Foreword

The Government of Zimbabwe has continued to exhibit its commitment for reducing food and nutrition insecurity in Zimbabwe. Evidence include the culmination of ZimASSET's Food and Nutrition Security Cluster and the multi-sector Food and Nutrition Security Policy (FNSP). Recognising the vagaries of climate variabilities and the unforeseeable potential livelihood challenges, Government put in place structures whose mandates are, among other things to provide early warning information for early actioning. The Food and Nutrition Council, through the ZimVAC, is one of such structures which strives to fulfil the aspirations of the FNSP's commitment number 6 of providing food and nutrition early warning information. In response to the advent of the El Nino phenomena which has resulted in the country experiencing long dry spells, the ZimVAC undertook a rapid assessment focussing on updating the ZimVAC May 2015 results. The lean season monitoring focused on the relevant food and nutrition security parameters. The process followed a 3 pronged approach which were, a review of existing food and nutrition secondary data, qualitative district Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and for other variables a quantitative household survey which in most cases are representative at provincial and national level.

This report provides a summation of the results for the 3 processes undertaken and focuses on the following thematic areas: the rainfall season quality, 2015/16 agricultural assistance, crop and livestock condition, food and livestock markets, gender based violence, household income sources and livelihoods strategies, domestic and production water situation, health and nutrition, food assistance and a review of the rural food security projections. The report concludes by giving specific recommendations on each of the thematic areas outlined in the report. Conclusions have been drawn that have influenced the proposed broad recommendations. It is our hope that such recommendations will aide to your development of response strategies.

We would also want to express our appreciation for the active participation of all food and nutrition structures at National, Provincial, District and the community at large. The quality of this report was enhanced by the participation of members of the Food and Nutrition Security Technical Committee and all the Provincial Administrators who made it to the report writing venue. The Government of Zimbabwe, SADC RVAA, WFP and UNICEF's financial support provided all the impetus the ZimVAC required to meet all the cost for this exercise.

George D. Kembo
ZimVAC Chairperson

Acknowledgements

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- Food and Nutrition Council
- SIRDC
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- SADC RVAC
- Zimbabwe National Statistics Agency (ZIMSTAT)
- Ministry of Agriculture, Mechanisation and Irrigation Development
- Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare
- Ministry of Health and Child Care
- Ministry of Local Government, Public Works and National Housing
- Ministry of Rural Development, Promotion and Preservation of National Culture and Heritage
- Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education
- OXFAM
- Red Cross
- Action Aid Zimbabwe
- Catholic Relief Services (CRS)
- UNICEF
- United Nations Resident Coordinator's Office
- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
- Meteorogical Services Department (MSD)
- United States Agency for International Development (USAID)
- UN Women
- United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)
- World Food Programme (WFP)
- Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)

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Background and Methodology

Background

- The May 2015 ZimVAC **results projected 16%** of the **rural population** (about 1.5million people) to have extreme difficulties accessing enough food for a healthy and active life on their own during the peak hunger period (January – March 2016).
- The figure represented a **160% increase** compared to May 2014 results, when a bumper harvest had been recorded.
- **A number of assumptions** were used in developing this most likely scenario
- Hence, the **need to monitor** and update the behaviour of indicators used for scenario building, accordingly

Objectives

The main objective of the monitoring exercise was to assess the prevailing food and nutrition security situation. Specifically, the assessment aimed to:

1. To assess how the food and nutrition situation had evolved since the last assessment (focusing on food availability, access, stability and utilization)
2. To assess the performance of the 2015/16 agriculture season
3. To assess the performance of the current food and nutrition interventions
4. To assess households' coping mechanisms
5. To determine levels of acute and chronic malnutrition in children 6 to 59 months of age
6. To update the May 2015 ZimVAC food security results in line with the behaviour of indicators used for the scenario building.

The Monitoring Exercise

The monitoring exercise used a three-pronged approach as follows:

1. **Secondary data** review and analysis;
2. Primary data collection/ analysis through:
    i. Qualitative district level **focus group discussions** in each of the country's 60 rural districts and
    ii. A **household survey** in sampled households to be representative at provincial and national level.

Secondary Data Review and Synthesis

Each of the following thematic areas was contextualised and analysis was by comparison to normal, last year or the recent past 5years, whichever was possible

- Cereal availability
- Markets and food prices
- Health and nutrition
- Productive and domestic water situation
- Climate and weather
- Livestock and grazing situation
- Food assistance interventions

Focus Group Discussions

Members from the national teams facilitated focus group discussions in each of the 60 rural districts using a guide with a list of questions covering the following thematic areas:

1. Rainfall season quality
2. 2015/16 agricultural assistance
3. Crop condition
4. Livestock condition
5. Food and livestock markets
6. Casual labour
7. Household income sources and livelihoods strategies
8. Domestic and production water situation
9. Food assistance and
10. Gender based violence

Household Survey

- A team comprising of the national supervisors and at least 6 selected members from the District Food and Nutrition Security Committees (DFNSCs) or the District Drought Relief Committees (DDRCs) administered 25 household questionnaires to randomly selected households from 2 perceived worse-off wards and 2 perceived better wards.
- The household visits assisted in the triangulation of issues emanating from the FGDs
- The data from the instrument was used to assess the following:
  - Food assistance interventions adequacy at household level
  - Meal frequency
  - Food consumption and dietary diversity scores
  - Household coping strategies
  - Household's coping capacity
  - Child nutrition

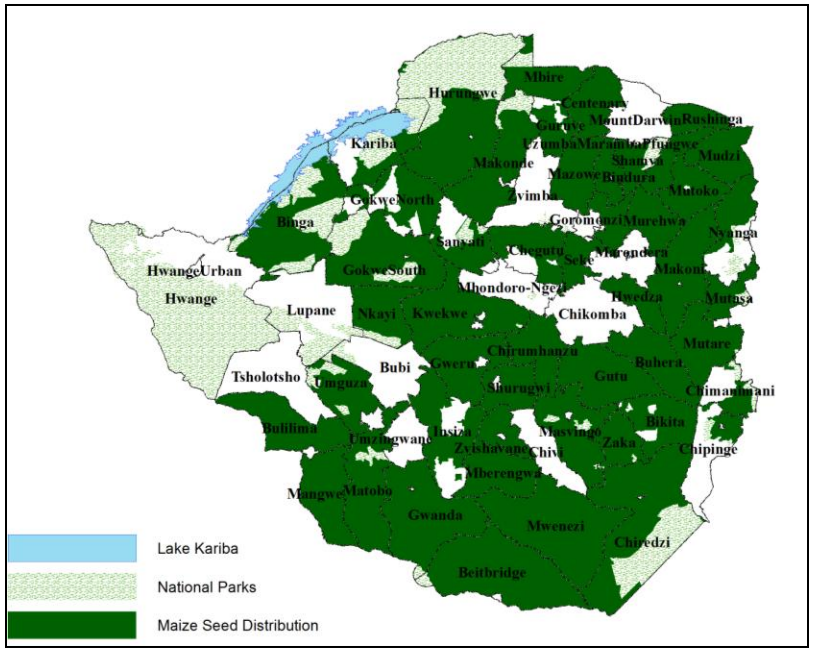
Timelines

Action	Timeline
Secondary data gathering and synthesis	06 – 13 January 2016
Tool finalisation	13 January 2016
Training (standardisation)	14 – 15 January 2016
Data collection	17-28 January 2016
Report writing	1-5 February 2016

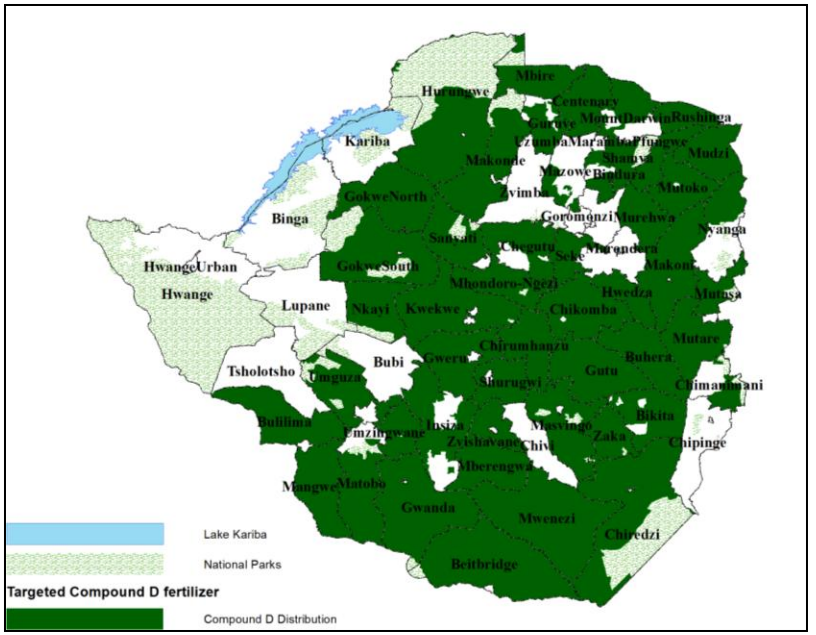
2015/16 Agricultural Season

Crop Input Availability

Agricultural Input Support Programmes



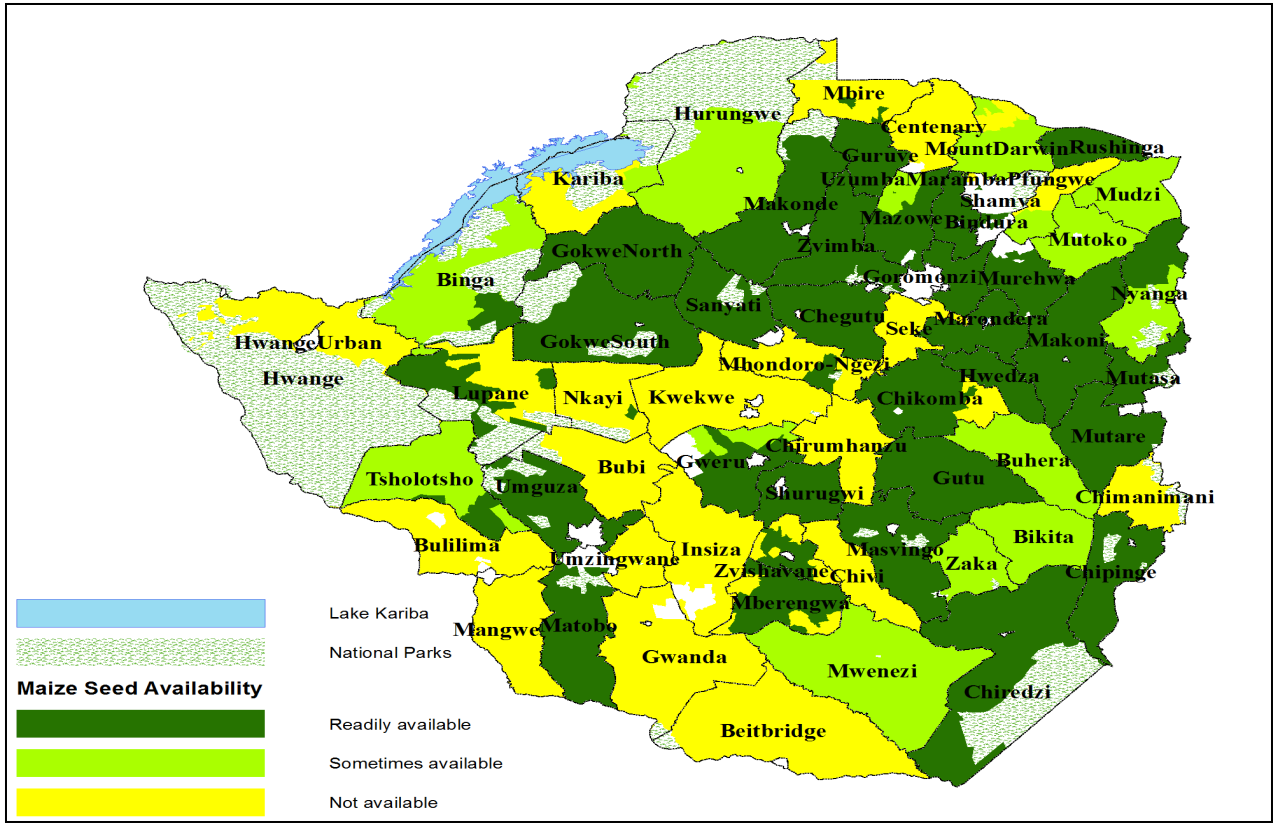
Targeted Maize Seed Support Programme



Targeted Compound D Fertilizer Support Programme

- Under the vulnerable input support programme, vulnerable households received 10kg of maize seed, 50kg bag of compound D and 50kg bag of Ammonium Nitrate (AN).
- The majority of the districts benefitted from the Government input support programme such as the vulnerable and the Presidential input schemes.
- While this was a good initiative, the preceding long dry spells belittled such efforts.

Availability of Appropriate Maize Seed Varieties on the Market

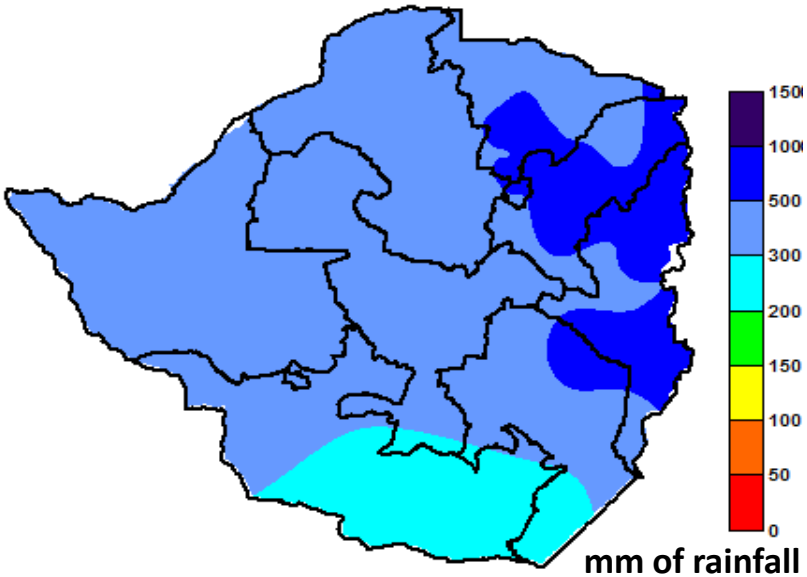


- Whilst the generic districts indicated the availability of maize seed on the formal markets, its appropriateness to the specific regions was worrisome.
- Significant districts had no maize seed variety that suited the district's climatic region.

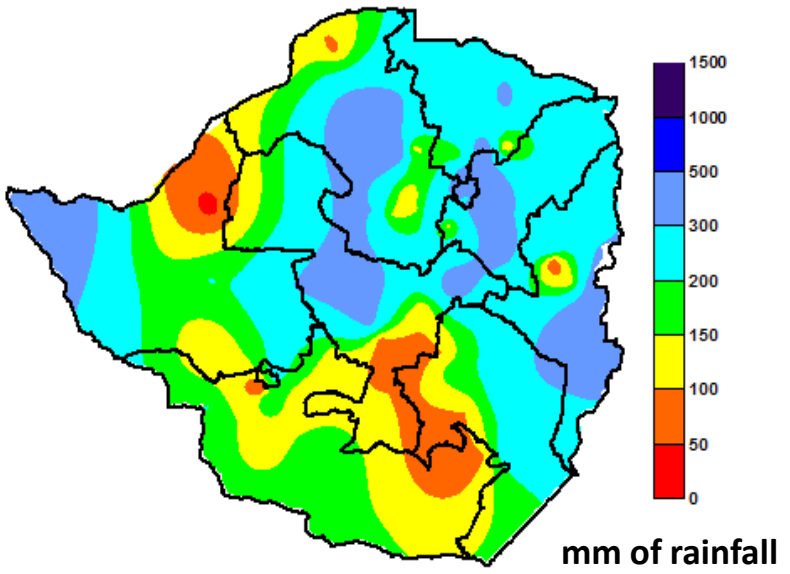
Spatial and Temporal Distribution of Rainfall in the 2015/2016 Season

Rainfall Totals Received During ONDJ

1 (a) Mean Accumulated Rainfall for ONDJ 1981-2010



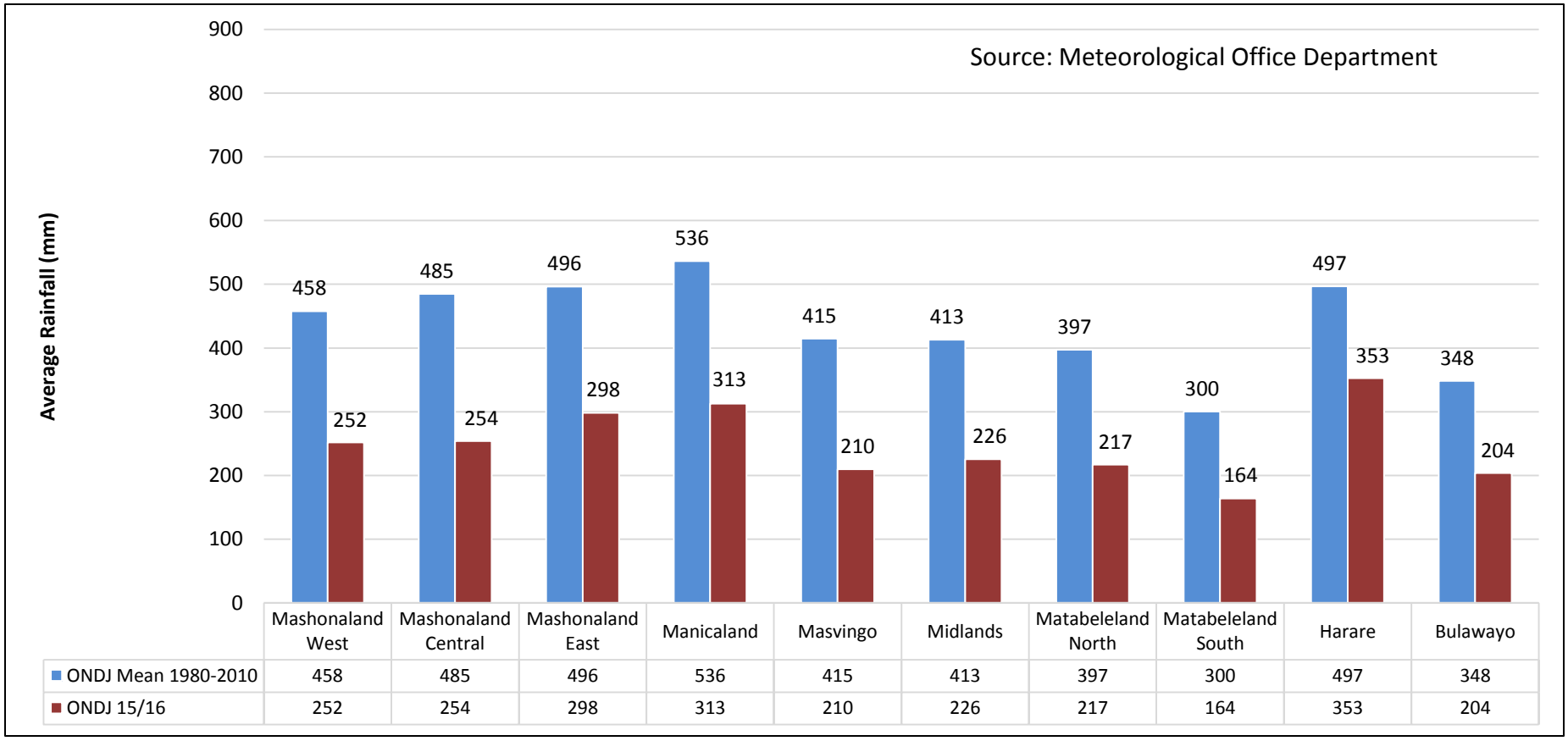
1 (b) Accumulated Rainfall for ONDJ 2015/2016



Source: Meteorological Services Department

- The mean rainfall data is obtained from the average data of 30 (thirty) consecutive years. 1981 to 2010 is the current climate period recognized by the World Meteorological Organization.
- The long term average for October, November, December, January (ONDJ) is showing that 95% of the country by this time should have received between 300 and 500mm of rainfall. The eastern areas should have between 500 and 1000mm of rain (deep blue). However, the area around Beitbridge should have received between 200 and 300mm (cyan).
- The accumulated rainfall totals for ONDJ for 2015/2016 rainfall season figure (1b) is showing that the greater part of the country had received less than 300mm by the end of the period.
- The areas that received less than 200mm of rain include most of Matabeleland South, Matabeleland North, and parts of Midlands and Masvingo (in particular Lusulu, Binga, Makoholi, Triangle, Shurugwi, Rutenga, and Rupike)

Rainfall Totals Received During ONDJ Compared to ONDJ 30 Year Mean

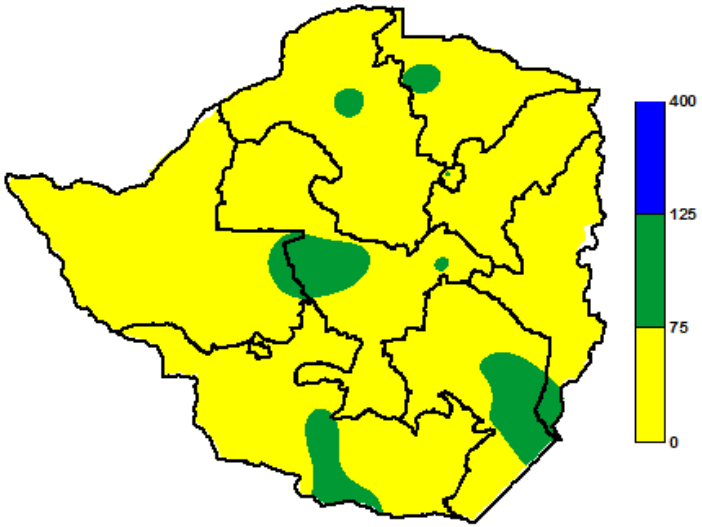


	Mashonaland West	Mashonaland Central	Mashonaland East	Manicaland	Masvingo	Midlands	Matabeleland North	Matabeleland South	Harare	Bulawayo
ONDJ Mean 1980-2010	458	485	496	536	415	413	397	300	497	348
ONDJ 15/16	252	254	298	313	210	226	217	164	353	204

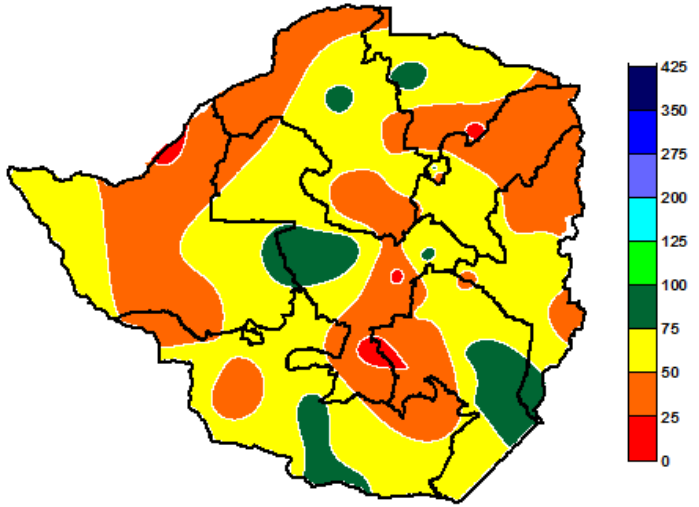
On average, for the period between the start of the season and the end of January, the country received less than 60% of the average rainfall for the same period between 1980 and 2010.

Percentage of Normal (%) During the Period ONDJ

2 (a) Percentage of normal for ONDJ (Standard)



2 (b) Percentage of normal for ONDJ

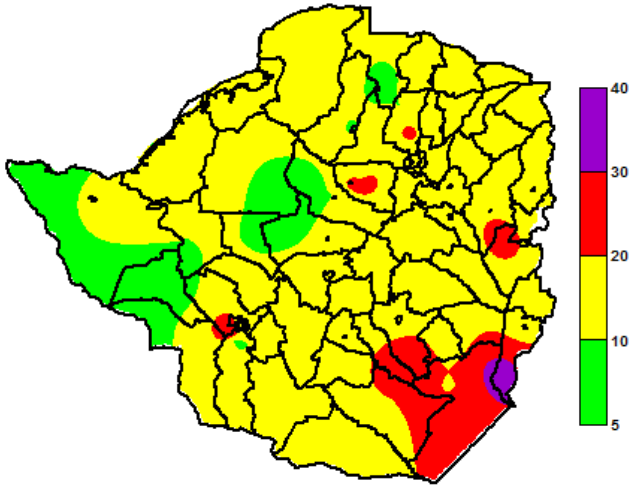


Source: Meteorological Services Department

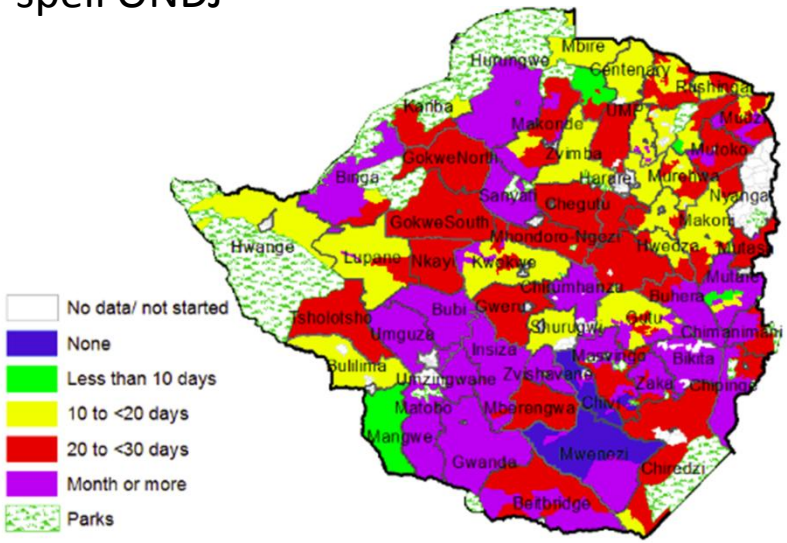
- Figure 2 (a) is the standard map used in SADC. It is showing that almost the whole country was in the below normal (yellow- less than 75% of normal). However, there are areas which had received their normal rains (green between 75% and 125%).
- Figure 2(b) depicts the percentage of normal data in greater geographical detail. Areas in the northern parts of Manicaland, Mashonaland East, and Mashonaland West, as well as substantial areas in Matabeleland North, Midlands, Masvingo, and Mashonaland Central have all received less than 50% of normal rainfall for the period observed.

