,373	3661
Mangwe	768	946	1,051	2765
Gwanda	207	266	340	813
Insiza	61	183	275	519
Matobo	245	362	467	1074
Umzingwane	53	97	160	310
Matabeleland South	2,849	3,713	4,459	11021

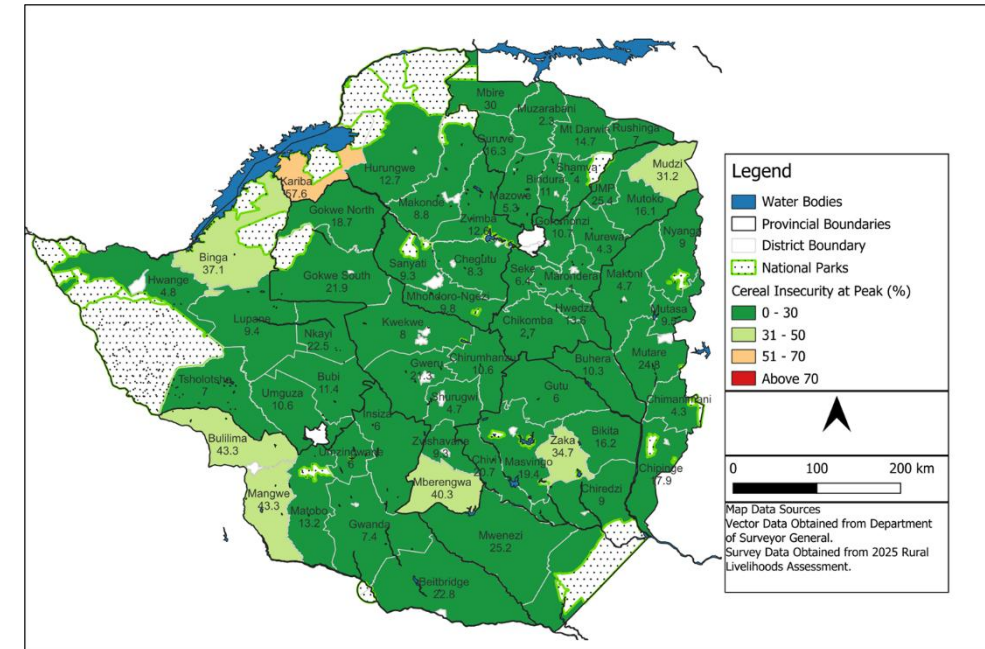
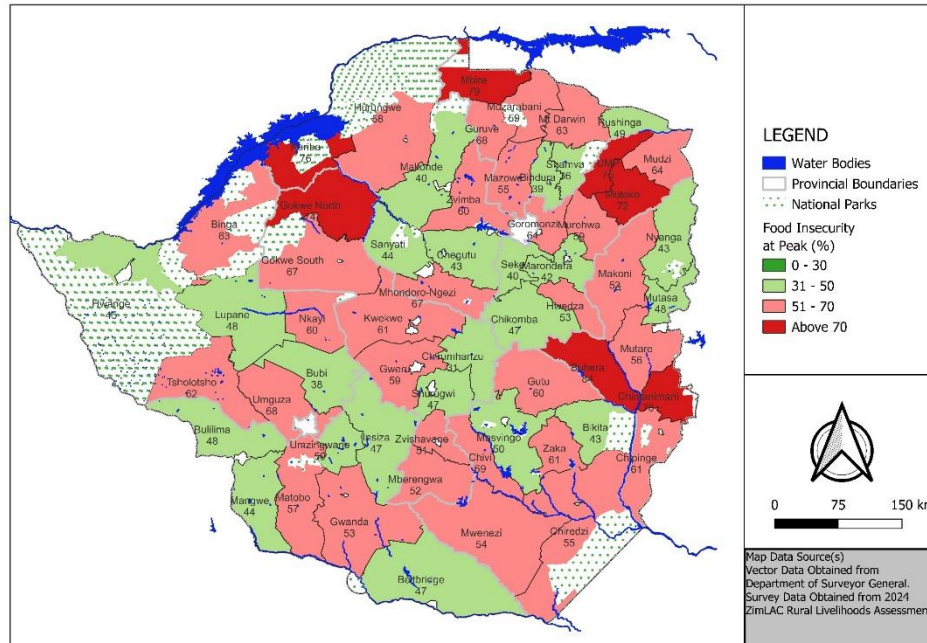
Cereal Insecure Proportions By Quarter