Dry Spells October- January

Length of longest dry spell ONDJ



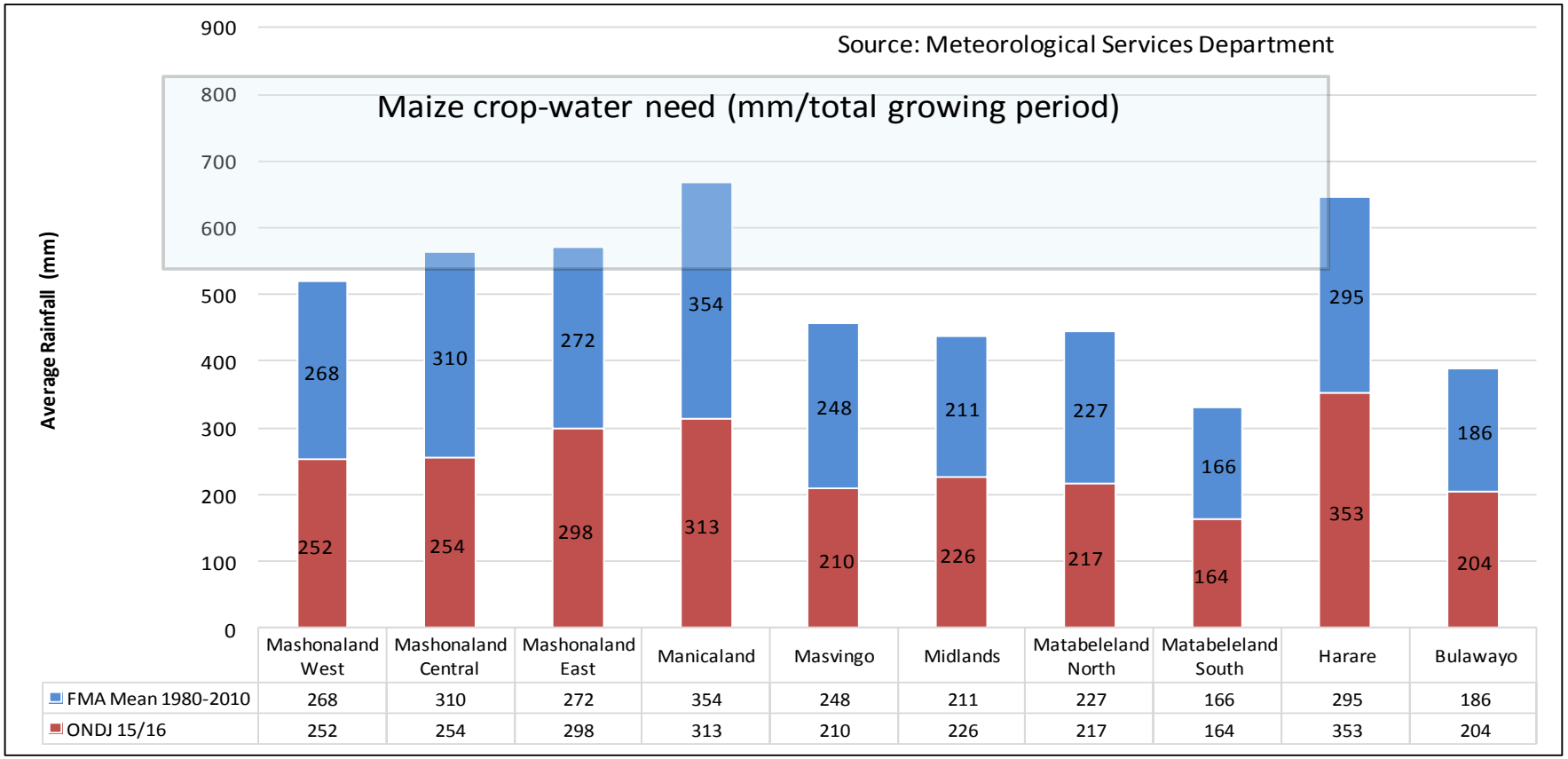
Source: Meteorological Services Department



Source: Rapid Assessment Focus Group Discussions

- A dry spell is defined as a period (number of days) when an area does not receive rains following the start of the season. A dry day is defined as a day with less than 0.85mm of rain.
- The figure to the left depicts the longest dry spell, between 5 and 35 days, received in different areas of the country between the start of the season and the end of January as measured by the Met Office.
- The figure to the right depicts the longest dry spell based on data obtained through the rapid assessment FGDs.
- Most of the country received at least one dry spell of more than 10 days.
- Areas in the southern part of Masvingo, southern part of Manicaland, Matabeleland South and Matabeleland North experienced dry spells of more than 20 days.

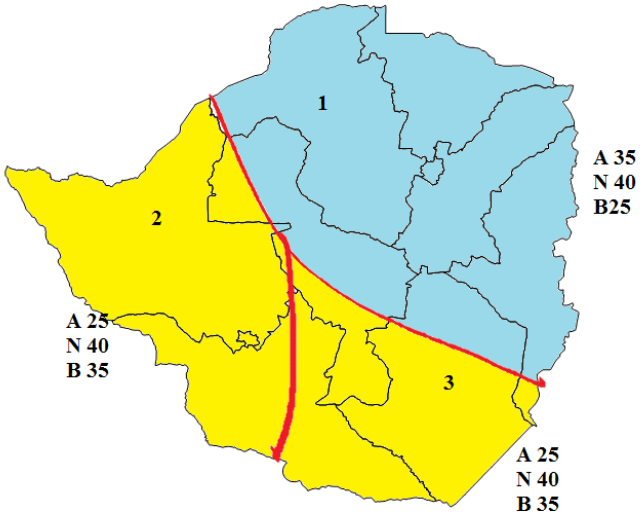
ONDJ 15/16 Observed Rainfall with Rainfall Projection Based on FMA Mean (1980-2010)



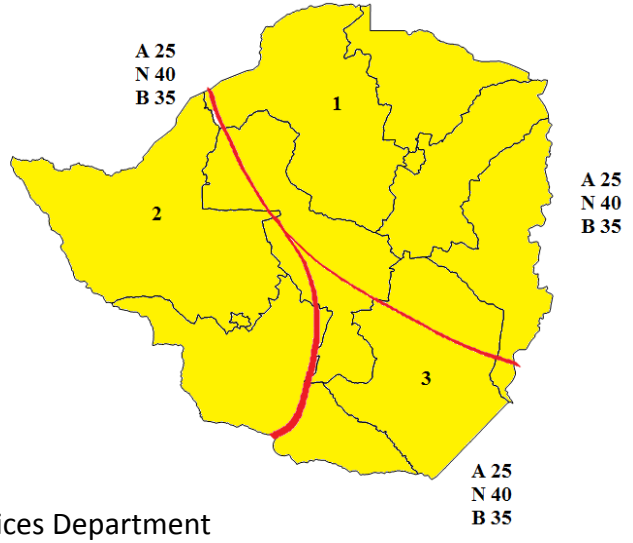
- The chart illustrates the mean accumulated rainfall for the October- January 2015/2016 period (red), summed to the mean accumulated rainfall for February-April (FMA) between 1980-2010
- Data is superimposed over the maize crop water need (500-800 mm/total growing period)
- If average rainfall for the FMA period is in line with the mean FMA rainfall, Masvingo, Midlands, Matabeleland North and South will receive on average less water than required for maize crop.
- Mashonaland East, West, and Central would barely receive sufficient water for maize crop

Seasonal Forecast Update

3 (a) Seasonal Forecast September 2015



3(b) Seasonal Forecast December 2015

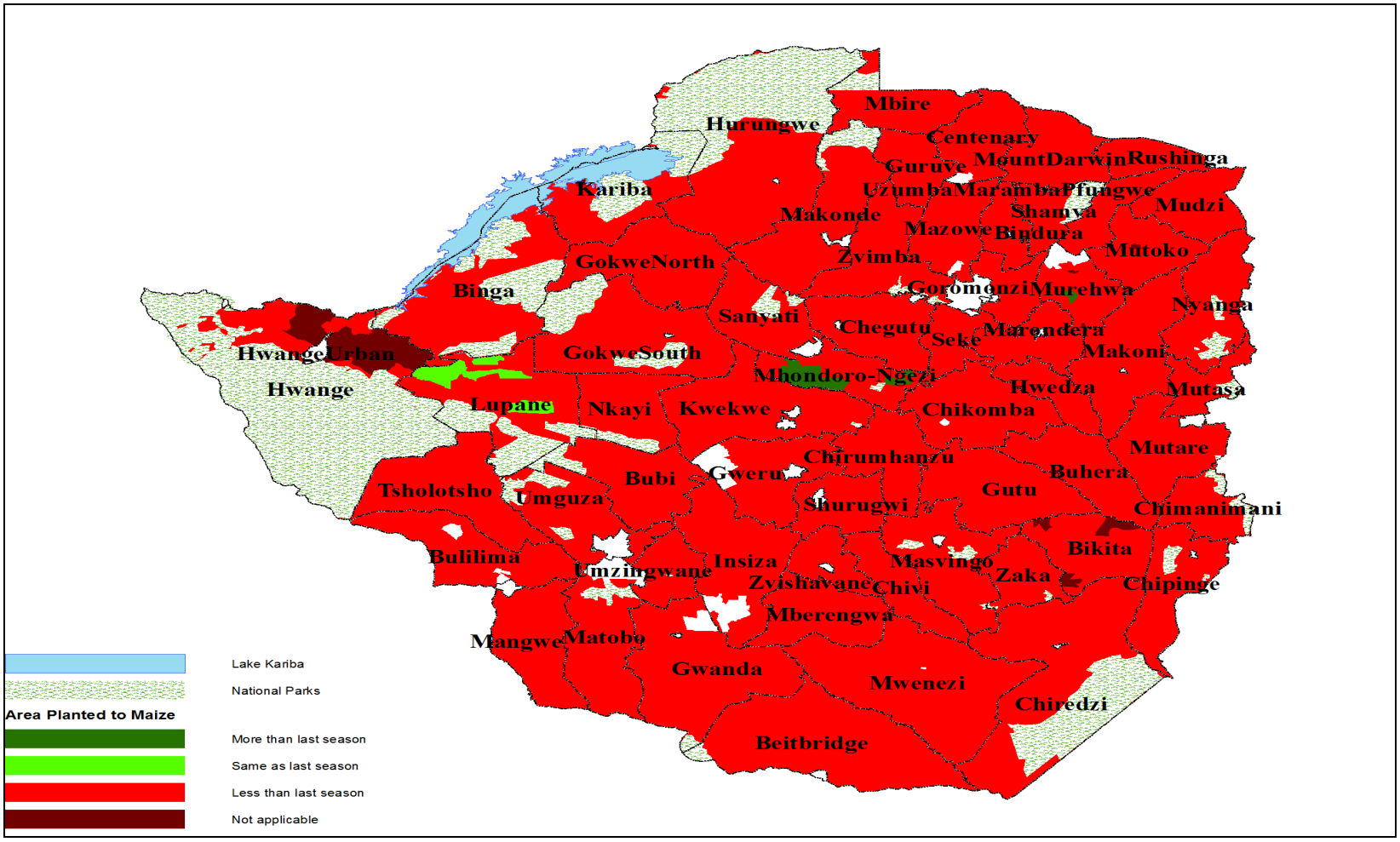


Source: Meteorological Services Department

- The seasonal forecast for January, February, March (JFM) as at September 2015 indicated mostly normal rainfall with a bias towards above normal for meteorological region 1 (Mashonaland Provinces, Harare, most of Manicaland, northern parts of Masvingo and northern parts of Midlands).
- Meteorological regions 2 & 3 were forecasted to go for normal rainfall with a bias towards below normal (fig 3a). Region 2 constitutes most of Matabeleland North, northwest Matabeleland South, Bulawayo. Region 3 constitutes: most of Masvingo, the extreme southern parts of Manicaland, southeast Matabeleland South and the southern parts of Midlands.
- The updated seasonal forecast however indicates the likelihood of normal rainfall with a bias towards below normal for the whole country (fig 3b). This includes Meteorological region 1 which consists of the Mashonalands, most of Manicaland and the northern parts of Masvingo and Midlands.

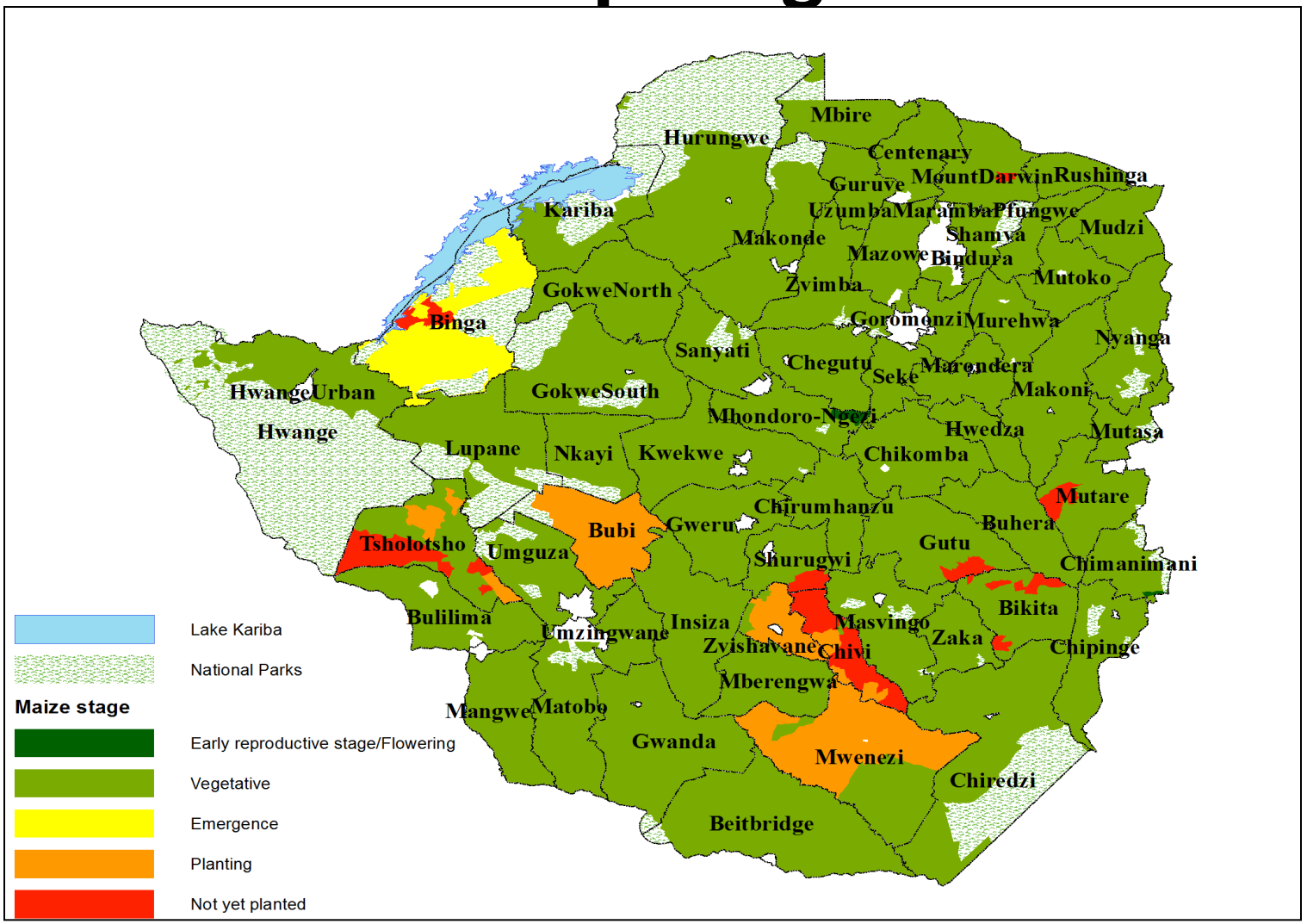
Area Planted, Crop Stage and Condition

Area Planted to Maize Compared to Same Time Last Season



Compared to the same time last year, the area planted to maize was lower this season.

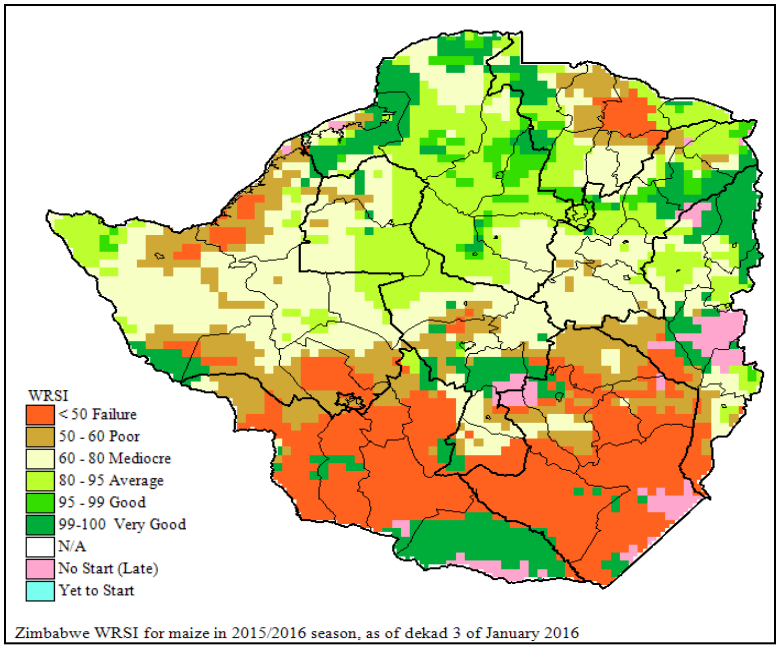
Crop Stage



The majority of the crop was at vegetative stage including small grains and legumes.

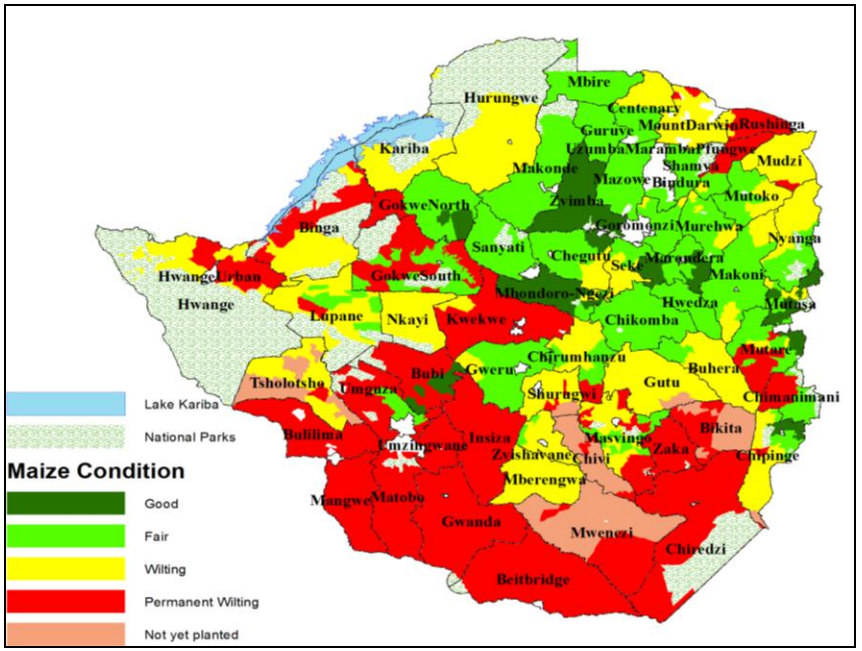
Crop Condition - Maize

WRSI for the 3rd Dekad of January



Zimbabwe WRSI for maize in 2015/2016 season, as of dekad 3 of January 2016

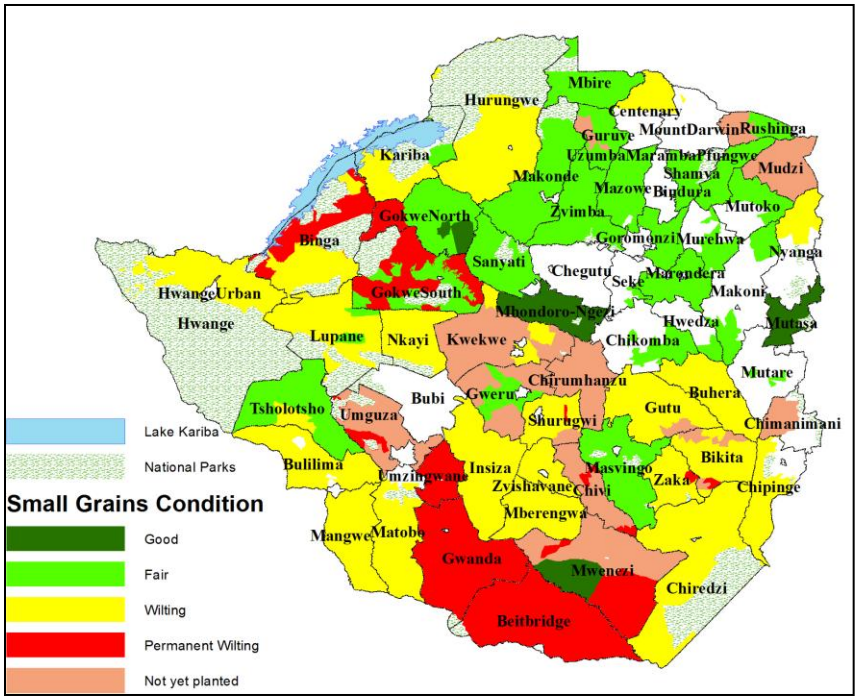
Maize Crop Condition



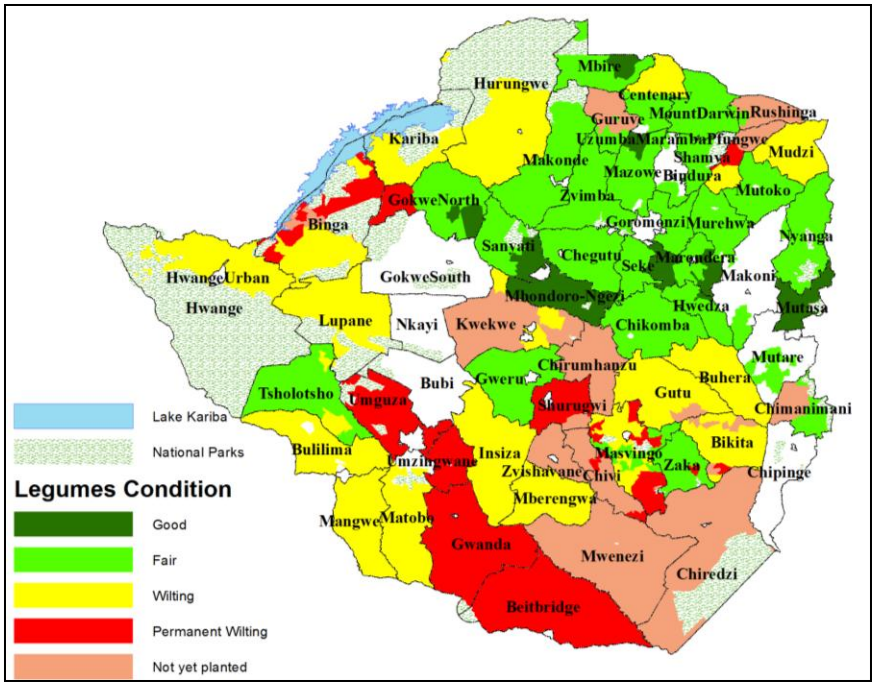
- The Water Requirement Satisfaction Index (WRSI) for the 3rd dekad of January indicates that the majority of areas did not receive enough water to sustain a maize crop
- Crop condition for the majority of the crops was fair to good in the upper part of the country
- In some wards (5%), households had not yet planted the maize crop due to poor spatial and temporal distribution of rainfall and 29% of the wards had permanent wilting
- For some areas that received significant rains after the assessment, we expect recovering of some crops
- Beitbridge had recently received significant amounts of rainfall just before the assessment

Crop Condition – Small Grains and Legumes

Small Grain Crop Condition



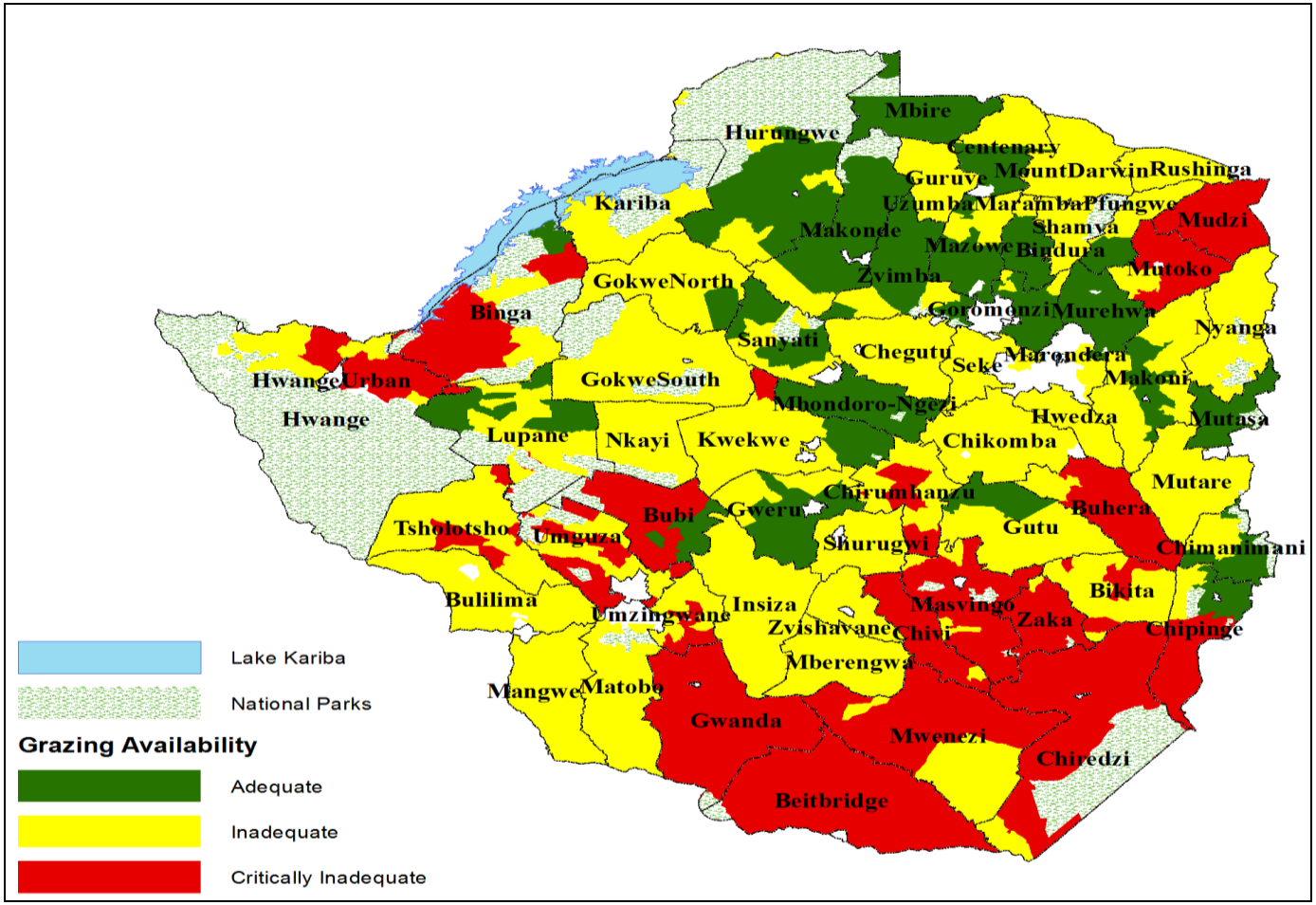
Legumes Crop Condition



- Both small grains and legumes had wilted in some wards
- Crops in fair condition were mostly in the northern wards

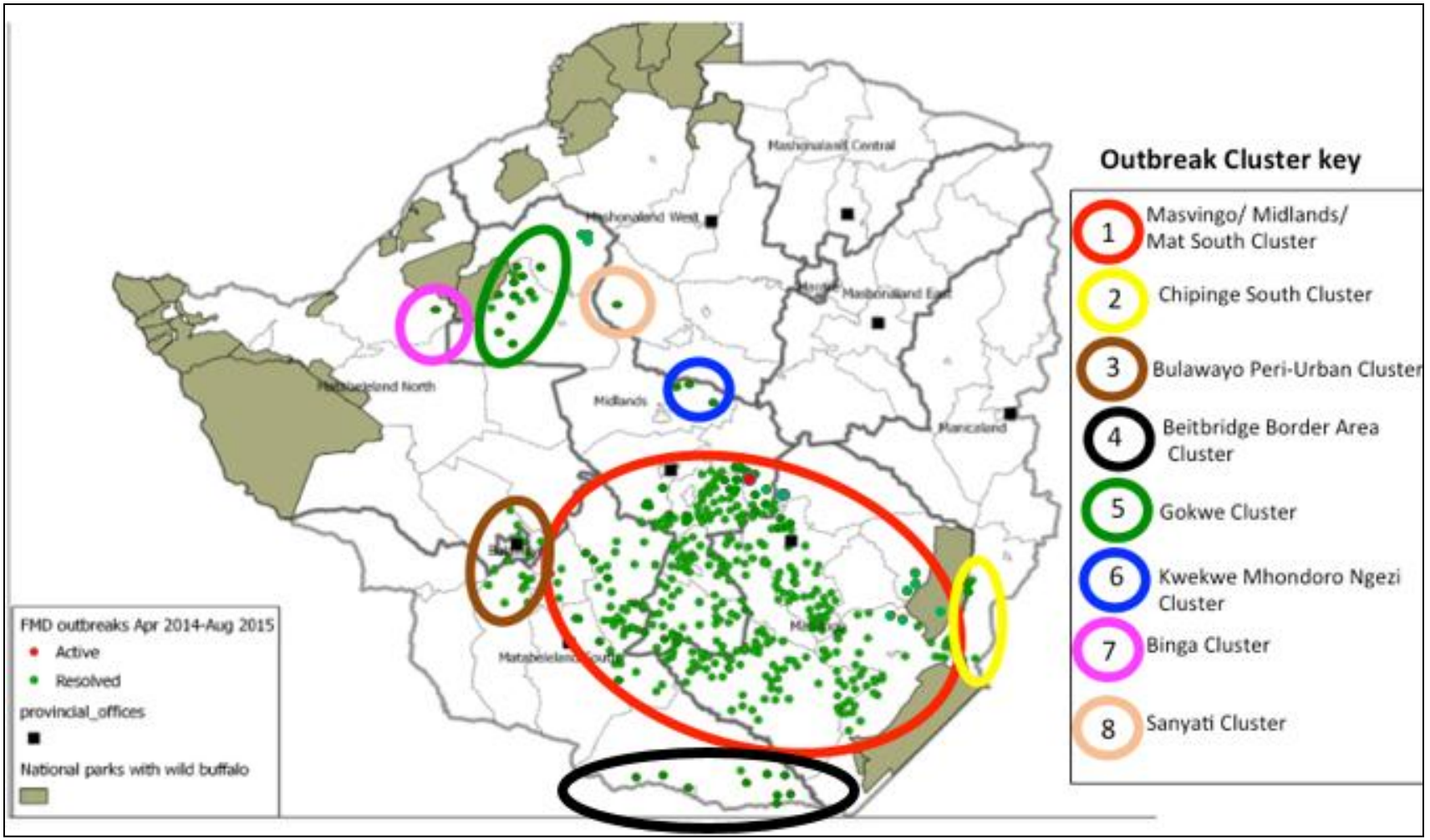
Livestock and Grazing Conditions

Grazing Availability



- Across the country, grazing was generally poor and inadequate.
- About 25 districts had critically inadequate pastures, and livestock deaths due to drought had been recorded in these districts

Livestock Diseases Situation

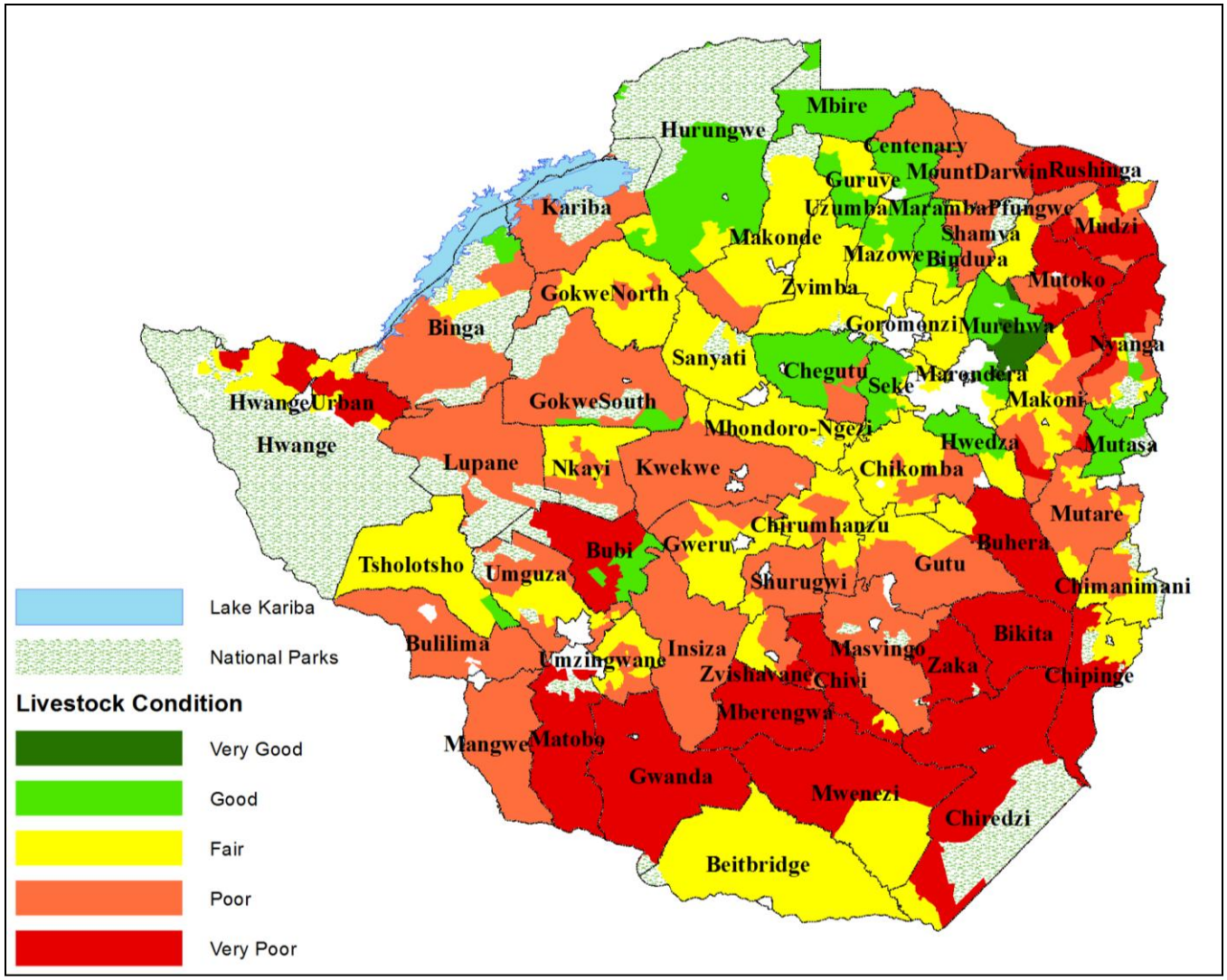


- Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) which was widespread in Matabeleland South, Midlands and Masvingo provinces and parts of Manicaland (Chipinge South) and Mashonaland West (Ngezi) had been contained.
- However, the existence of quarantine in the areas impacts negatively on the price for livestock.

Other Livestock Disease Occurrences

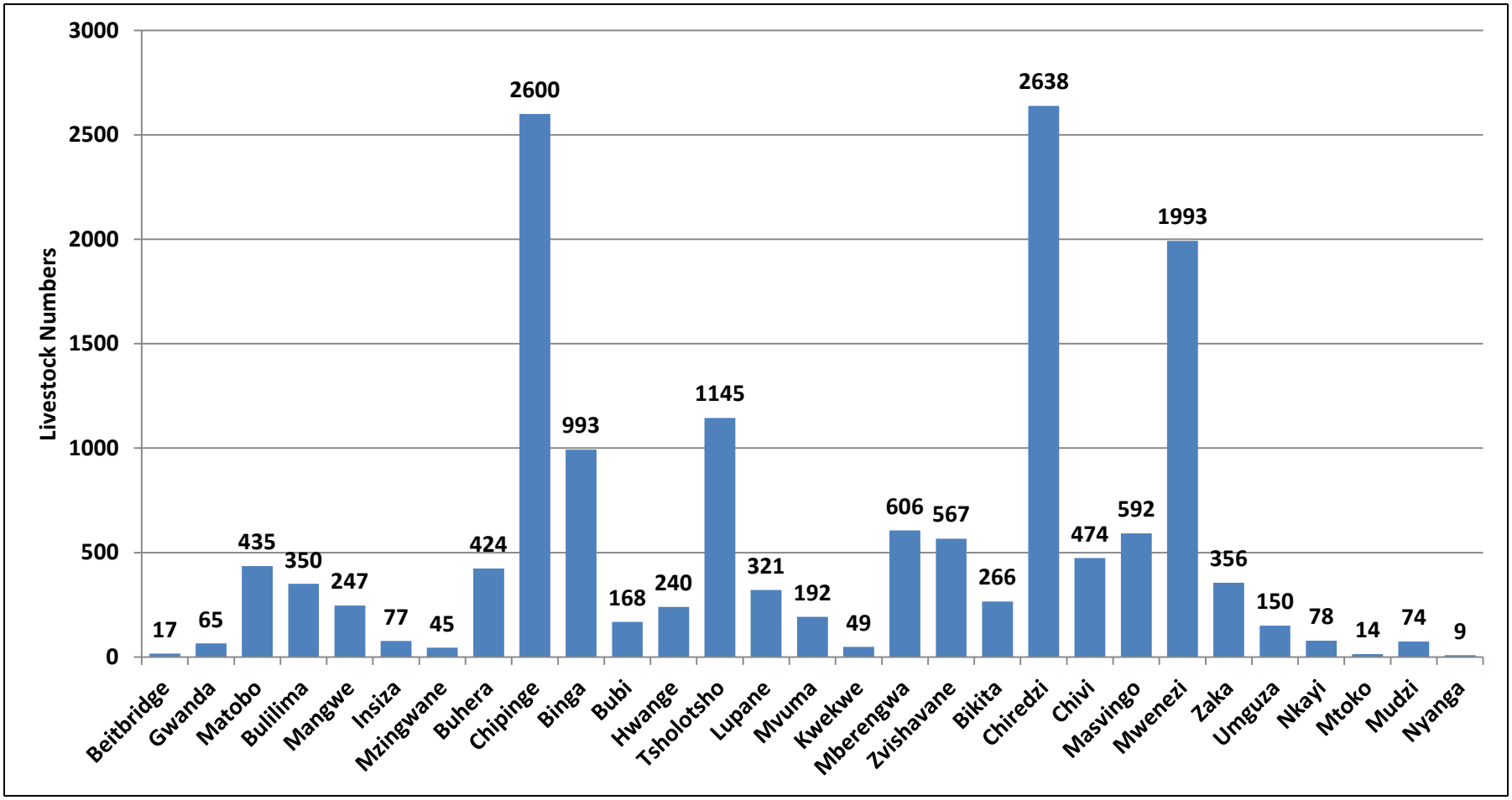
Diseases	Districts Affected
New Castle	Rushinga, Mbire, Umzingwane, Bikita, Gutu, Mberengwa, Mwenezi, Guruve, Bindura , Zaka and Seke (3 wards)
Black Leg	Wedza, Mhondoro-Ngezi, Beitbridge, Mangwe, Insiza, Nkayi, Umguza, Makoni, Mutare, Bindura, Shamva, Mt Darwin, Chegutu, Chikomba, Hwange and Tsholotsho
January Disease	Goromonzi , Shamva (1,2,3)
Tick borne	Mutasa, Chikomba, Hwedza, Murehwa, Bindura, Centenary, Mbire, Rushinga, Hurungwe, Guruve, Mazowe, Seke and Chegutu, Beitbridge, Mangwe, Gwanda, Insiza, Bikita, Gutu, Mwenezi, Zaka, Sanyati, Buhera, Insiza, Chiredzi and Umzingwane
Lumpy skin	Beitbridge, Zaka, UMP, Insiza, Hwedza, Masvingo
Swine fever	Mt Darwin (ward 1)

Livestock Condition



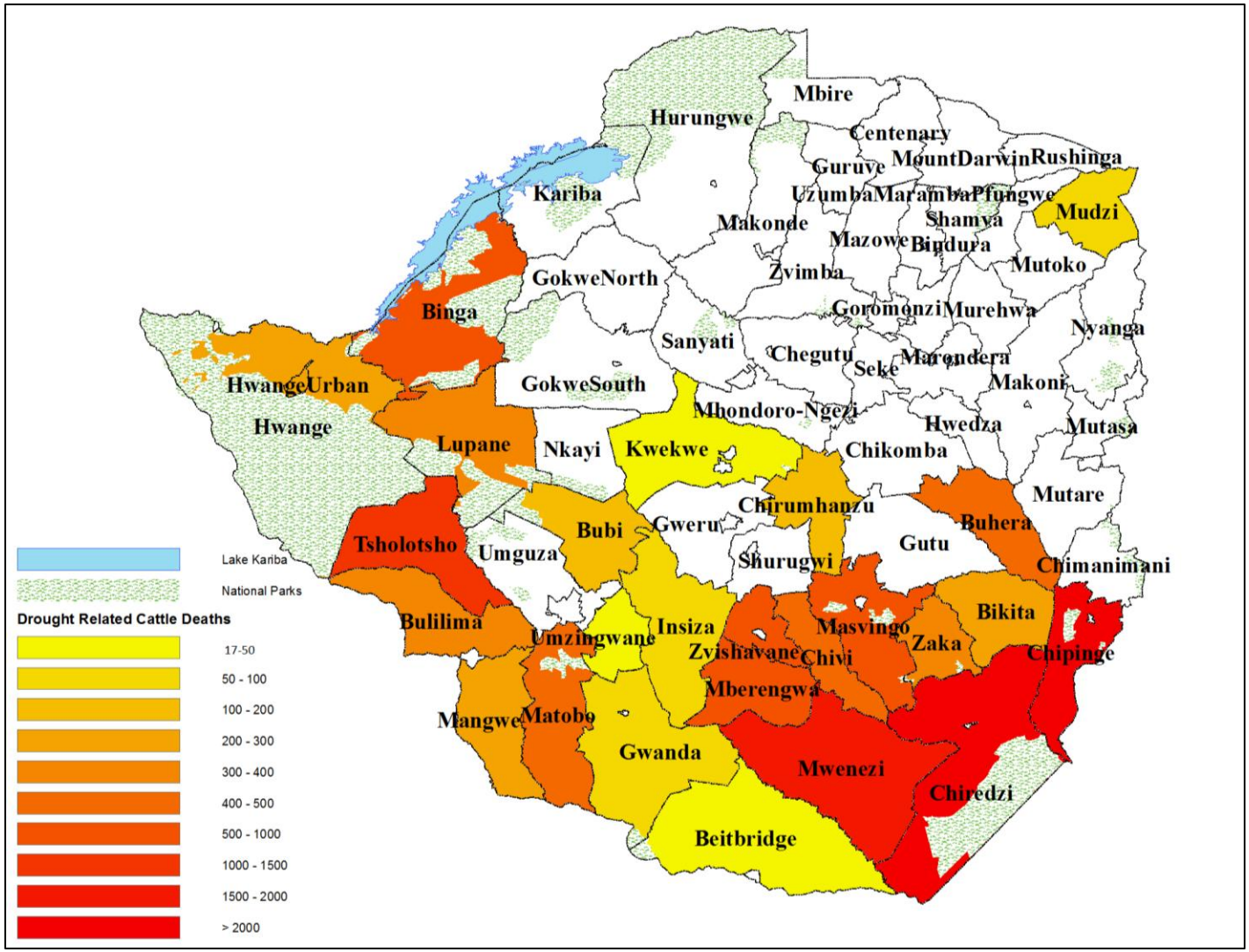
Condition ranged from very poor to fair with only 11 districts indicating that livestock condition was good

Drought Related Deaths



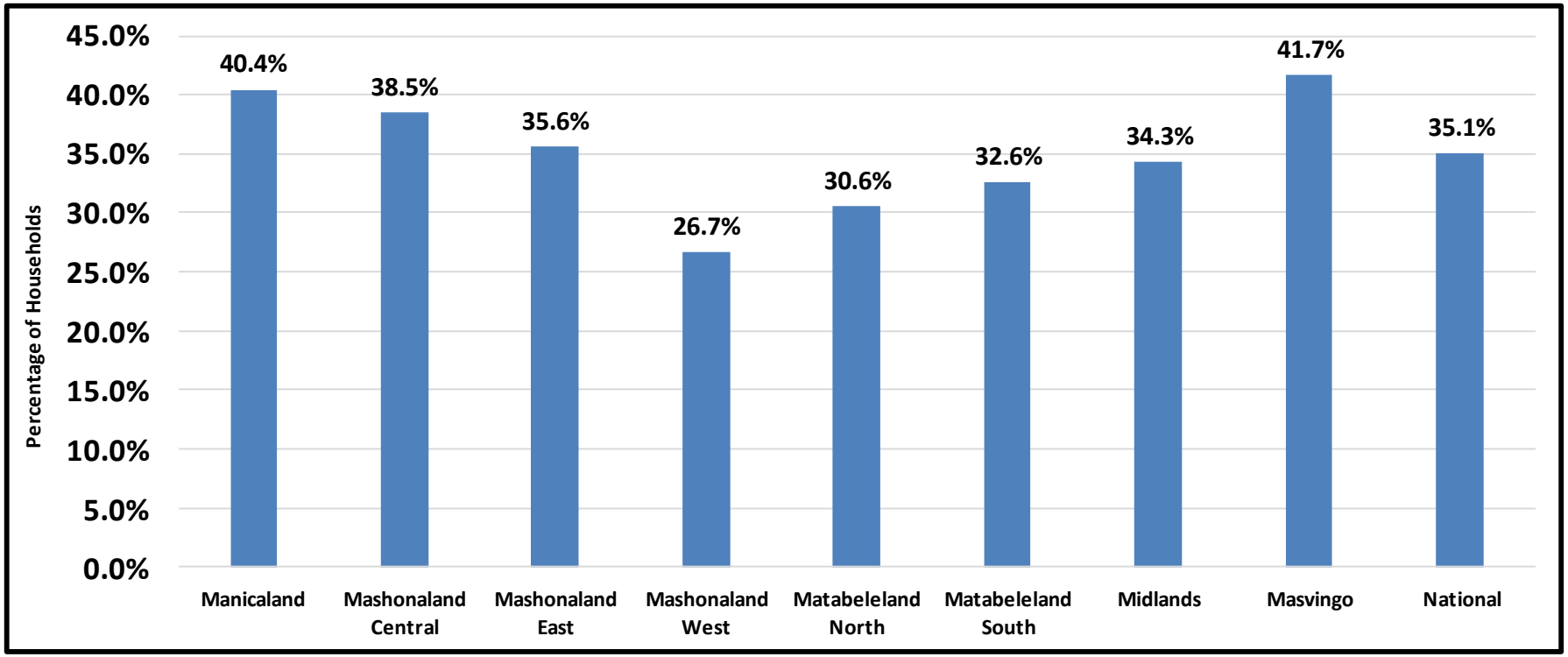
The highest deaths due to drought were recorded in Chiredzi (2,638), followed by Chipinge, (2,600), then Mwenezi (1,993), Tsholotsho (1,145) and Binga (993).

Drought Related Cattle Deaths



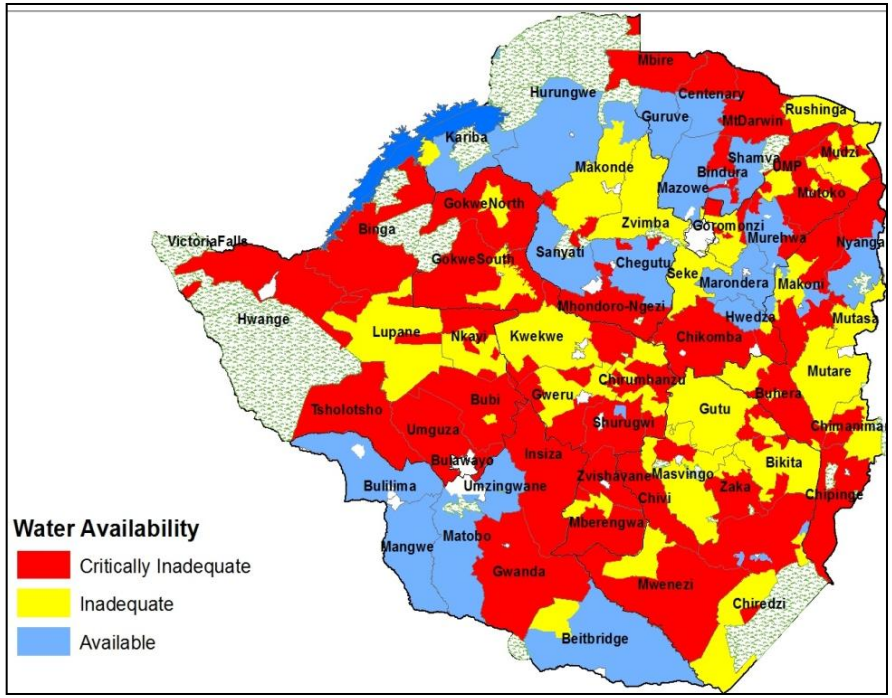
Water Situation

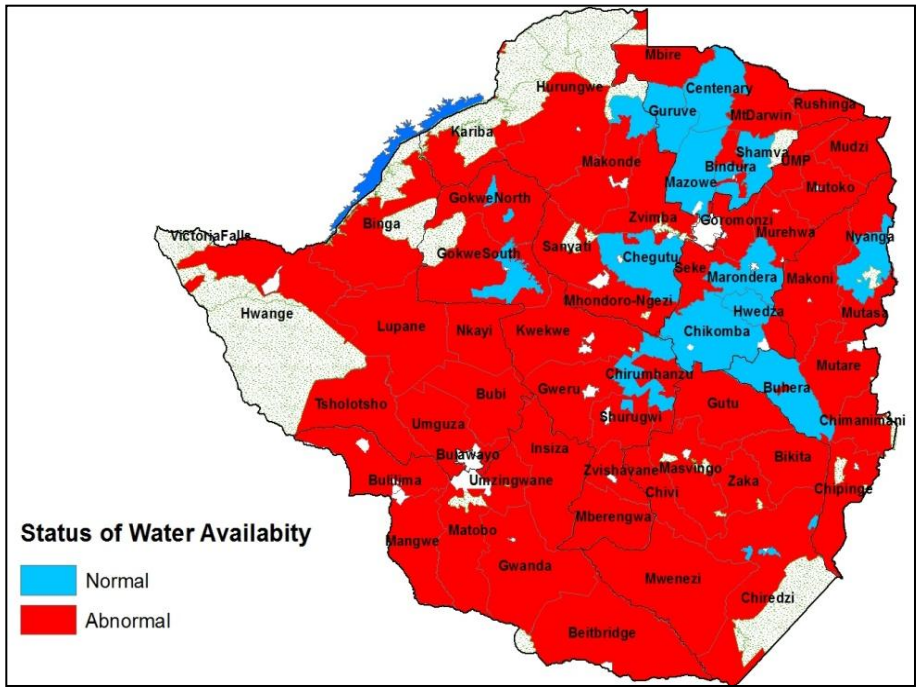
Households with Inadequate Water Supply by Province



- On average, 35.1% of households had inadequate water supply for domestic use and of these, 31.3% cited that this was abnormal for this time of the year compared to other seasons.
- Masvingo and Manicaland provinces had the highest proportions of households with inadequate water for domestic use; 41.7% and 40.4% respectively.