District	Jul - Sept 2025 (%)	Oct - Dec 2025 (%)	Jan - Mar 2026 (%)
Beitbridge	13	18	23
Bulilima	33	39	43
Mangwe	32	39	43
Gwanda	4	6	7
Insiza	1	4	6
Matobo	7	10	13
Umzingwane	2	4	6
Mat South	6	11	17

Food Security Status: Peak Hunger Period January to March

2024

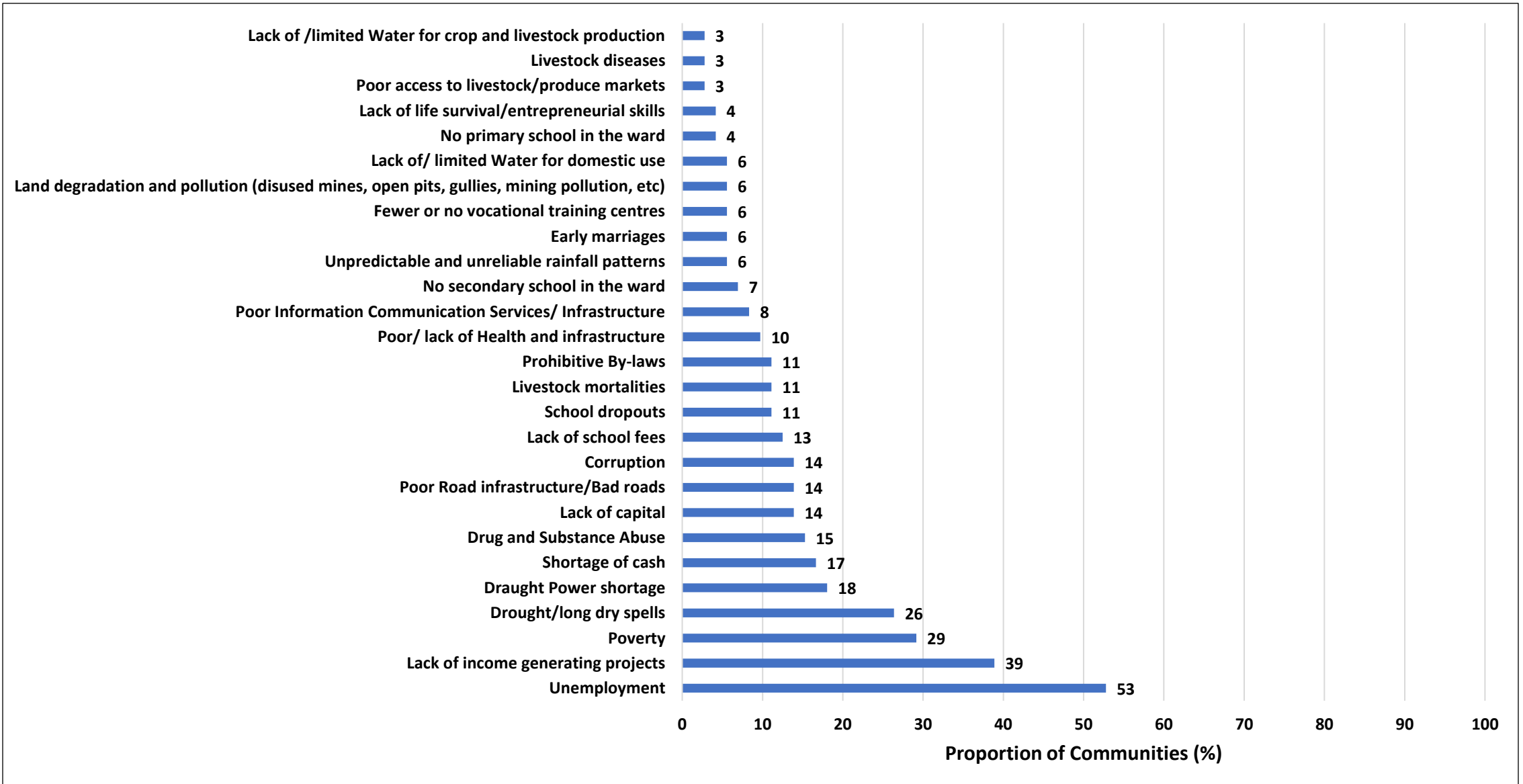
2025



- Bulilima (43.3%), Mangwe (43.3%) and Beitbridge (22.8%) have the highest proportions of people who would be food insecure during the peak hunger period.