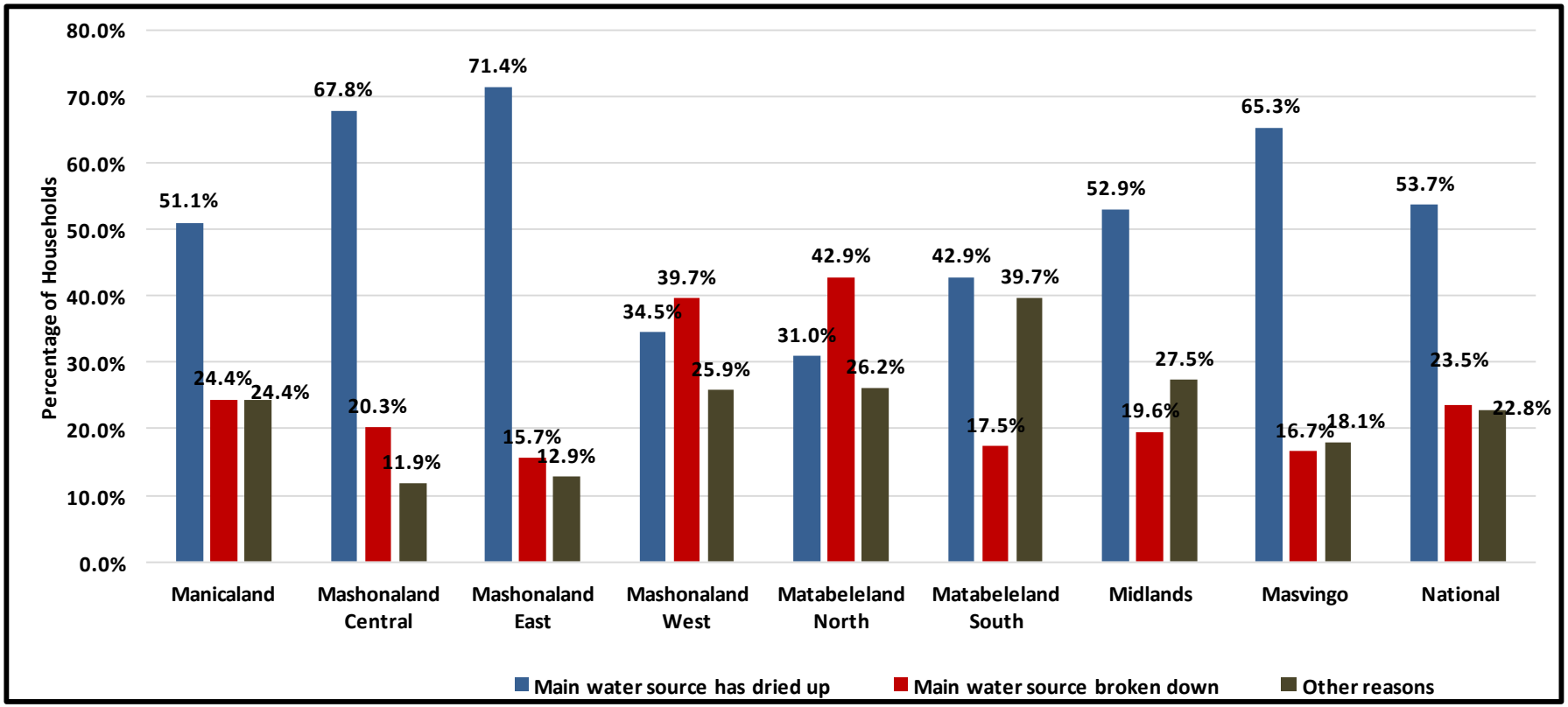
Water Availability for Domestic Purposes





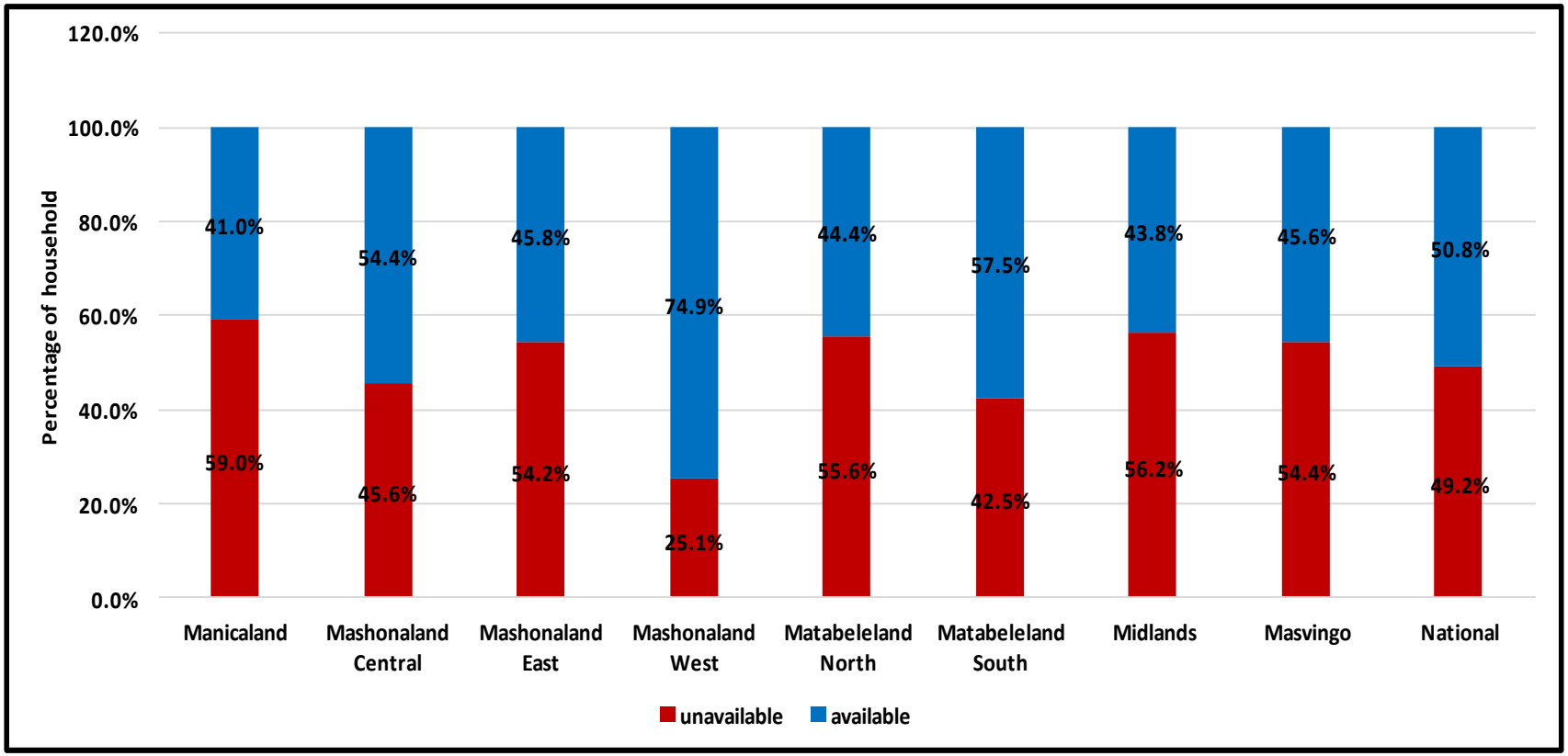
- In Matabeleland North, Midlands, Masvingo, parts of Manicaland and northern parts of Mashonaland East water was inadequate and communities relied on distant sources
- In Matabeleland South and Mashonaland West water was generally available- attribution to the Rural WASH Programme.
- The FGDs highlighted that it was abnormal for this time of the year to have inadequate water for domestic purposes in most of the provinces this time of the year

Changes in Water Sources



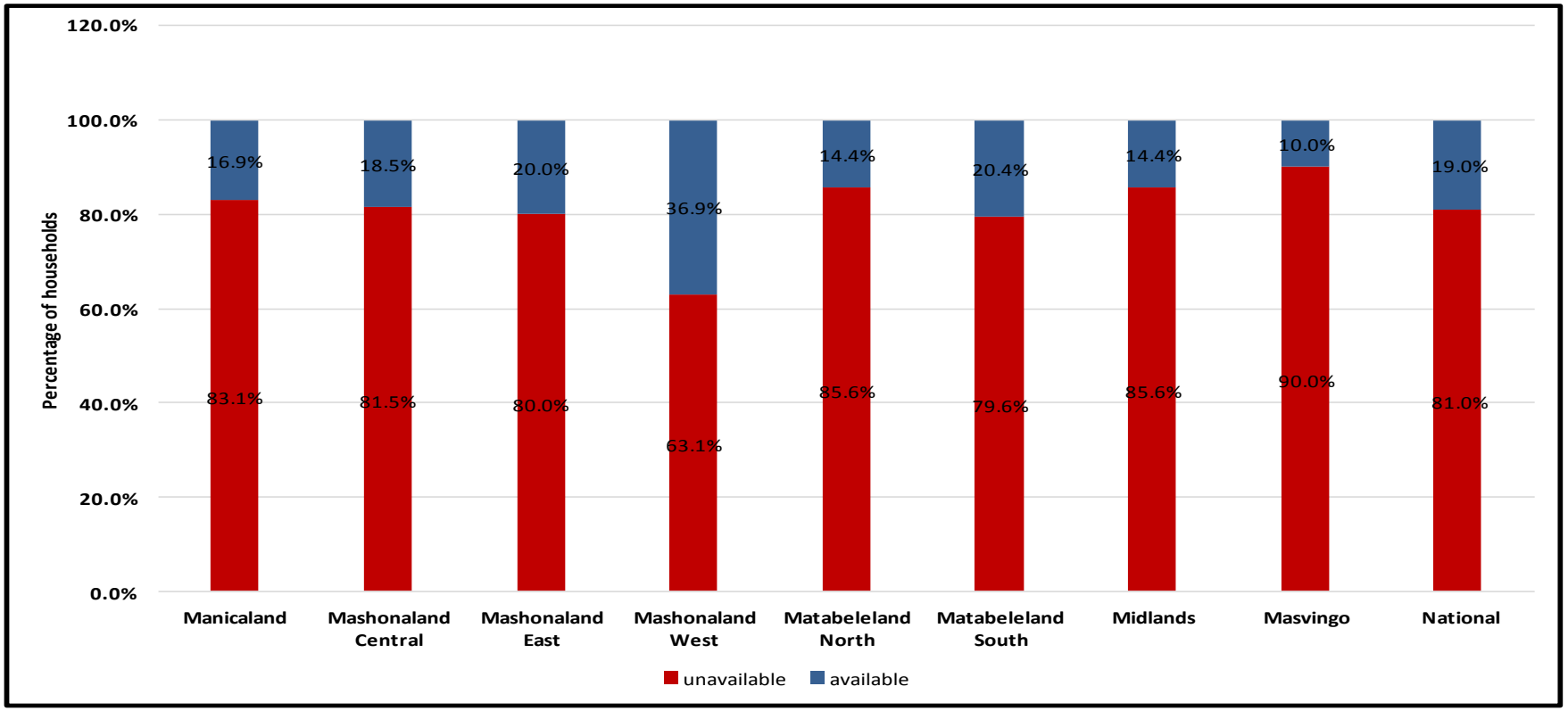
- A total of 29% of households had changed their main water sources in the past 3 months
- Of these, 53.7% cited main water source had dried up, 23.5% of households reported that main source had broken down
- Mashonaland East (71.4%) reported the highest change of main water source due to drying up.
- Matabeleland North recorded the highest proportion (42.9%) of households who changed their main source due to non-functionality of water points. This was attributed to increased pressure on the functional water points
- Other reasons cited for changing main water source included increased salinity levels and collapsed boreholes

Availability of Water for Livestock



- On average, 49.2 % of households reported unavailability of water for their livestock, with Manicaland province reporting the highest proportion of 59% followed by Matabeleland North with 55.6%
- In Mashonaland West, generally water was available for livestock with only 25.1% reporting unavailability

Availability of Water for Agriculture



- Nationally, 81% of households reported unavailability of water for agricultural purposes (irrigation schemes and gardens).
- Masvingo province reported the highest levels (90%) of inadequate water for agriculture, followed by Matabeleland North and Midlands with 85.6%.

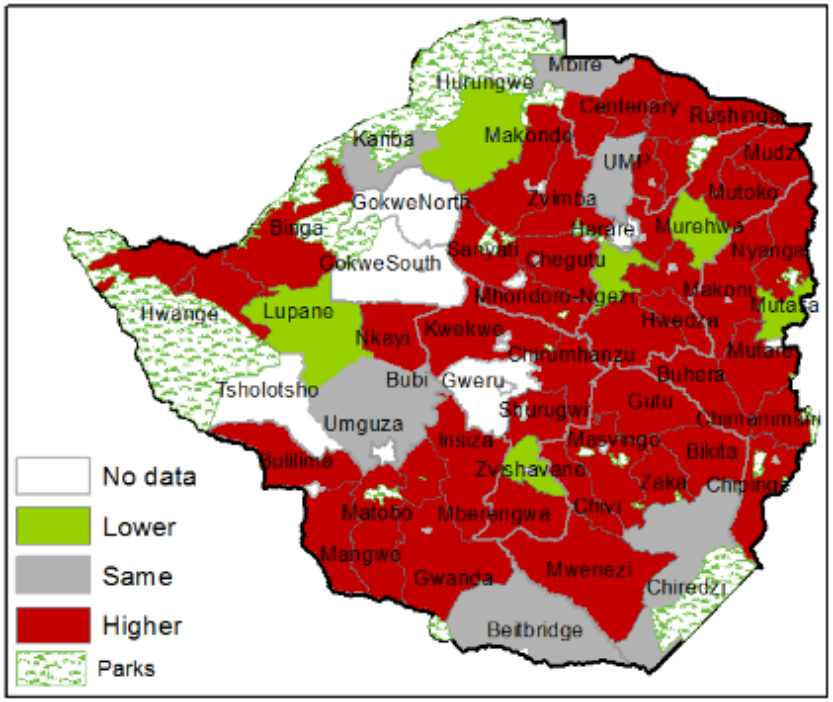
Social Behaviours

Gender Based Violence (GBV)

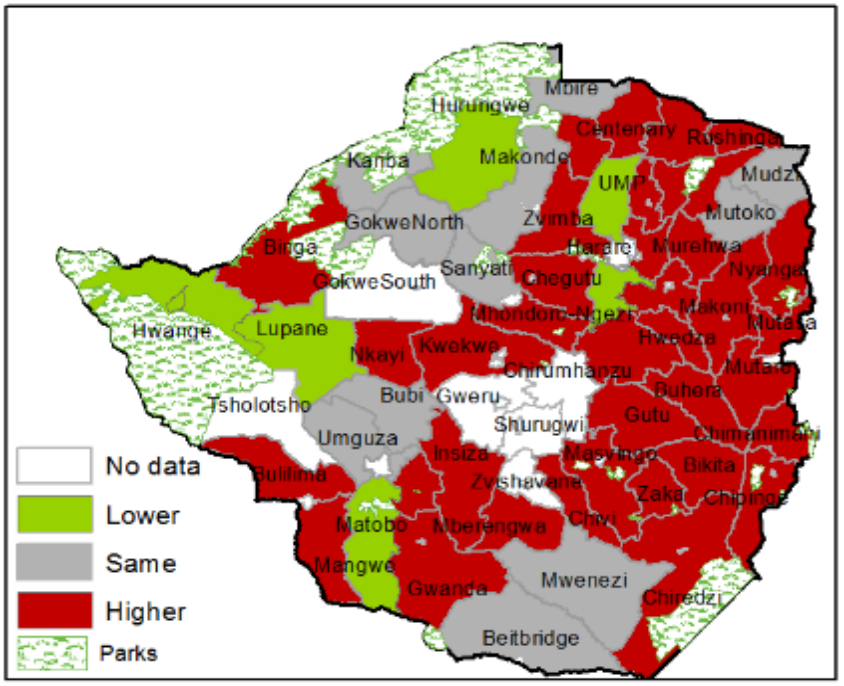
Prevalence

- Generally, physical and sexual violence, teenage pregnancies and child marriages were reported to be on the increase in most districts.
- During Focus group discussions, it was mentioned that some households in Mt Darwin and Seke districts, were resorting to marrying off their children as a coping strategy.
- In the farming and mining compounds, all types of GBV were especially noted to be high. For example in Zvimba, and Makonde districts. This is a result of the living conditions in these areas that encourage physical and sexual violence.
- The apparent increase in GBV in some instances was also noted to be a result of the recent increase in reported cases as a result of trainings and various interventions around GBV and not necessarily an increase in the actual incidents.

Physical Violence Prevalence

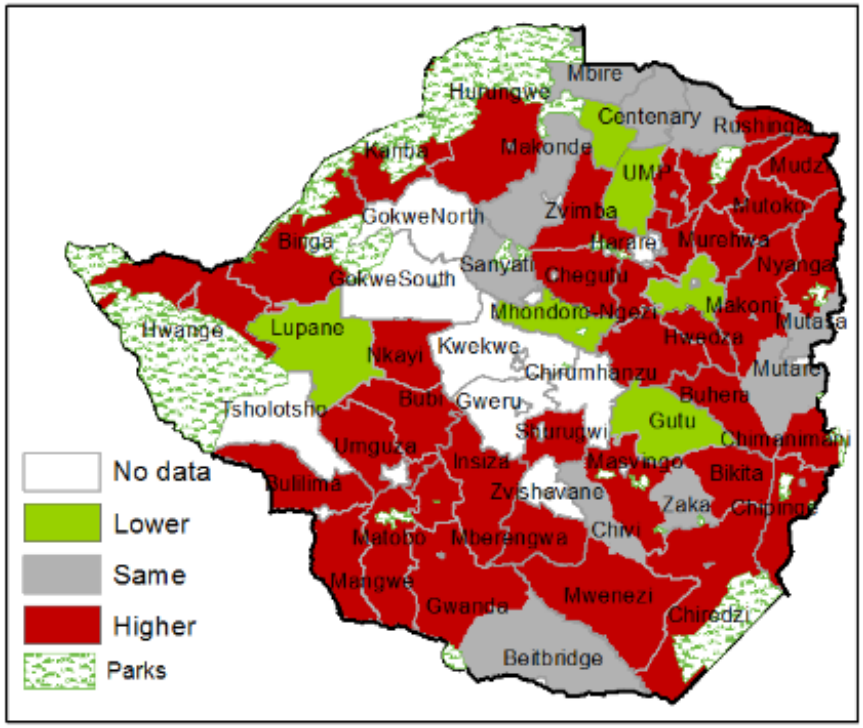


Sexual Violence Prevalence

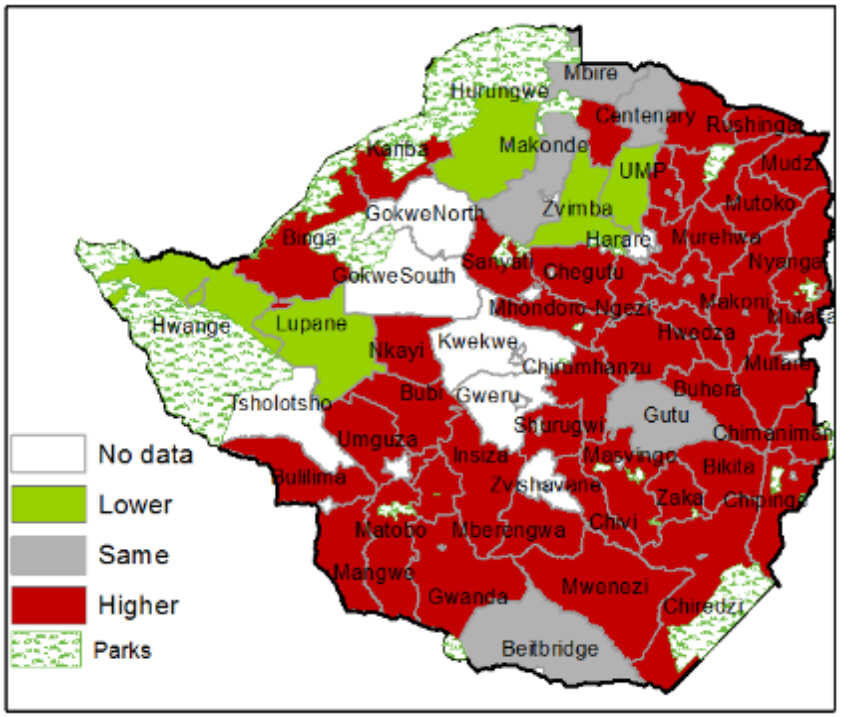


- The survey worked with 2015 as the baseline. The data collected showed a general increase in physical and sexual violence in the country.
- However, Government is addressing these issues through the establishment of structures in the Ministries of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare and Women Affairs, Gender and Community Development; Health and Victim friendly Units and limited NGO presence.
- Kariba, Beitbridge and Mbire had no changes for both physical and sexual violence .

Child Marriage Prevalence



Teenage Pregnancy Prevalence

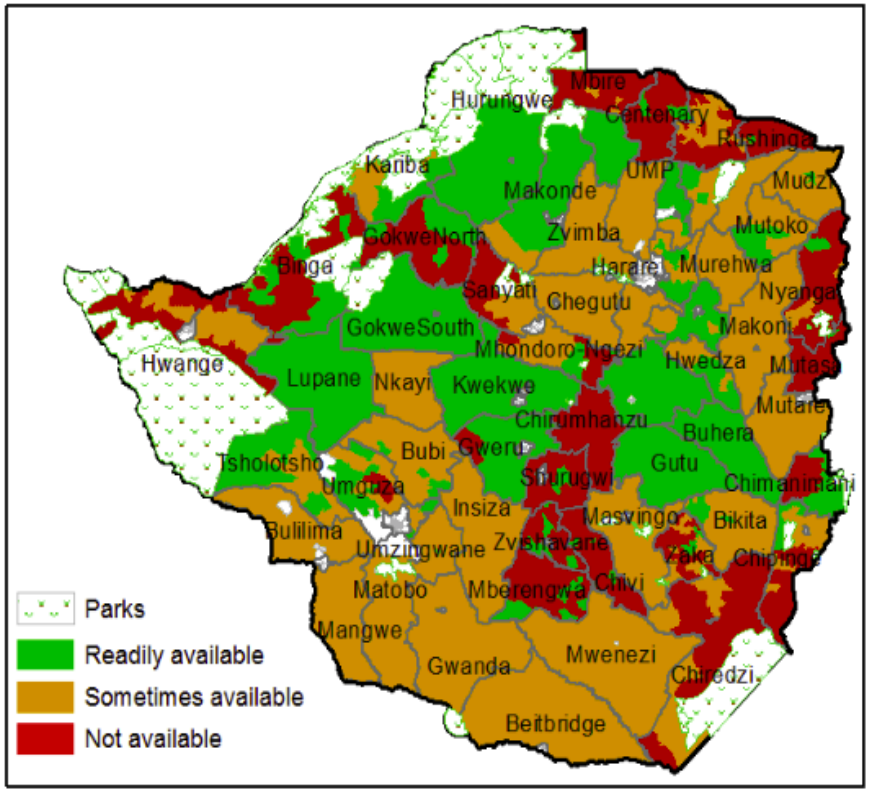


Child marriage and teenage pregnancy prevalence was higher than 2015 in the majority of the districts.

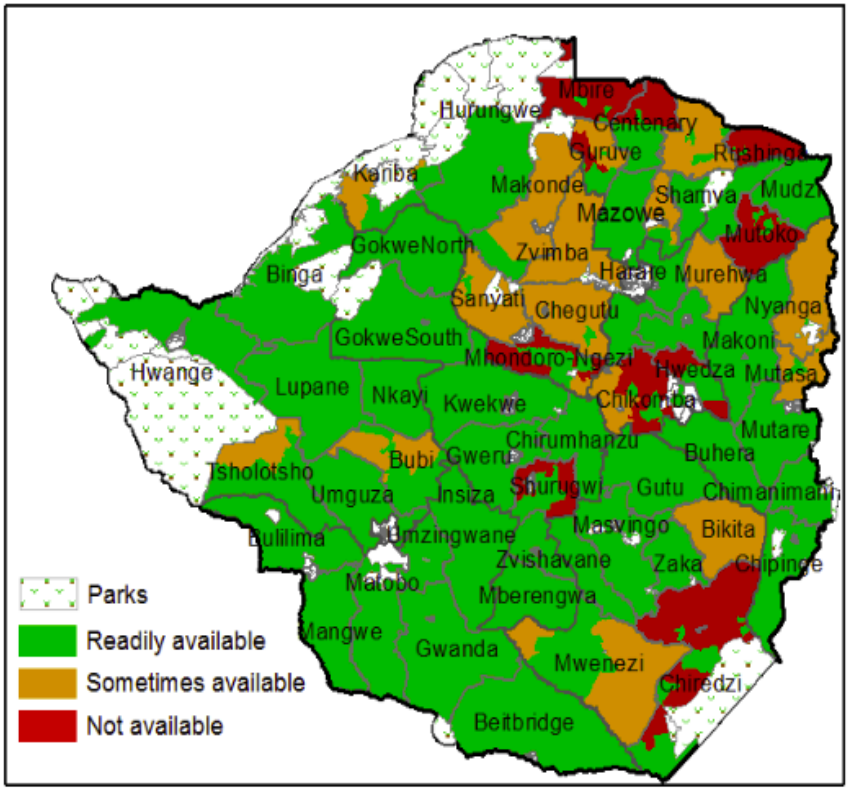
Food and Livestock Markets

Cereal Availability by Wards

Maize grain availability



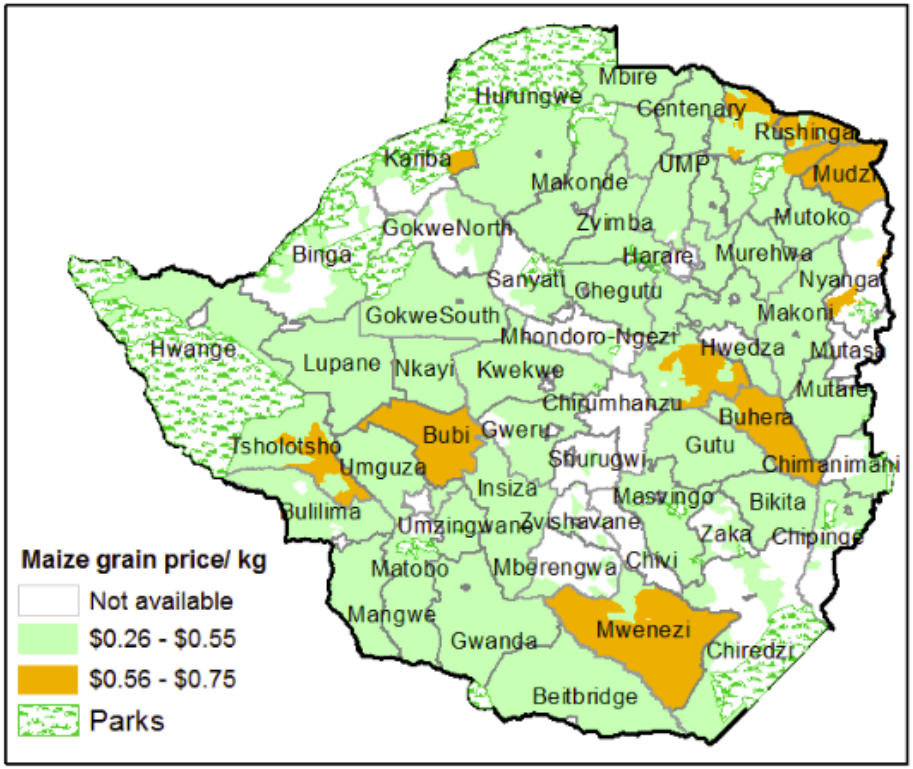
Maize meal availability



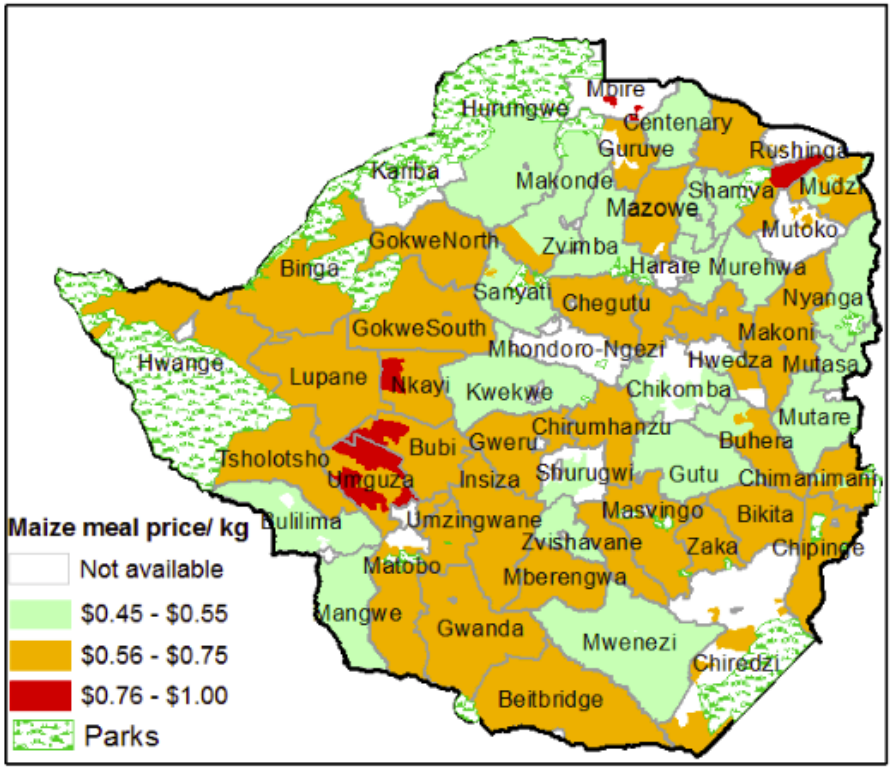
- Generally maize grain was available (readily and sometimes) in more than 50% of the wards.
- Maize meal was readily available in most wards.
- Maize grain was mainly available from GMB selling points and mobile vendors moving from one market place to the other.

Food Commodity Prices

Maize grain prices per kg



Maize meal prices per kg



- Maize grain prices were ranging from $4 to $12 per bucket and maize meal prices were ranging from $4.50 to $6 per 10 kg.

Food Commodity Prices

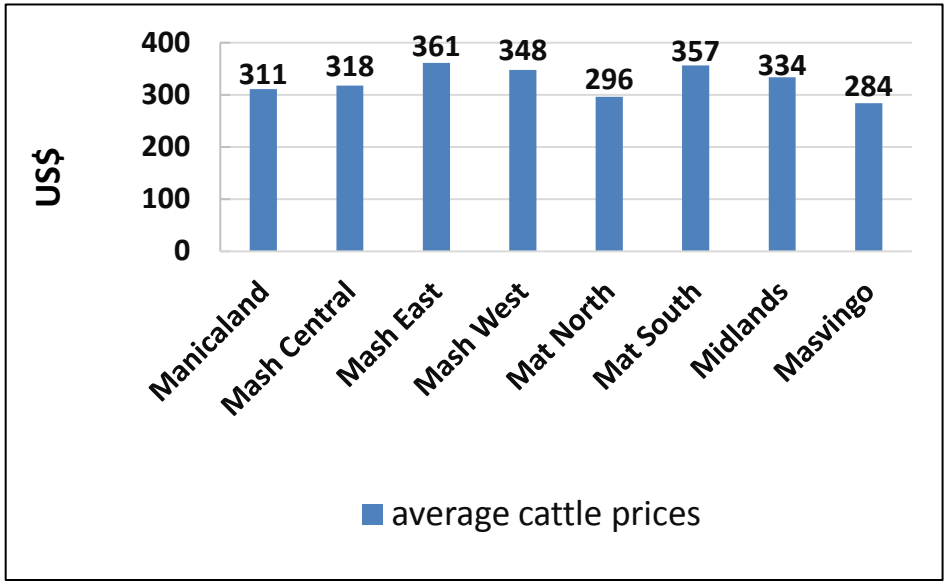
Province	2015 Grain Prices	2016 Grain Prices	% change
Manicaland	0.36	0.46	25.5%
Mashonaland Central	0.31	0.39	25.2%
Mashonaland East	0.36	0.45	25.7%
Mashonaland West	0.30	0.37	23.3%
Masvingo	0.28	0.44	59.4%
Matabeleland North	0.38	0.48	28.4%
Matabeleland South	0.29	0.46	60.7%
Midlands	0.30	0.45	48.4%
National	0.32	0.44	35.9%

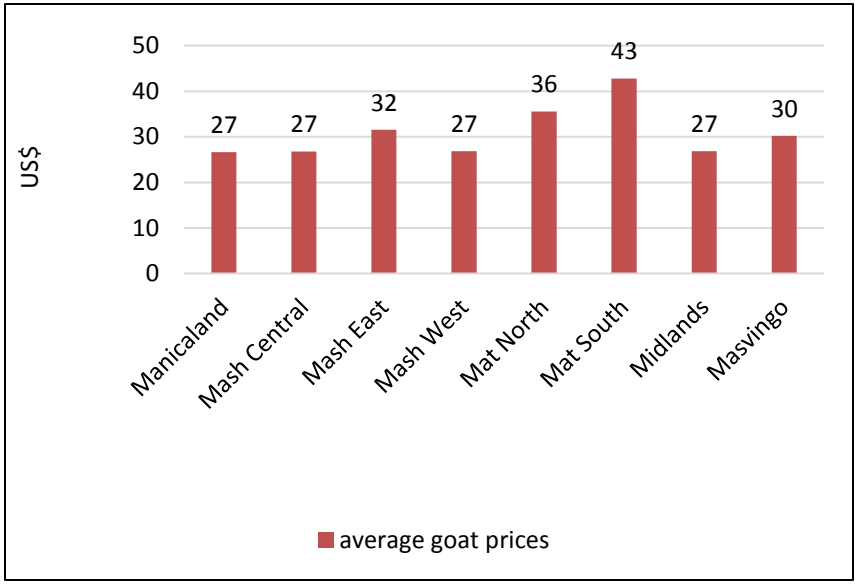
- The prevailing national average maize grain price of $0.44/kg was 38% higher than the same period last year of $0.32/kg.
- Highest price increases were observed in Matabeleland south (60%), Masvingo (59%) and Midlands(48%).
- Maize grain was mainly available at GMB depots where it was sold as 50kg bags at $22.50, which made it out of reach for most vulnerable people.

Other Food Commodity Prices

- Sorghum prices were ranging from $4 to $6 per 20 litre bucket in most districts whereas millet was ranging between $6 and $13 per bucket
- Edible beans prices ranged between $1.50 to $2 a kg and was available in most markets.
- Cooking oil was ranging from $1.50 to $2 per litre in all districts. The variances were mainly due to the difference in brands.

Livestock Prices

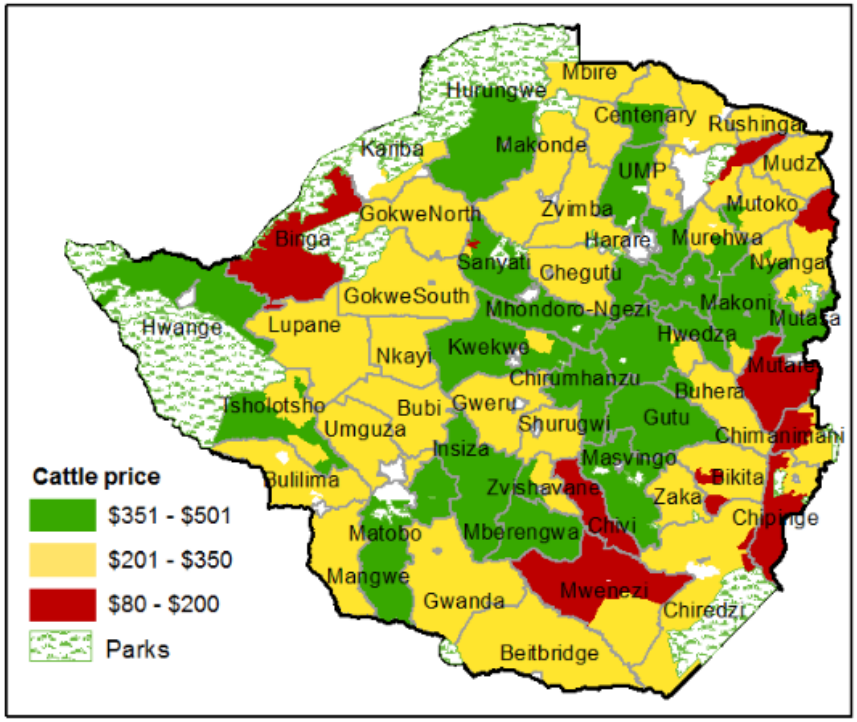




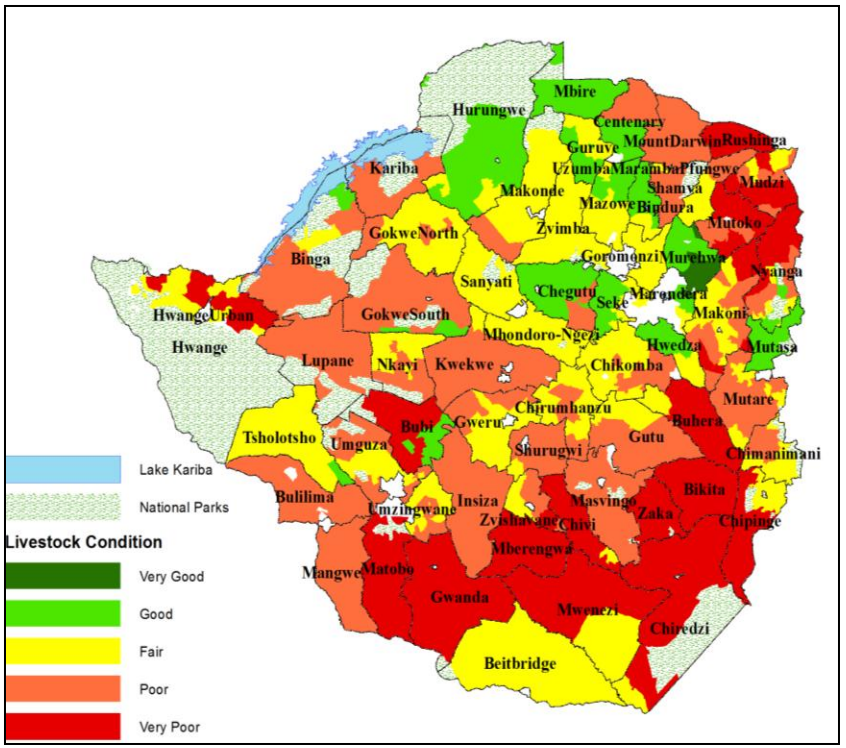
- Average cattle prices ranged between $284 and $361.
- Goats prices ranged between $27 and $43.

Cattle Prices and Condition

Cattle prices



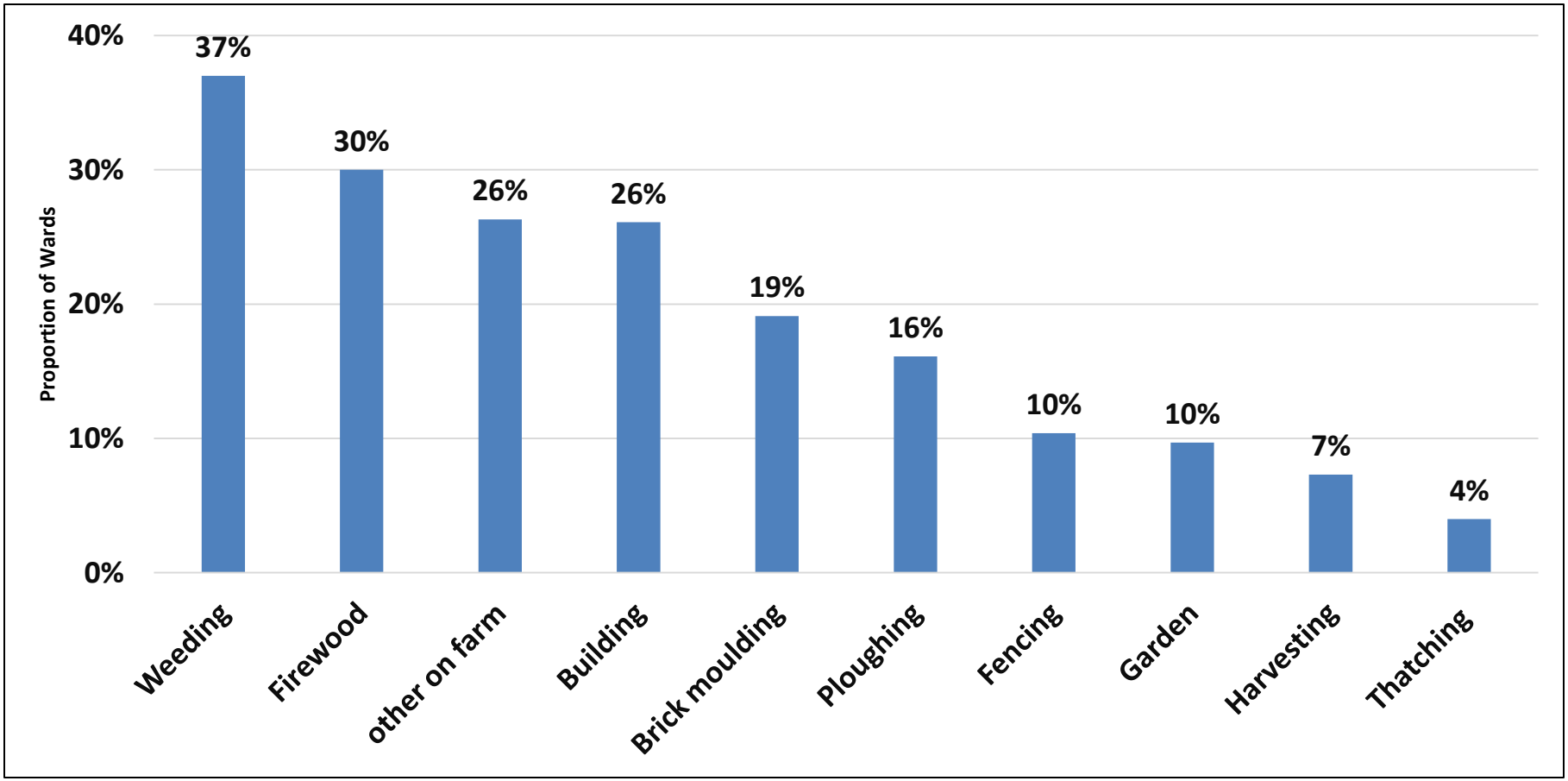
Cattle condition



- Low cattle prices were recorded in areas where cattle condition was poor.
- Lowest average cattle prices were recorded in Chivi and Mwenezi with an average price of $80.
- Such conditions were noted to be abnormal and influenced by the drought situation.

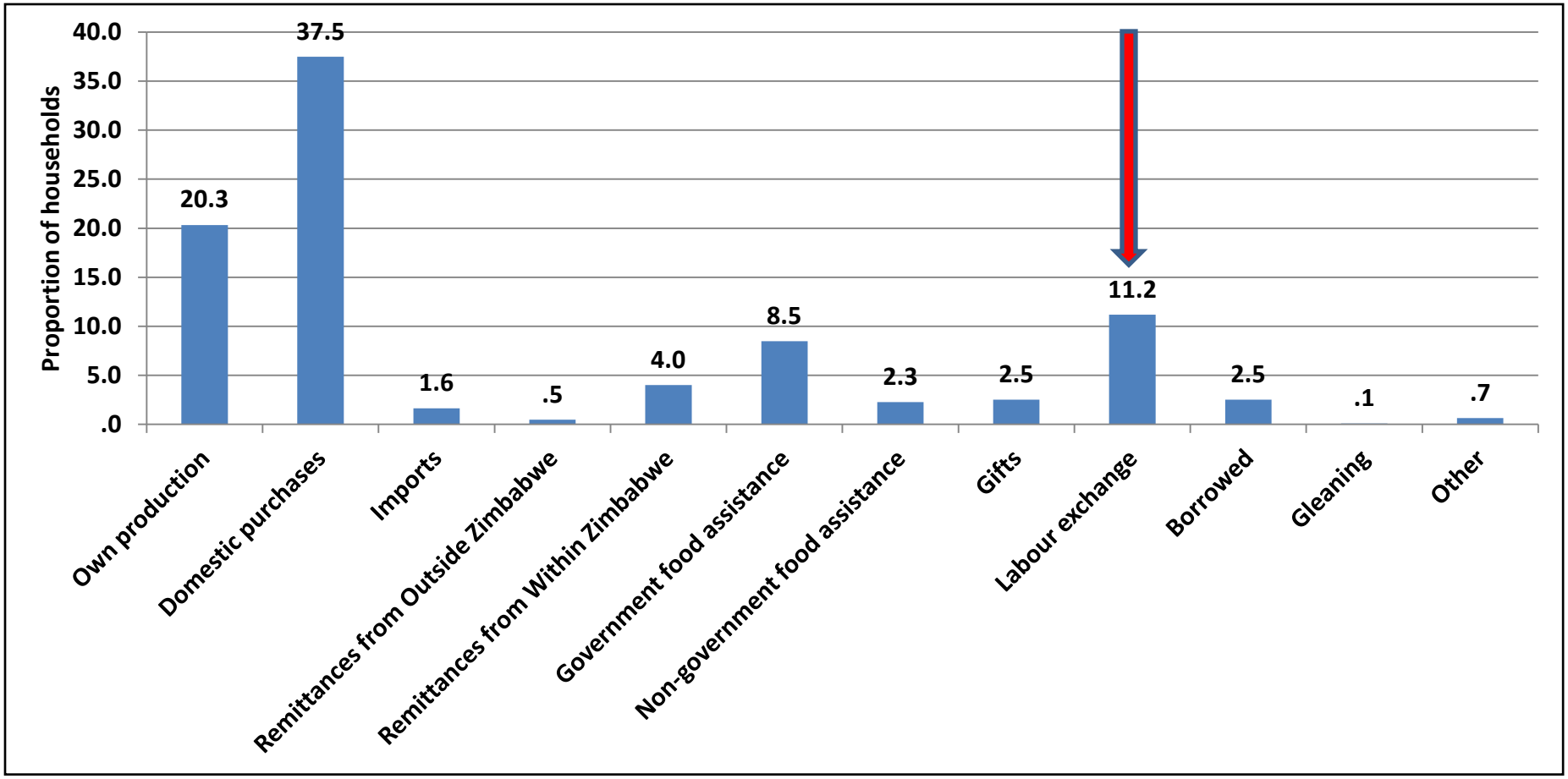
Casual Labour and Livelihoods Coping Strategies

Casual Labour Opportunities



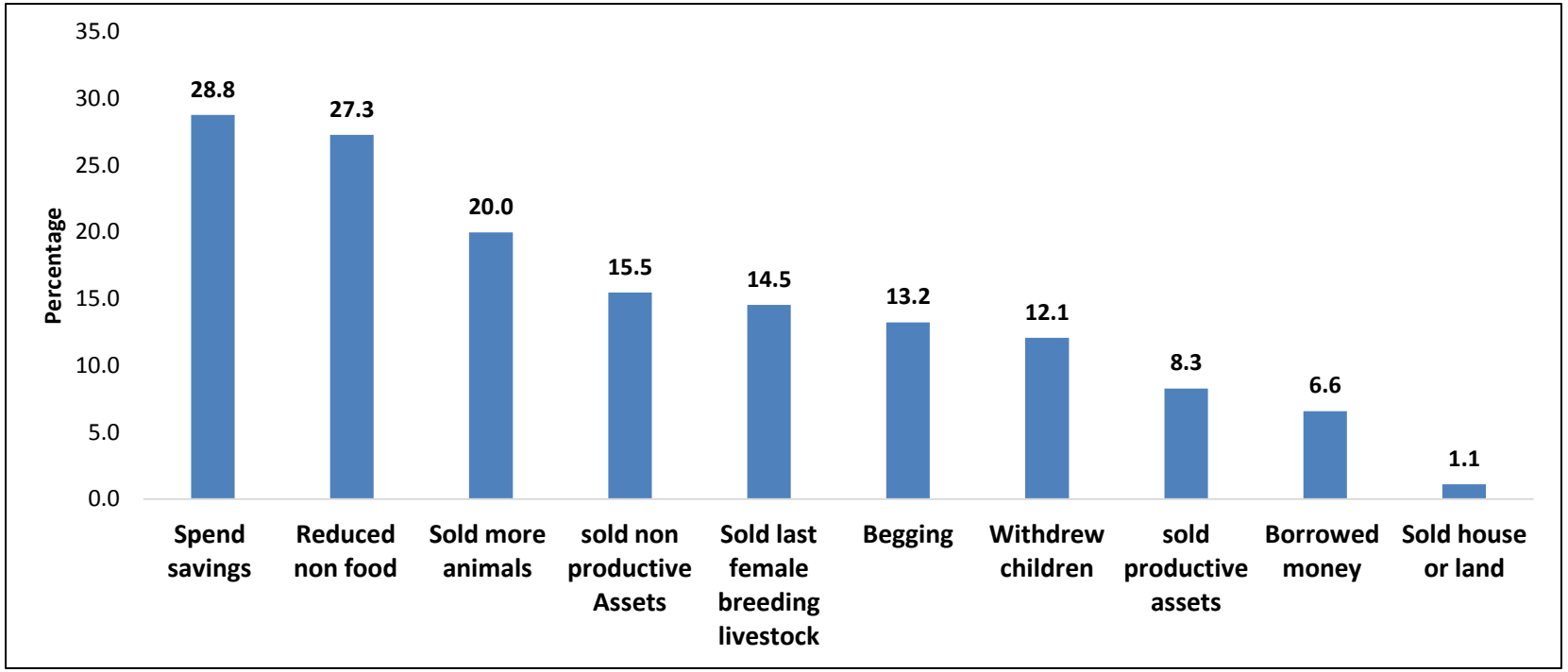
Most reported casual labour opportunities were weeding, followed by firewood and other on farm activities and building.

Maize Grain Stock Sources



Only 11% of the sampled households' maize grain stocks were from labour exchange.

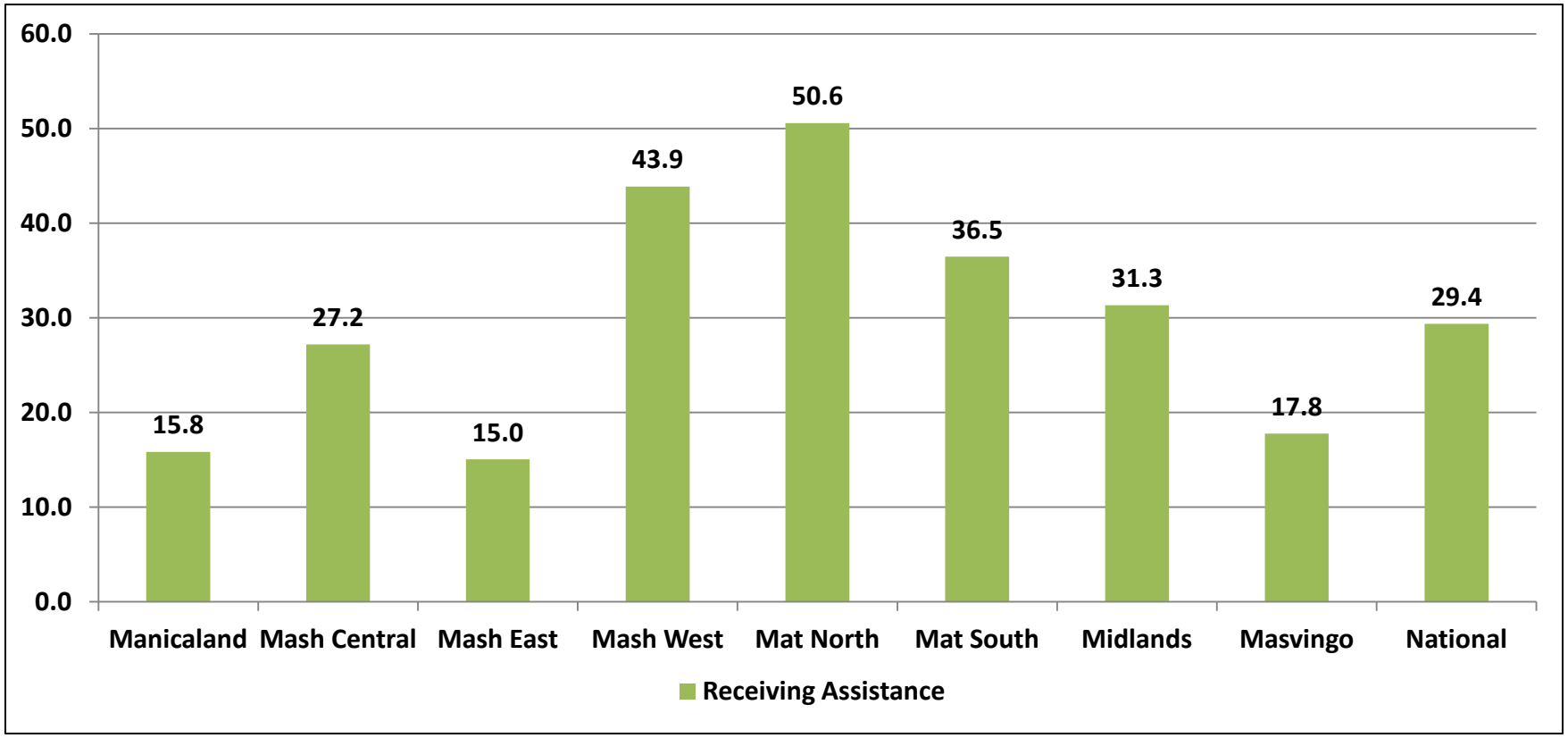
Most Common Livelihood Coping Strategy



- Spending of savings on food (29%) was the most common livelihood coping strategy adopted by most households.
- However, 15% of the sampled households had sold a female breeding livestock.