- Insiza (6%) and Umzingwane (6%) have the least proportion of people who will be food insecure during the peak hunger period.

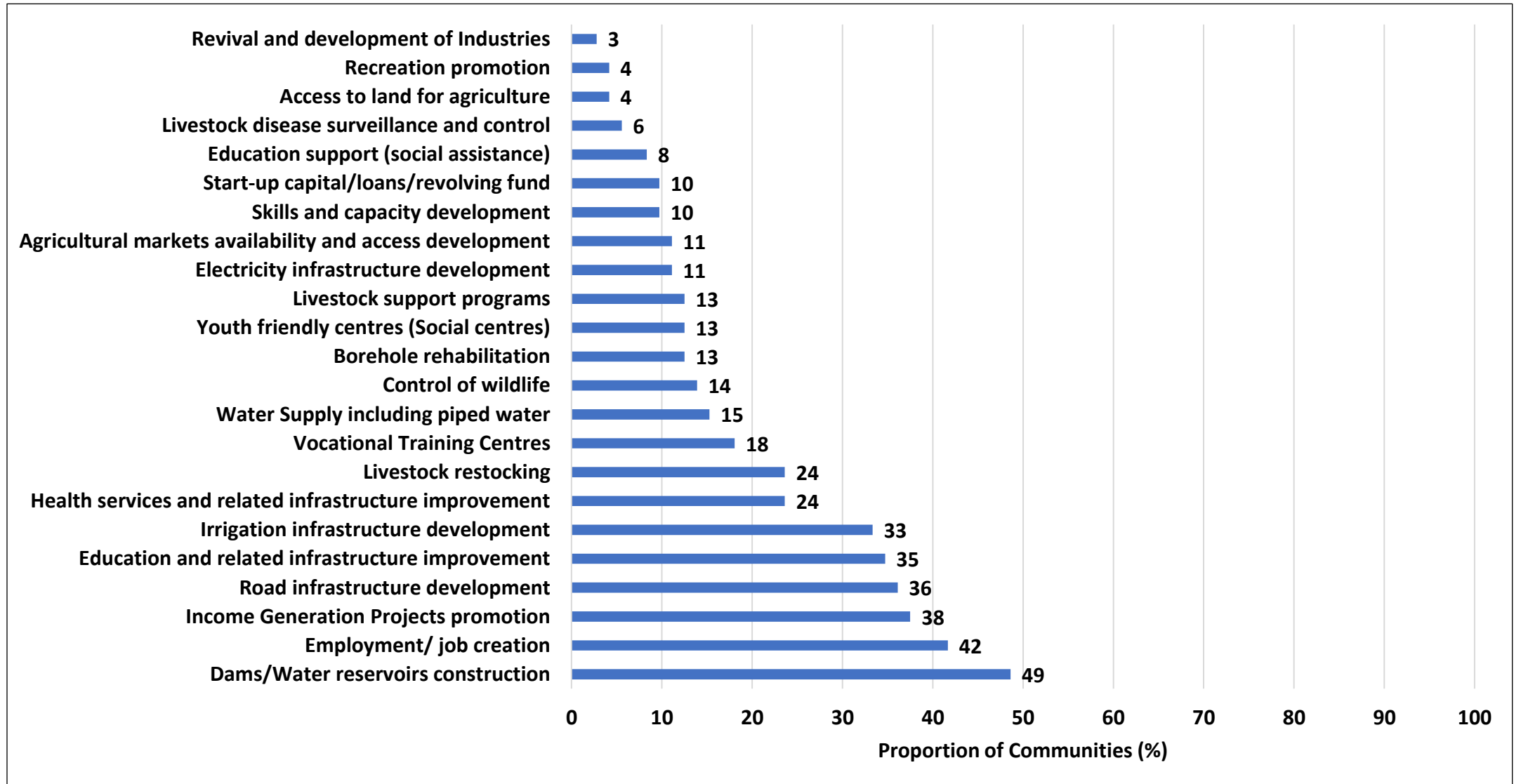
Community Development Challenges and Priorities

Development Challenges



- The major development challenges reported by communities were unemployment (53%), lack of income generating projects (39%) and poverty (29%).