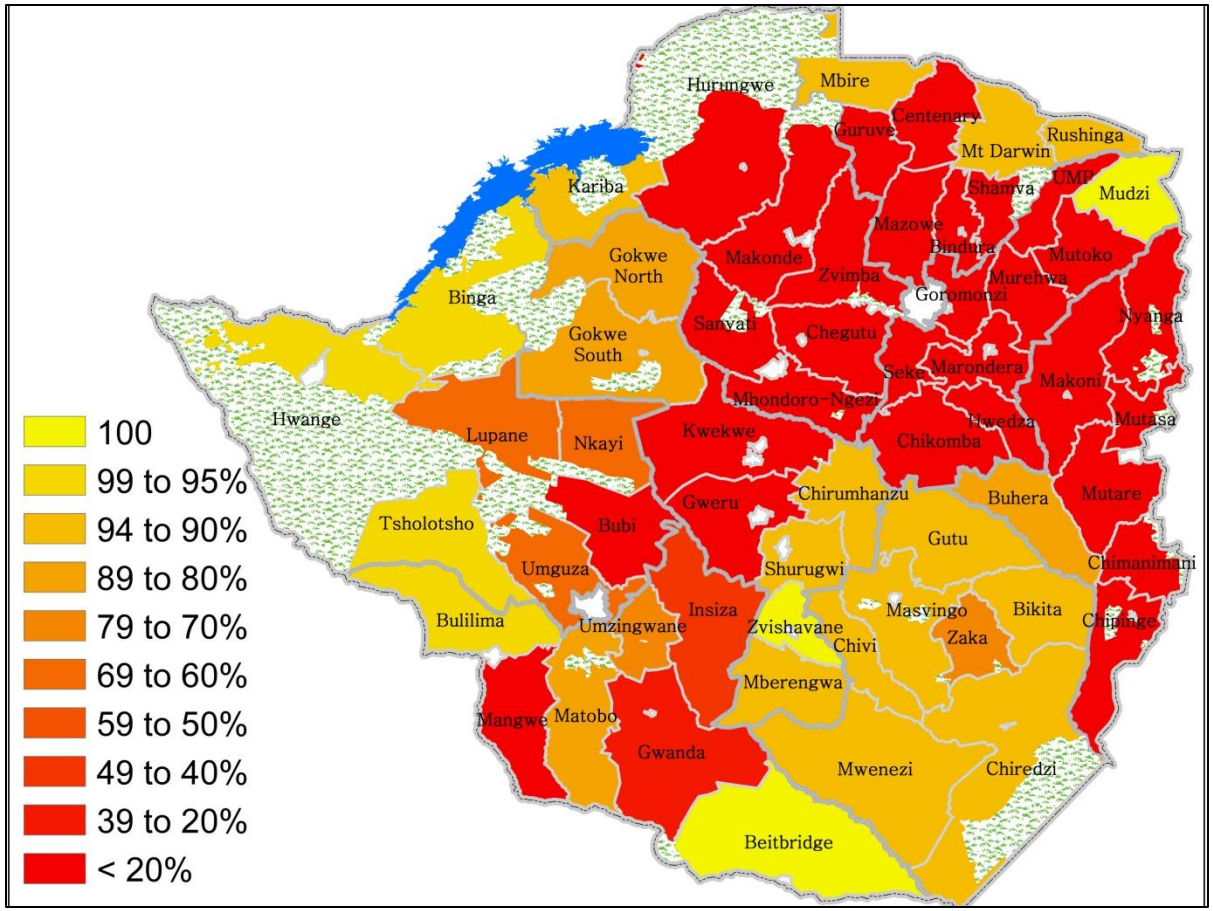
Food Assistance

Food Assistance by Province



Matabeleland North (49%) had the highest number of households that received assistance from Government and its Development Partners.

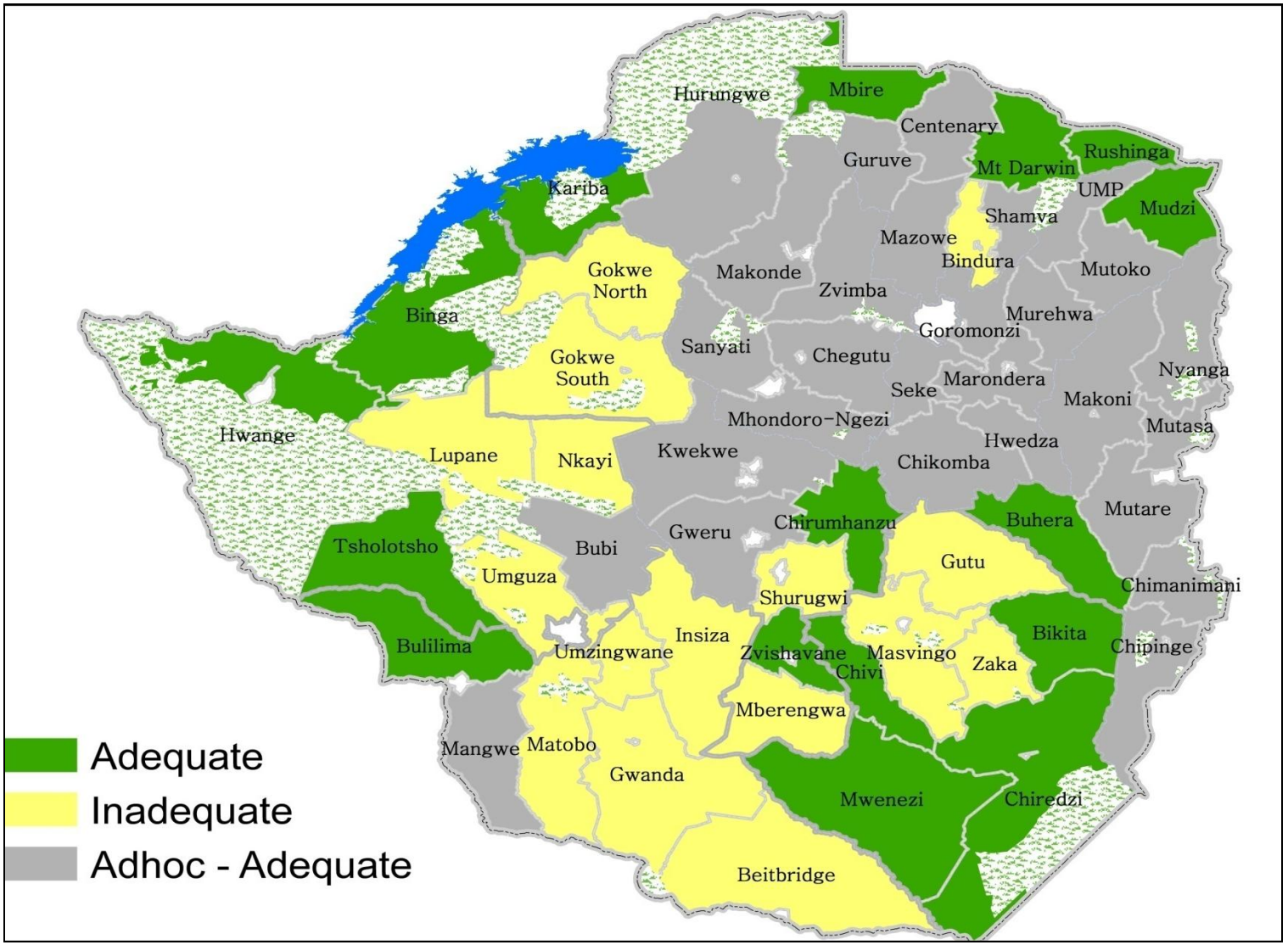
Response Coverage (1.5 million)



The map depicts the total population covered by the interventions as compared to the food insecure population according to the ZimVAC May 2015 projections.

All districts were receiving assistance from either Government or Development Partners.

Response Adequacy



Adequacy of Interventions

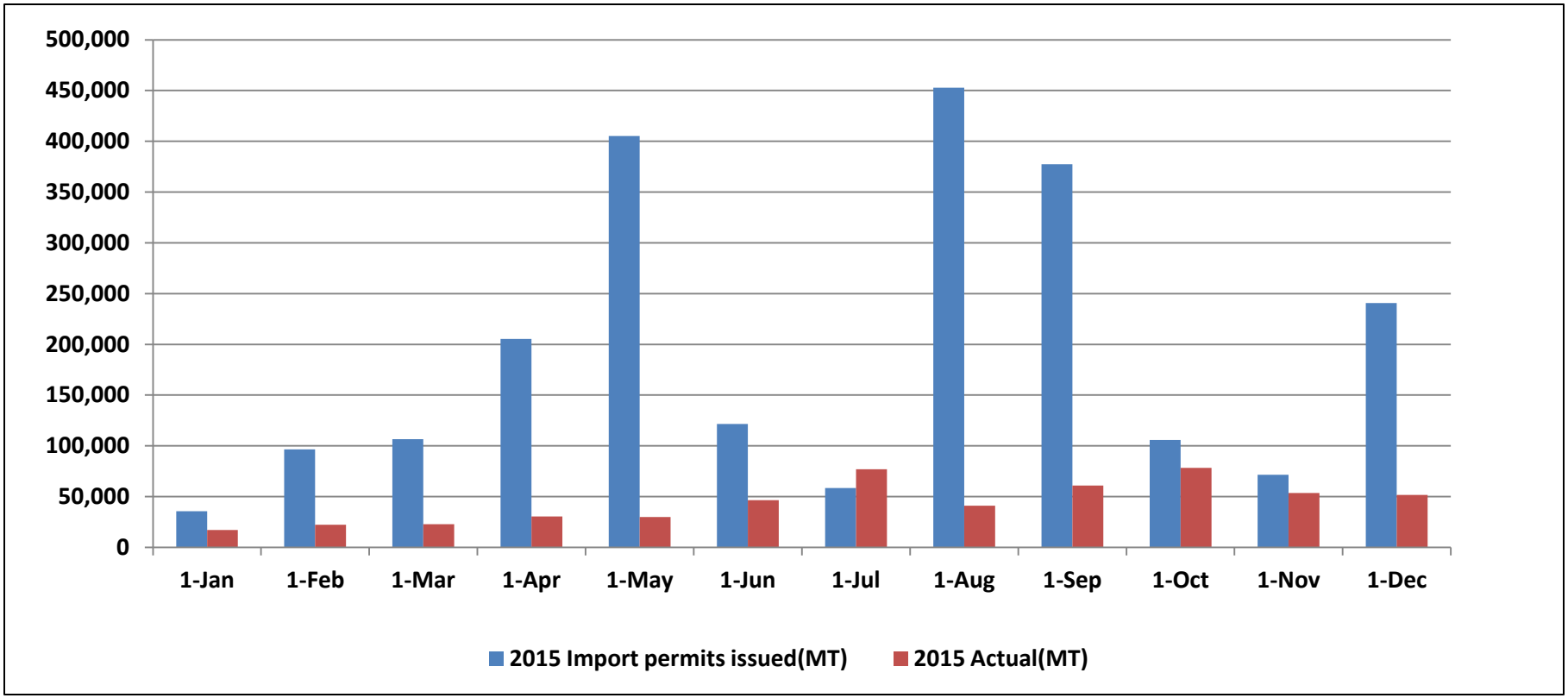
- Given that an intervention is deemed adequate when it meets approximately 85% of household food needs, only 15 districts had interventions that were adequately meeting household food requirements.
- 16 districts had interventions that were meeting only 30% of the household food requirements to varying beneficiaries.
- However, significant districts were receiving inconsistent interventions

Food Availability and Consumption Patterns

Food Availability – National stocks

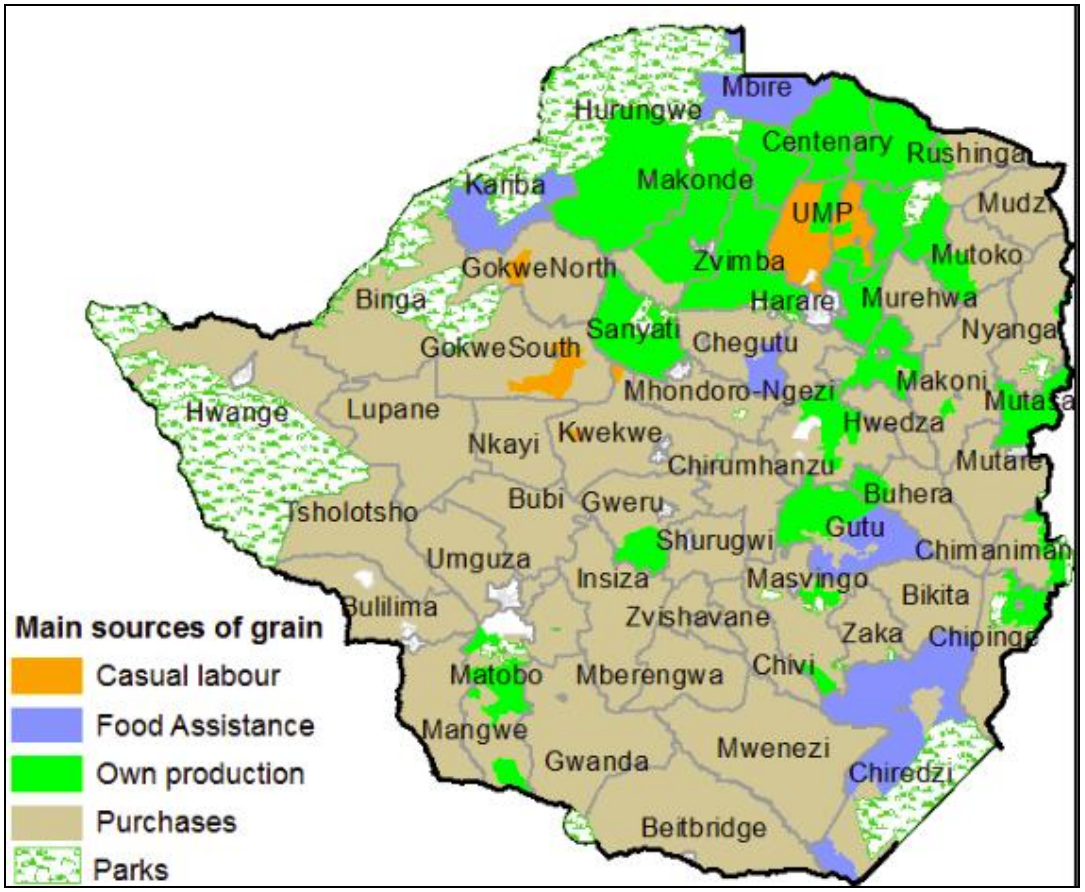
- Based on updated cereal balance sheet, 122,997 MT of maize were available as at 28 January 2016. This is against a national monthly requirement of 125,000MT for human consumption only.
- Other cereal stocks mainly wheat and rice were at 47,796MT.
- Commercial maize meal imports have been liberalised by the Government (Mid-January), which was expected to improve maize meal availability in the country. Already, import licences to the tune of 103,000MT were issued out in January.
- The amount of private stocks at farm level could not be established.

Import Permits vs Actual Imports



- An additional 180,300 MT would need to be imported to close the projected seasonal gap by 31 March 2016.
- At the current monthly maize importation rate, about 3.5 months would be required to import the outstanding imports.

Main Sources of Grain



Grain Sources	Proportion
Purchases	69%
Own production	23%
Food Assistance	6%
Casual labour	2%

- Households were mainly depending on purchases for grain.
- Normally at this time of the year the proportion of wards depending on casual labour for grain will be higher than the current 2%.

Household Stocks

Average number of days the stocks will last

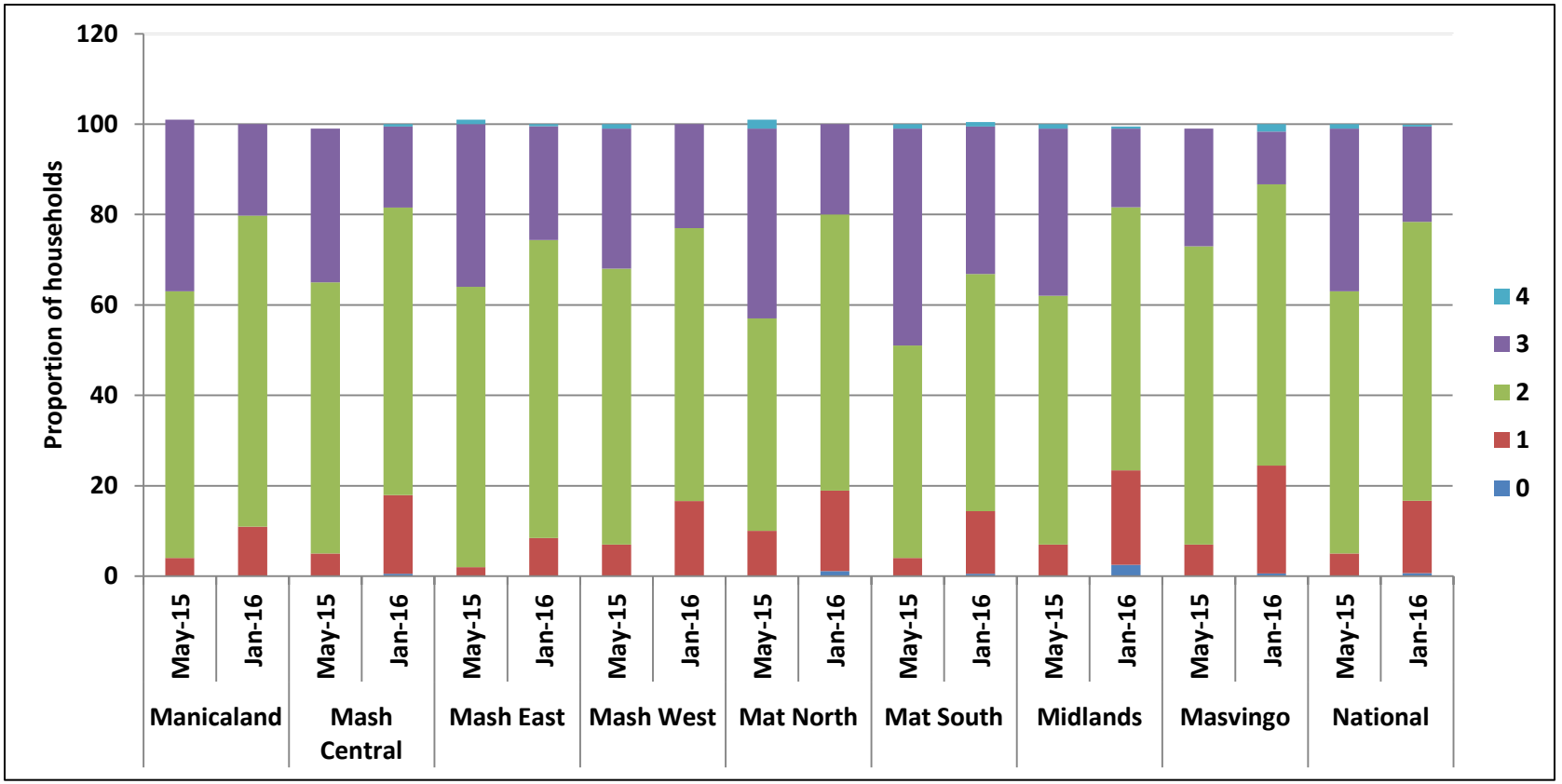
Province	Maize stocks days	Sorghum stocks days	Millet stocks days	Wheat stocks days
Manicaland	30.5	0	0	21
Mashonaland Central	50.6	51.4	8.3	16.4
Mashonaland East	48.7	12.8	33.8	16.5
Mashonaland West	35	78.8		60
Matabeleland North	14.3	10.6	16.9	7.2
Matabeleland South	13.6	4.9	0.1	0.9
Midlands	35.2	19.3	5.5	30
Masvingo	31	55.4	0.4	0.2
Average	**32.36**	**29.15**	**8.13**	**19.03**

- On average, household maize stocks (from all sources) were expected to last an average of 32 days.
- Mashonaland Central had the highest number of days (51) before household maize stocks were depleted.
- The least number of days was recorded in Matabeleland South at 14 days, before maize grain stocks were depleted.
- Sorghum stocks were reported to be higher than maize grain stocks in Mashonaland West and Masvingo provinces.
- The national average sorghum stocks were expected to last for 29 days.

Availability of Other Food Commodities

- Green leafy vegetables were readily available in 33% of the wards and sometimes available in 23% of the wards.
- The most accessible green leafy vegetable were the indigenous or wild varieties e.g spider leaf (nyevhe), and okra.
- Orange fleshed vegetables were not readily available in most wards except 18% of the wards.
- Roots and tubers were readily available in 8% and sometimes available in 10% of the wards.
- Fruits were reported to be available in 51% of the wards these were mainly indigenous fruits.

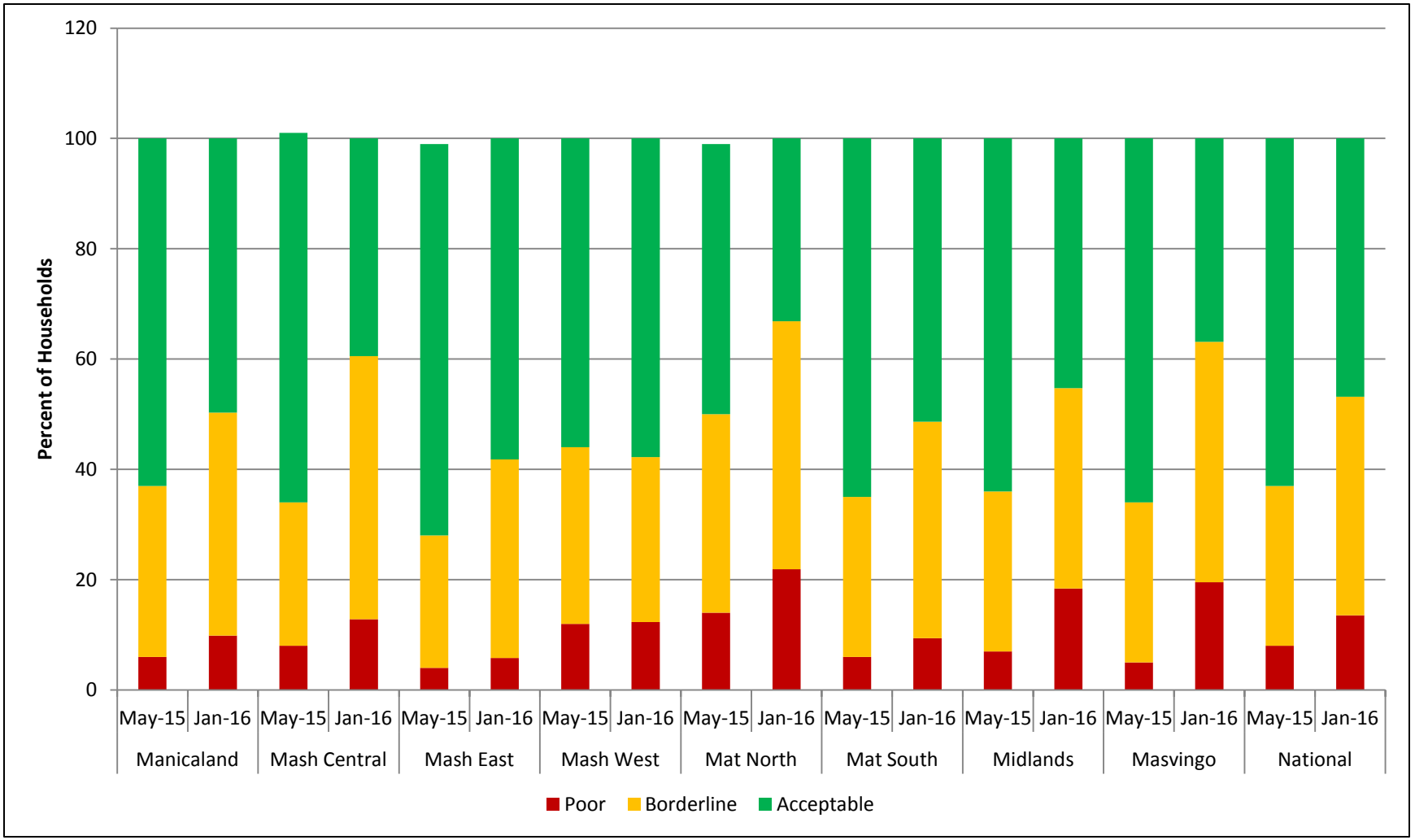
Household Food Consumption



Almost 78% of households were having one or two meals a day up from 63% in May 2015. Those consuming one meal a day increased from 5% to 17%.

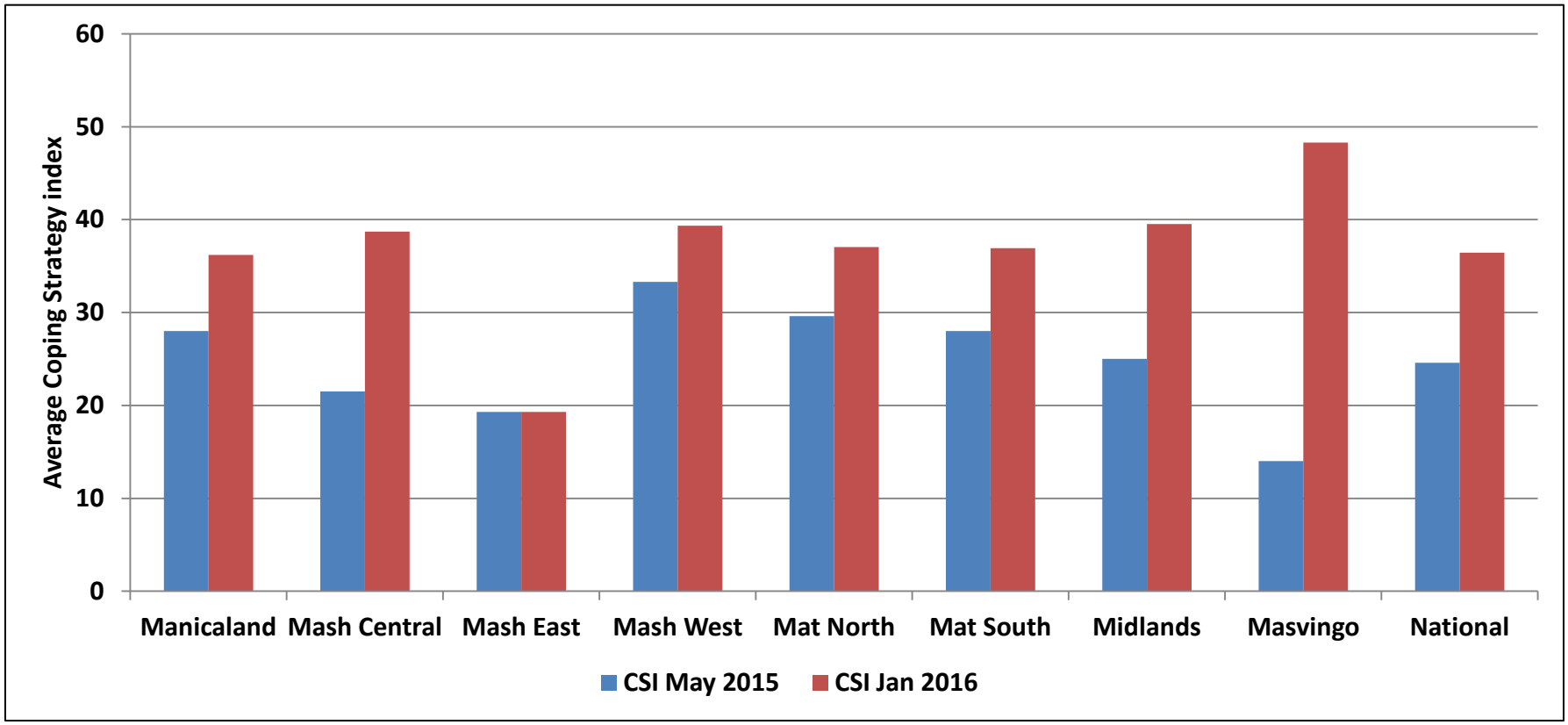
Midlands and Masvingo provinces had the greatest change in households eating one meal a day from about 7% to about 24%.

Food Consumption



- Household level food shortages have resultantly affected consumption patterns.
- The household hunger scale shows moderate to severe hunger increased from 16% in May 2015 to 37% in January 2016.

Consumption Coping Strategy Index



- The consumption coping strategy index score increased from 25 in May 2015 to 36 in January 2016 showing that more households were engaging in negative consumption coping strategies to deal with food access challenges.
- These included reducing number of meals eaten per day, limiting portion sizes at meal times, resorting to less preferred foods and limiting adult consumption so children could eat.
- The number of households having less than four food groups increased from 11% to 16% showing that more people were failing to access a more diverse diet

Child Nutrition Status

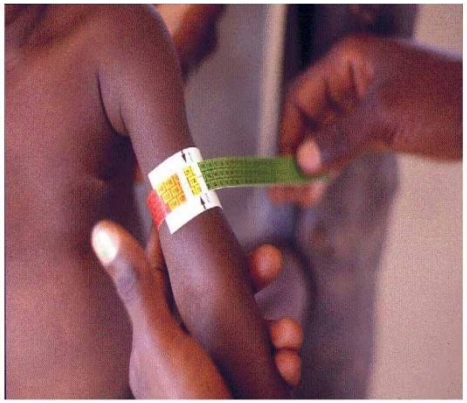
Definition of terms

- Moderate Acute Malnutrition (MAM) is defined as weight-for-height/length between -2 and -3 Z-Score.

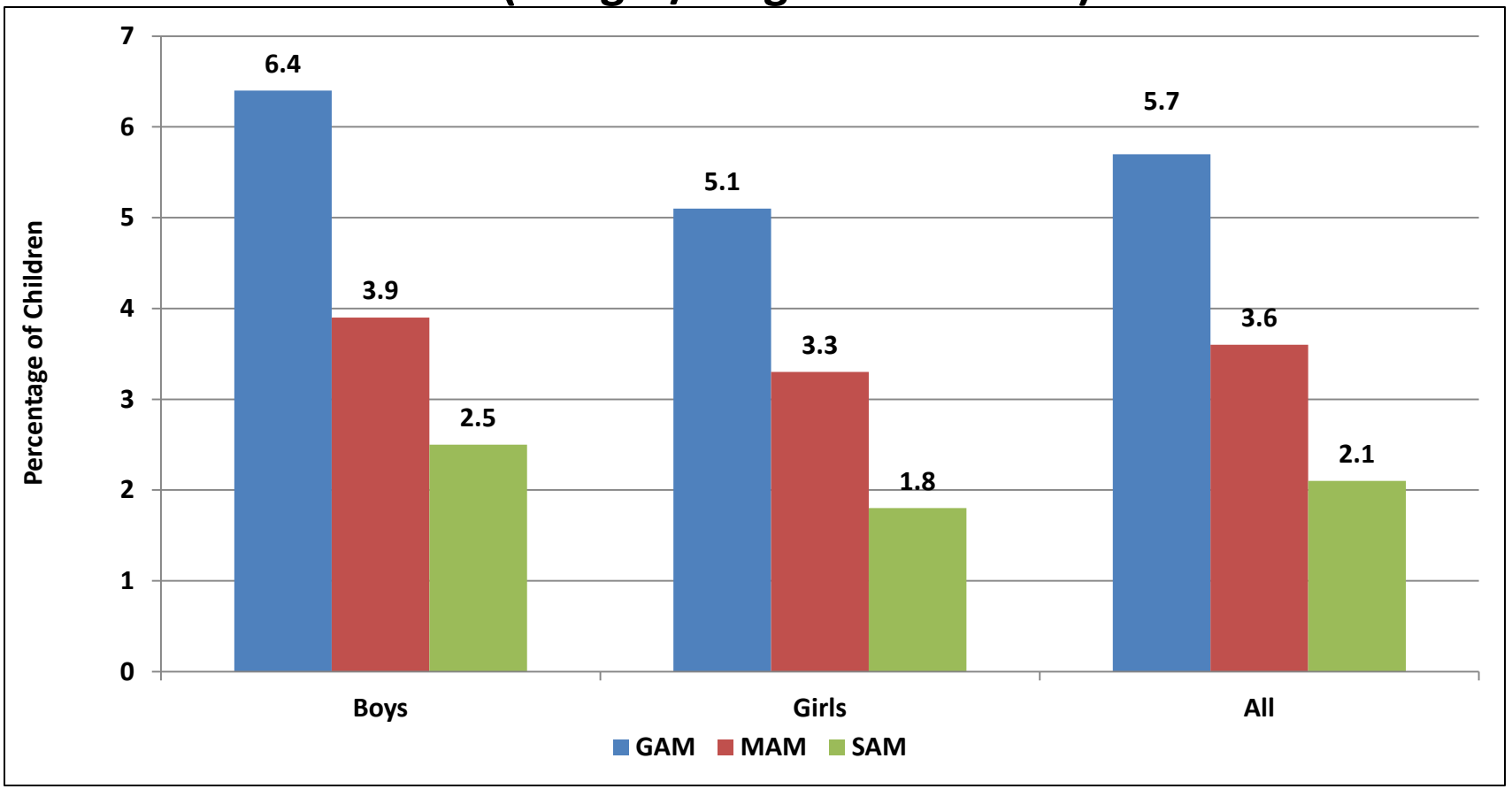
- Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM) is defined as weight-for-height/length less than -3 z-score or below the 70th percentile and/or oedema.

- Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM) is a measurement of nutritional status, defined as weight-for-height/length less than -3 z-score and/or oedema or a combination of MAM and SAM. (if a child's weight to height ratio is less than the value at -2 standard deviations on the z-score for the same measurement in the reference population)

Illustration of Acute Malnutrition (Wasting & Oedema)

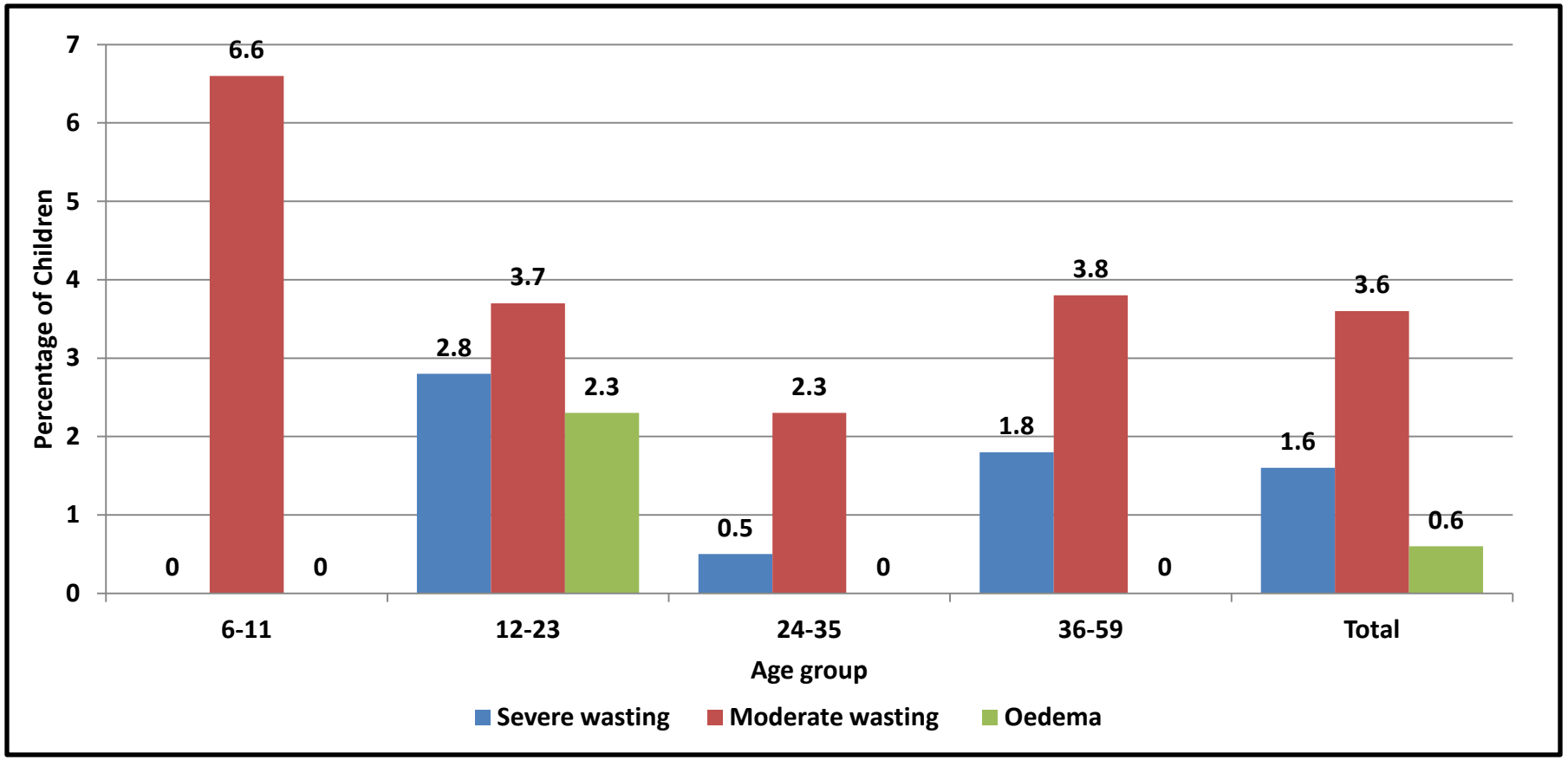


Prevalence of Acute Malnutrition in Children 6-59 months of Age (Weight/Height & Oedema)



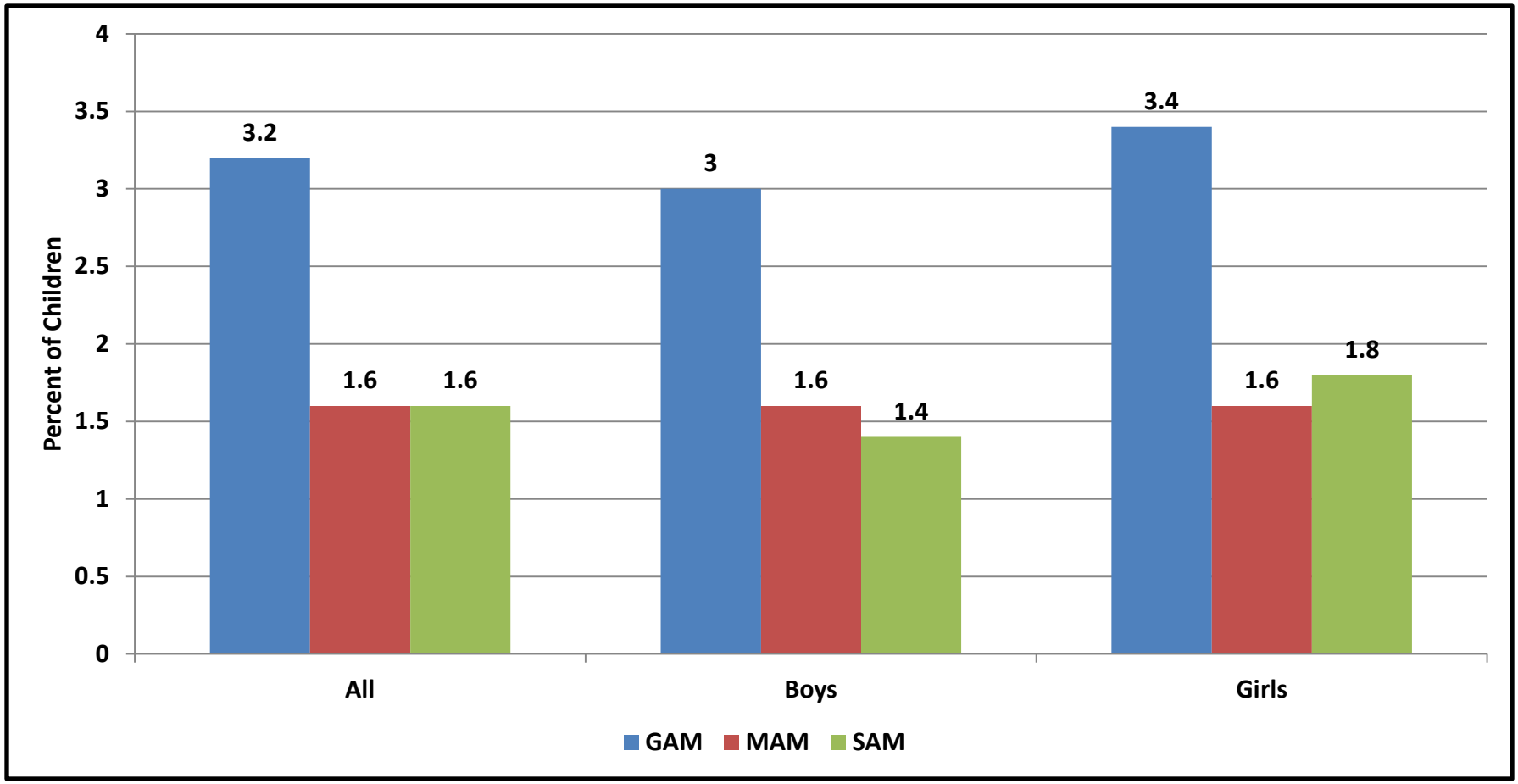
- GAM is at 5.7%, and is the highest ever reached in the past 15 years.
- GAM rates have not surpassed 5%
- Boys were more affected by acute malnutrition than girls
- The SAM rate of 2.1% is slightly above the 2% threshold for emergency response, an indication of a poor nutrition status.

Prevalence of Acute Malnutrition by Age, based on Weight-for-Height z-scores and/or Oedema (N=898)



- SAM most affected the 12-23 months age group.
- All oedema cases were also in that age group .

Prevalence of Acute Malnutrition based on MUAC cut off's (and/or Oedema) and by Sex (N=898)



GAM is 3.2% using Mid-Upper Arm Circumference (MUAC) cut-offs

Illustration of Stunting or Chronic Malnutrition

Teo
Age:
2 years
9 months

Weight:
10.7 kg.

Height:
78.3 cm

Likely Chronic Malnutrition

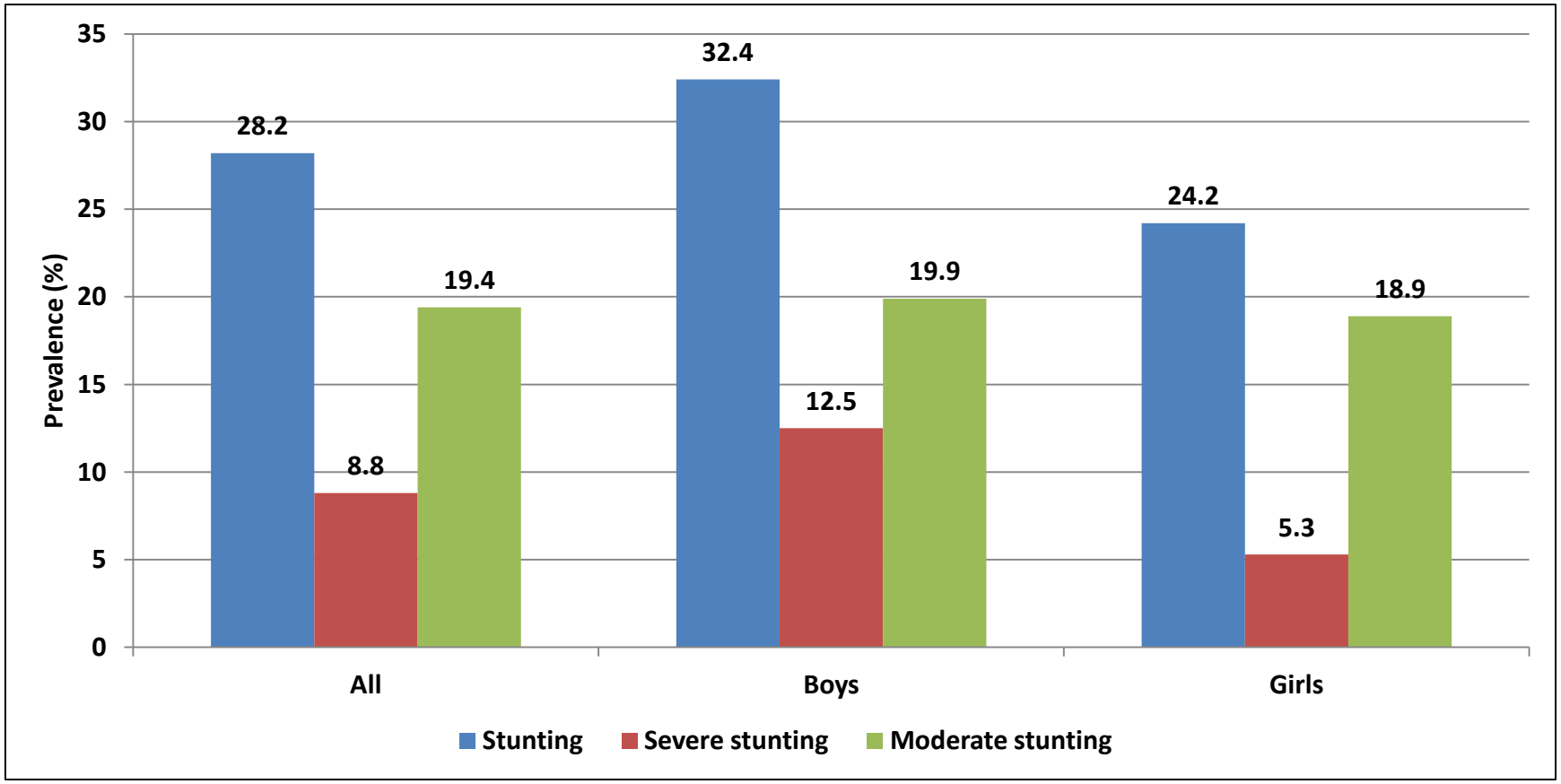
Maria
Age:
2 years
6 months

Weight:
11.6 kg.

Height:
86.4 cm

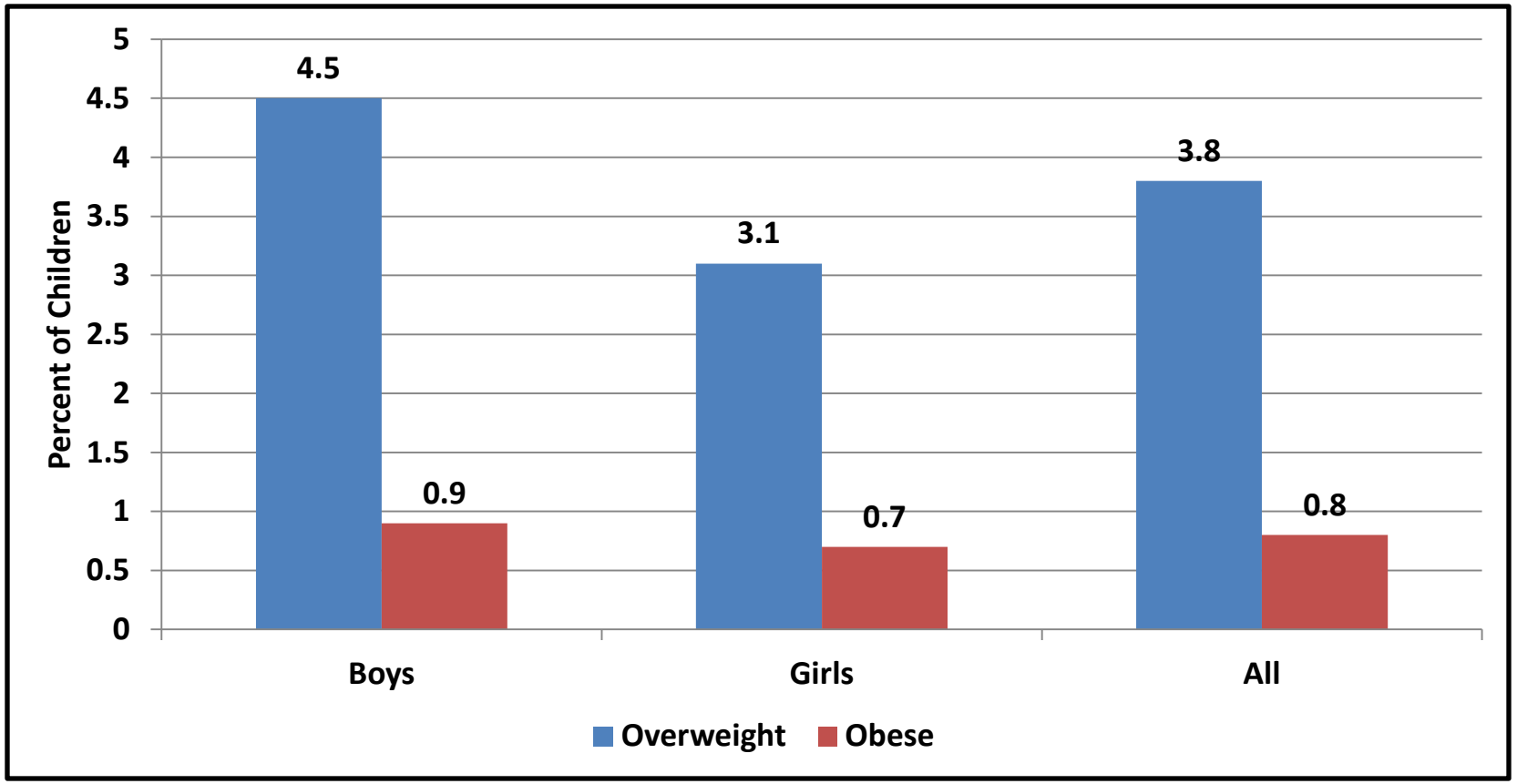
Likely no chronic malnutrition

Prevalence of Stunting



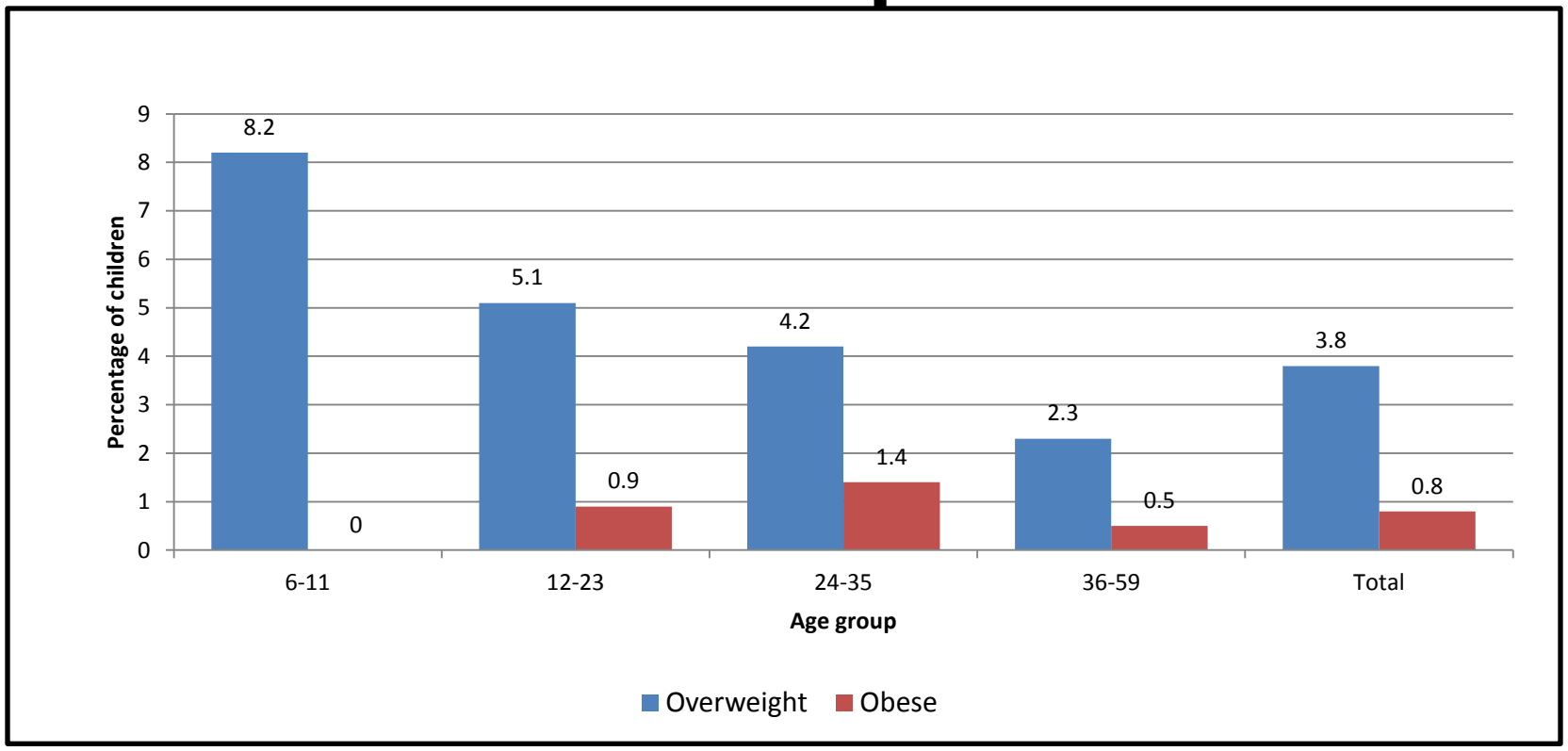
- Stunting (28.2%) remains a nutrition challenge requiring attention.
- Stunting remains higher in boys than girls.
- Stunting was higher in the 12 to 23 and the 24 to 35 months age groups.