Development Priorities



- The major development priorities reported by communities were dams/ water reservoir construction (49%), employment creation (42%) and income-generating projects promotion (38%).

Conclusions and Recommendations

Conclusions and Recommendations

Education

- The proportion of children who received a hot meal at school was 65%. Government is commended for scaling up support towards the school feeding programme. The Government, through the Ministries responsible for education and social protection, and development partners, should continue to promote the upscaling of available social safety nets for children. These include the Education Assistance Programme and the School Feeding Programme.

Food Safety

- The proportion of households which had no knowledge on the pre-harvest interval of fruits and vegetables sprayed with pesticides was 35.5% while 6.6% reported that they were consuming vegetables or fruits before the recommended pre-harvest interval. There is need for the Ministries responsible for Health and Agriculture to increase awareness on the importance of observing pre-harvest intervals. This will help to protect households' health by preventing exposure to harmful pesticides residues that can cause acute poisoning, cancer or reproductive problems.
- About 33.6% of the households reported that they were not reading food package labels when purchasing food items. Improving food safety is an essential element of improving food security. There is need for the Ministry responsible for Health to scale-up consumer education and awareness on food safety issues to enable households to make healthy food choices.

Shocks and Stressors

- Prolonged mid-season dry spells (57%) and cash shortages (45%) were the most prevalent shocks experienced by households. It is recommended that a multisectoral approach be adopted in responding to the shocks. The initiatives should include water harvesting, borehole drilling, and irrigation.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Food Security

- Approximately 17% of the rural population in Matabeleland South will be food insecure during the peak hunger period. This proportion translates to 120,514 people requiring 11,021 MT of cereal. There is need for the Ministry responsible for agriculture to strengthen climate-smart agriculture initiatives. These include the Pfumvudza/Intwasa programme, promotion of drought resilient crops and promotion of livestock production. It is also recommended that the Ministry responsible for social protection continue to support vulnerable households.

Social Protection

- The proportion of households in Matabeleland South that received any form of social protection support was 65%. The Province should also strengthen its resilience-building programmes to reduce the proportion of households that depend on social assistance.

Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

- At least 29% of the households were practising open defecation. In addition, the majority of households in the province had no hand-washing stations at the toilet facility (89%). It is therefore recommended that the WASH sector promotes WASH-specific awareness and education programmes. The sector should also come up with measures to have improved hand-washing facilities at the toilet

Conclusion and Recommendations

Household Income

- Rural households' incomes have been on an increase since 2020. Government is commended for implementing robust economic stabilisation measures which have contributed to this improvement. However, the major income sources (casual labour (35%) and food crop production (17%)) are susceptible to climate related shocks. Therefore, there is need to up-scale rural development programmes which promote livelihoods diversification and enhance resilience.

Livelihoods Coping

- The proportion of households engaging in stress (20%) and crisis (12%) livelihoods coping categories was higher compared to the base year. The Government and its partners are recommended to accelerate the implementation of policies and strategies focusing on livelihoods diversification and resilience building to ensure sustainable livelihoods and economic growth in rural areas. Areas of focus emerging from the assessment include large-scale irrigation development, value addition, market linkages strengthening, financing and capacity building for communities.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Livestock

- About 69% of households did not own cattle. In Matabeleland South, about 17% of the communities indicated that the pastures were of poor quality. Given that a significant portion of households lack cattle, Government's ongoing efforts to expand livestock ownership, improve pasture quality and introduce efficient livestock practices like deworming and dipping must be intensified to mitigate livestock poverty and enhance the overall quality of life in rural communities. It is recommended that the Government, particularly the Ministry of Lands, Agriculture, Fisheries, Water and Rural Development, implement comprehensive strategies and investments to bolster the animal health industry. This should encompass the establishment of robust drought mitigation measures to secure livestock feed and water, thereby curtailing livestock mortality. Additionally, fostering a policy framework that encourages sustainable production, effective livestock risk management, and the adoption of advanced practices through research and technological innovation is crucial.

Youth Development Challenges and Priorities

- The major youth challenges reported were drug and substance abuse (79%) and drug and early marriages (69%). The Ministry responsible for Youth and Women Affairs should strengthen and upscale income projects for youths. In addition, a multisectoral approach to drug and substance abuse should also strengthen its youth engagement, targeting youth in schools and in the community.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Agriculture Production and Technologies

- Adoption of climate-smart technologies was prominent in practising Pfumvudza/Intwasa (33.6%). There is need to scale up production of labour-saving machinery for climate smart agriculture and make them affordable.
- About 94.2% of the households reported using firewood as the main source of energy for cooking. There is need to maintain the country's biodiversity and wildlife in a good state. The Ministry responsible for Environment needs to ensure that programmes and strategies on re-forestation ensure the sustainable use of timber and non-timber forest products.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Dietary Intake and Taboos

- Household food taboos and restrictions may contribute to negative health and nutrition outcomes. Thirty percent of households had food taboos that restricted the consumption of certain meat and meat products. Gwandahad 45% of households that were not consuming certain meats and meat products. There is need to enhance operationalisation of Social and Behaviour Change (SBC) messages whist increasing the interface with the community and individuals. Ministries responsible for Health, Information and broadcasting services, including subnational levels should make use of available information platforms such as community radio stations, tailor-making messages to address context specific drivers of poor dietary intake.

Child Health

- Vitamin A supplementation to children 6 to 59 months was above the NDS1 target of 90%. The Ministry responsible for Health should continue with the strategies applied, that is task sharing with community health workers, integrating with campaign blitz and child health and nutrition support groups/ care groups. However there is need to strengthen routine surveillance and documentation of Vitamin A supplementation efforts at community level.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Infant and Young Child Feeding

- Continued breastfeeding is a vital life saving practice, particularly during illness as it provides the nutrients required for recovery and growth. The findings show that provincially 51.7% of children aged 12-23 months are being breastfed beyond one year. Continued breastfeeding improves with home and family-based interventions, such as home visits by community health workers and scaling up of infant and young child feeding support groups.
- The Minimum Acceptable Diet (MAD) remained low at 12.2%, below the national target of 25%.
- Proper regulation of the breast-milk substitute industry and enforcement of the International Code of Marketing of Breast-milk Substitutes is also an essential element for promoting and protecting continued breastfeeding.
- WHO guiding principles recommend that children aged 6–23 months be fed a variety of foods to ensure that nutrient needs associated with improved linear growth are met. 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. About 23.5% of children were reported to be consuming a diverse diet. Food-based strategies involving dietary diversification (homestead nutrition gardening, animal husbandry, and nutrition education) as the long-term sustainable strategies are recommended. The Ministry responsible for Agriculture should create an enabling environment that supports sustainable agriculture for practicing dietary diversification with behavior change communication as an integral segment.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Nutrition Status

- Child wasting (Global Acute Malnutrition) was 4.2% at the provincial level, with Beitbridge (6.3%), Gwanda (5.1%), and Matobo(5.3%), having the highest proportions of children above the 5% WHO threshold for emergency response. Child wasting carries a high risk of death if left unmanaged. The nutrition sector must remain alert and actively monitor the caseload of severe wasting especially towards the lean season between September 2025 and March 2026. It is recommended to set up sentinel site surveillance mechanisms in districts with high Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM) rates to define and monitor early warning indicators and trigger levels that will facilitate implementation of anticipatory actions and an appropriate timely response in the event of a continued deterioration of the nutritional status in children under-five.
- Stunting reflects the cumulative effects of under nutrition and infections during the first 1000 days. The proportion of children that were stunted was 26.7% which remains high according to the WHO classification and the NDS1 set target of 17%. The government should continue to implement interventions to address context specific drivers of stunting.

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