Overweight and Obesity by Sex



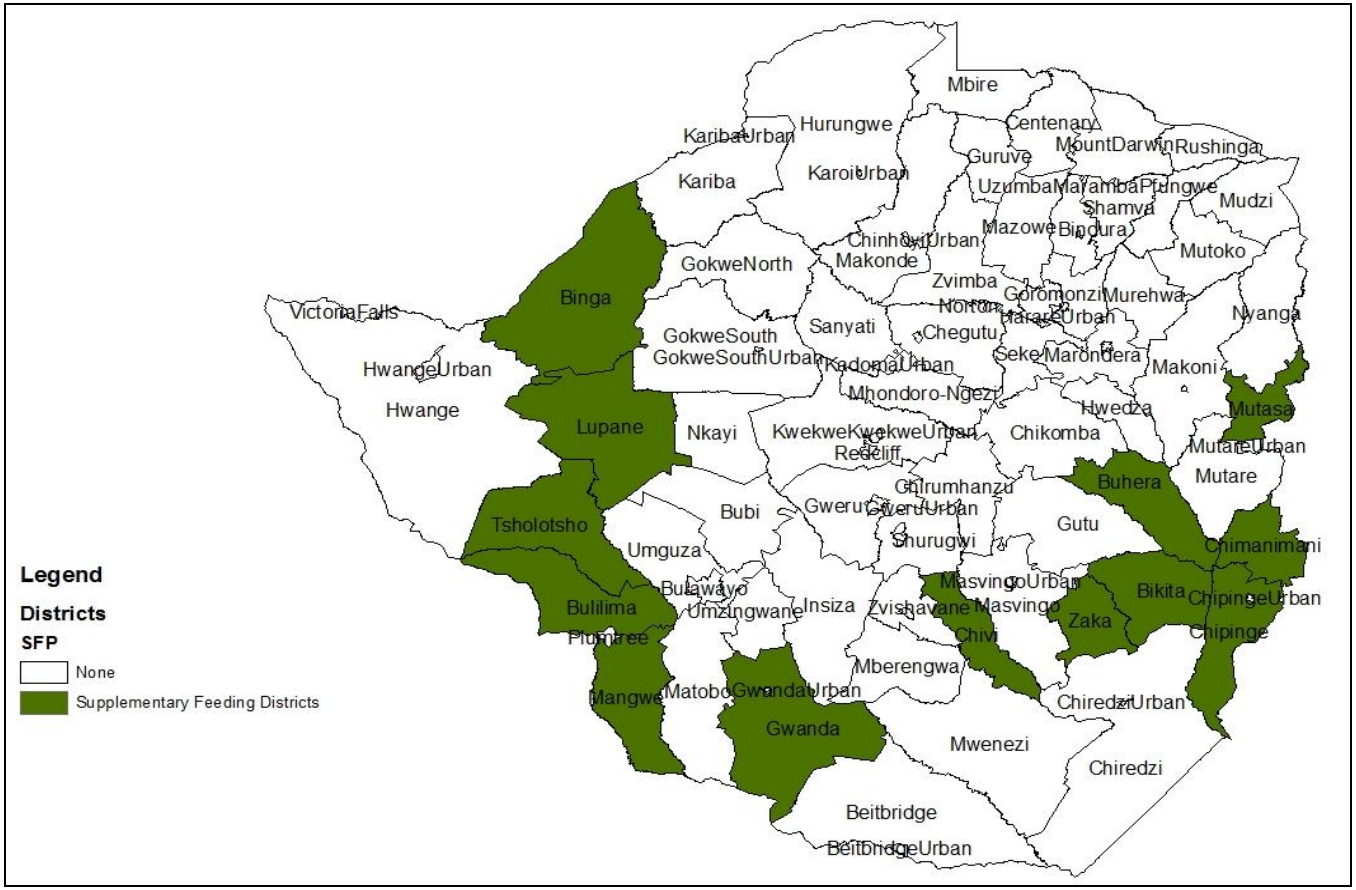
There is an emerging problem of overweight and obesity in children.

Overweight and Obesity by Age Group



The highest prevalence of overweight is in children 6 to 11 months

Coverage of Supplementary Feeding for Children



- Coverage for child supplementary feeding programmes is in 13 districts.
- ENSURE and Amalima programme are conducting blanket feeding for children less than two years
- The Emergency Relief Funds are targeting children 6-59 months with moderate acute malnutrition
- WFP is targeting children 6-23 months in Mutasa district.

Food Security Prevalence
January – March 2016

Food Security Projection Update (January – March 2016)

- The household food security status was determined by measuring the household's access to enough food to give each member a minimum of 2100 kilocalories per day in the consumption period 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2016.
- Each of the survey households' potential access was computed by estimating the household's likely disposable income in the 2015/16 consumption year from the following possible income sources:
  - Cereal stocks
  - Own food crop production
  - Potential income from own cash crop production
  - Potential income from livestock
  - Income from other sources such as gifts, remittances, pensions and formal employment

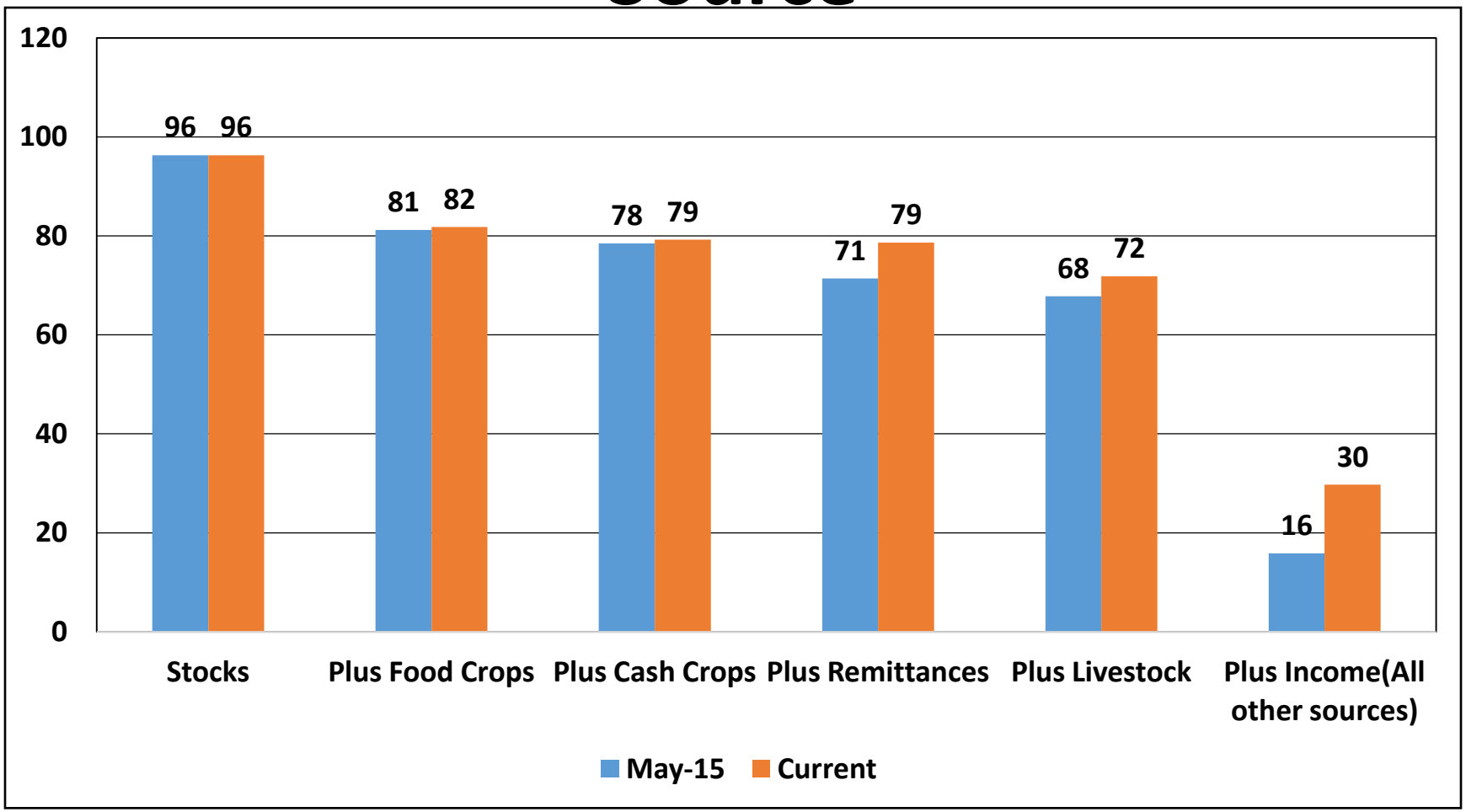
Food Security Projection Update

- Total energy that could be acquired by the household from the cheapest available energy source using its potential disposable income was then computed and compared to the household's minimum energy requirements.
- When the potential energy 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.

Assumptions for the Update

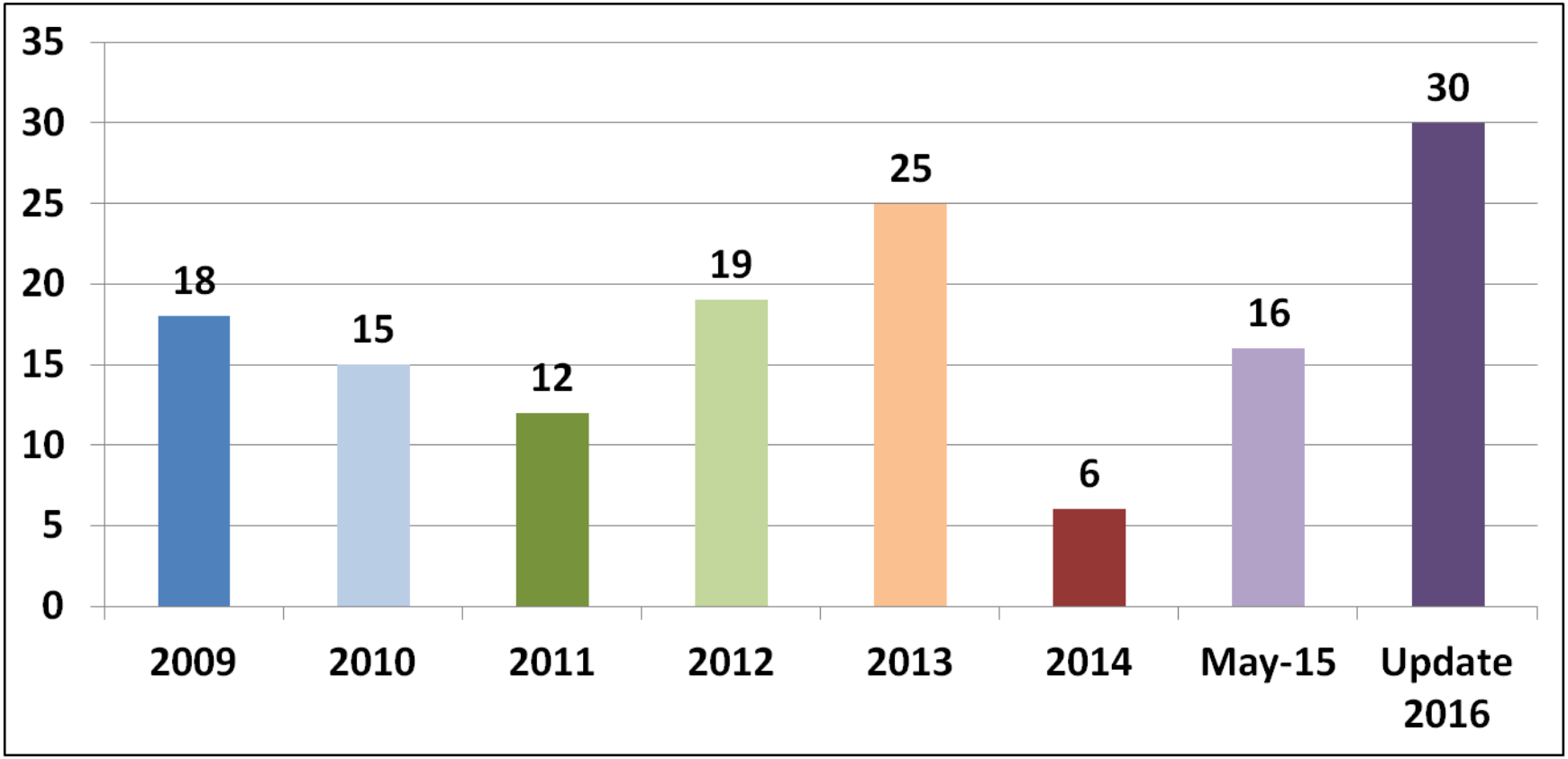
- Five percent of household food crop harvest estimates was discounted to reflect storage losses.
- The forecasted soya beans, tobacco and cotton producer prices were substituted with the actual realised seasonal average producer prices.
- Livestock prices, as the potential household income, were adjusted to reflected the distressed sales in the in districts
- Maize grain prices were adjusted to reflect the prevailing prices
- Potential income from agricultural casual labour was discounted to reflect the poor agricultural season that reduced the availability of this source to almost negligible levels in most rural districts.
- The South African Rand household income was revised to reflect the depreciation of the currency against the US dollar.

Food Insecure Proportion by Potential Source



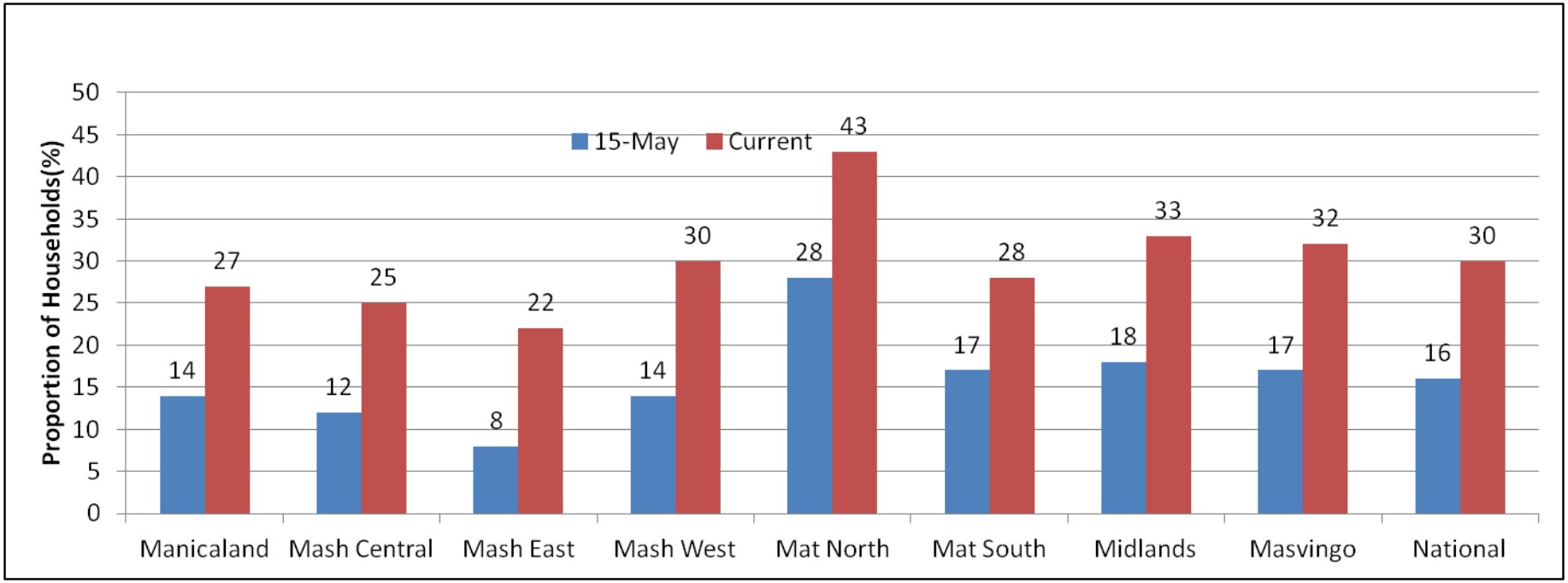
The food security situation is expected to worsen during this last quarter of the 2015/16 consumption year with the proportion of the rural households who are deemed food insecure doubling from the May 2015 projection of 16% to 30%

Trend Analysis of Food Insecure Proportion During the Peak Hunger Period



The update for the last quarter of the 2015/16 consumption year has projected January to March 2016 as the worst in the last six years with the closest being in 2013 (25%)

Food Security Projections: 2015 and Updated



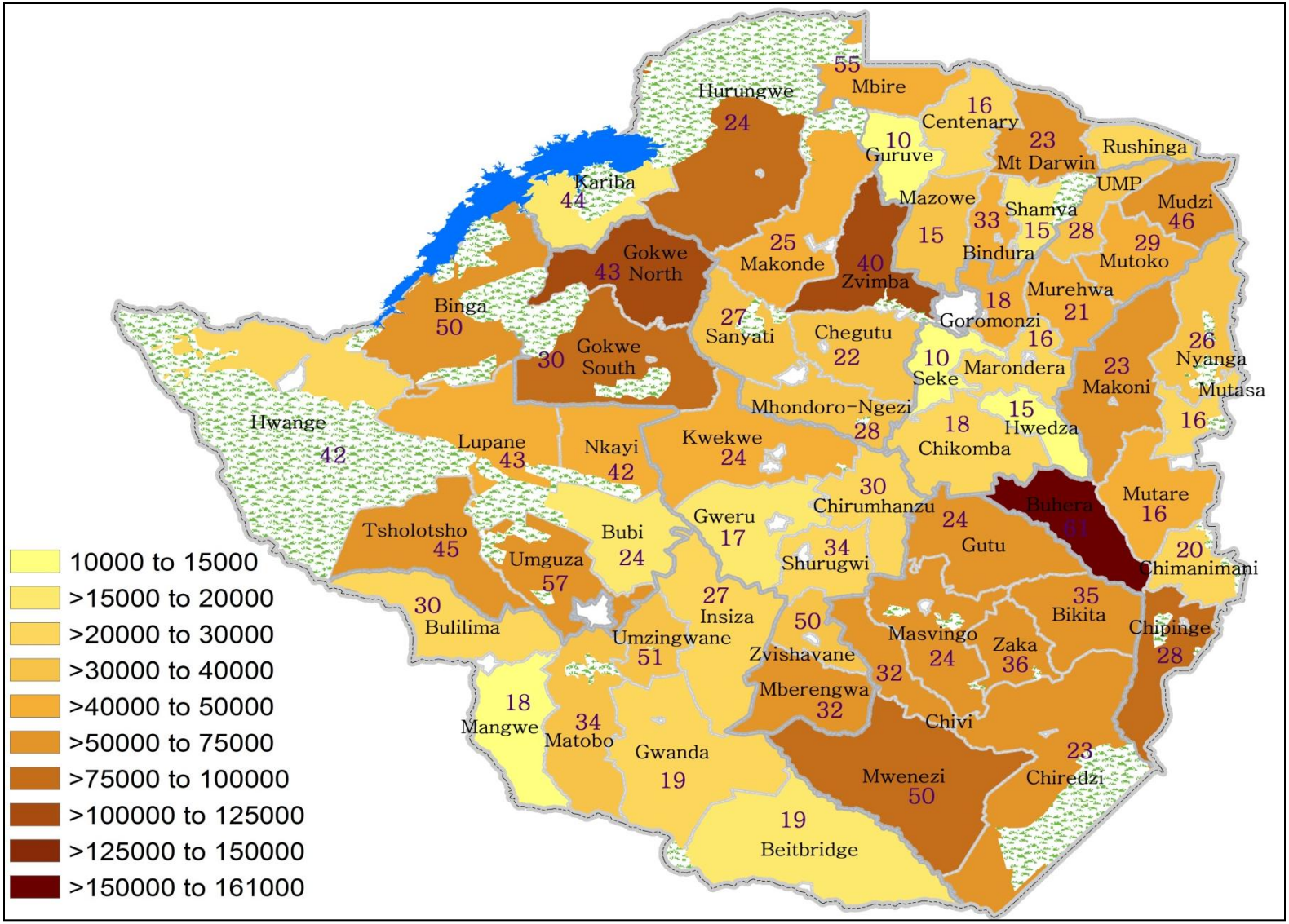
- The revised food insecurity prevalence in the rural areas during the peak hunger period (January-March 2016) is 30% .This represents approximately 2 829 159 people.
- The provinces with the highest prevalence of food insecurity are Matabeleland North (43%) followed by Midlands (33%), Masvingo (32%), Mashonaland West (30%) and Matabeleland South (28%). The provinces with the lowest prevalence of food insecurity are Mashonaland East (22%) followed by Mashonaland Central (25%) and Manicaland (27%).
- Despite having the lowest prevalence of food insecurity, Mashonaland East was found to have the highest increase in food insecurity rates from the May 2015 projections (64% increase from 8% to 22%).
- Mashonaland West (53%) and Mashonaland Central (52%) also witnessed high increases in food insecurity levels.

Districts with the Highest and Lowest Food Insecurity Levels

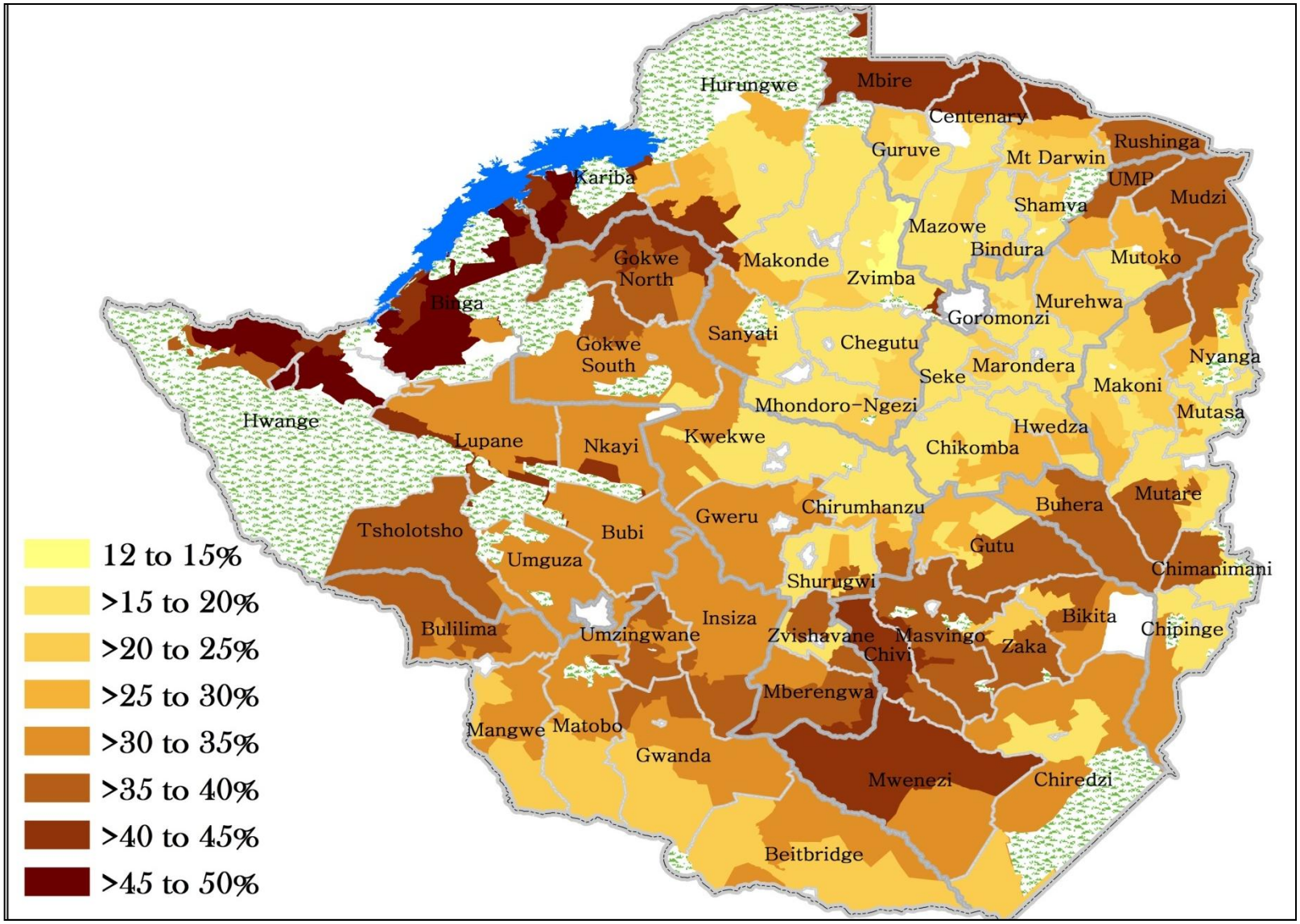
Highest Food Insecurity Levels (%)		Lowest Food Insecurity Levels (%)	
Buhera	61	Guruve	10
Mguza	57	Seke	10
Mbire	55	Hwedza	15
Umzingwane	51	Mazowe	15
Zvishavane	50	Shamva	15
Mwenezi	50	Marondera	16
Binga	50	Muzarabani	16
Mudzi	46	Mutare	16
Kariba	44	Mutasa	16
Gokwe North	43	Gweru	17

- Food insecurity rates above 50% were found in 7 districts: Buhera (61%), Umguza (57%), Mbire (55%), Umzingwane (51%), Zvishavane (50%), Mwenezi (50%) and Binga (50%).
- The districts of Guruve (10%), Seke (10%), Hwedza (15%), Mazowe (15%) and Shamva (15%) had the lowest food insecurity rates.

Food Insecure Households by District January – March 2016



Food Insecure Households by Livelihood Zone January – March 2016



Conclusions and Recommendations

Conclusions and Recommendations

1. Performance of the 2015/2016 rainfall season between October 2015 and January 2016 was characterized by poor and erratic rainfall. Most parts of the country experienced at least one dry spell of more than 10 days. Rainfall totals for the country have been less than 60% of the long term average. The rainfall forecast for the last half of the season- January, February and March (JFM) is normal to below normal. If all provinces were to experience on average below normal rainfall, rain-fed maize crops in Matabeleland North, Matabeleland South and Masvingo would receive on average less water than required for maize crop. Mashonaland East, Mashonaland West, and Mashonaland Central provinces would also be at risk of not meeting their water requirements for rain-fed maize.
2. There is a need to monitor the evolution of the season and its implication on the food security situation between this assessment and the May Rural Livelihoods Assessments using secondary data being gathered and analysed by different institutions.

Conclusions and Recommendations

3. There is need for on-going monitoring and reporting on humanitarian programmes being implemented.
4. Increased participation of the Government in all stages of food assistance programmes needs to be ensured.
5. The impact of the Agricultural Input Support Programmes for this season have been negatively affected by the long dry spells.
6. Future Agricultural support programmes should target labour endowed households (that are likely to make productive use of the inputs) with comprehensive and timely distributed inputs. Labour constrained households should be targeted by food assistance and social protection programmes.

Conclusions and Recommendations

7. The number of households deriving income and grain from casual labour has significantly decreased (approximately 45% decrease). This leaves many rural poor households without one of their main livelihoods coping strategy, and hence more vulnerable to food insecurity.
8. Put in place policies that improve households' disposable income, such as reduced taxes on sales and reduced pension contributions. Although the proportion of households accessing water from improved sources (78%) is comparable to results from previous assessments, the percentage of household accessing inadequate amounts (35%) of water for domestic use during the assessment period (January) is unusual.
9. Nationally, 81% of households reported unavailability of water for agricultural purposes (irrigation schemes and gardens), and 49 % of households reported unavailability of water for their livestock. This was unusual for this time of the year.

Conclusions and Recommendations

10. Response to these water shortage problems should be addressed by equipping existing high yield water points with motorised pumps. The rehabilitation, drilling and construction of new water points in areas with high ground water potential should also be undertaken. Where applicable, this should consider the use of solar and wind energy.
11. Ensure that cattle troughs are constructed around community water points in areas with critical water shortages. This should be done not only to provide water for livestock but also minimize water losses.
12. Support emergency rehabilitation of irrigation infrastructure in areas where minimum, rapid interventions can mitigate the effects of the current drought.

Conclusions and Recommendations

13. Livestock make a significant contribution to the livelihoods of many households, particularly in the southern districts. Grazing across the whole country is generally poor and inadequate and about 25 districts had critically inadequate pastures. Significant and unusual livestock deaths due to drought have been recorded in several districts. In particular, Chiredzi (2638), Chipinge (2600), Mwenezi (1993), Tsholotsholo (1145) and Binga (993) had the highest drought related cattle deaths at the time of the assessment.
14. Livestock support programmes should be intensified to ensure that all critical facets (food, water and drugs) are adequately covered.
15. There is an urgent need to strengthen and expand current livestock support programmes to prevent further deterioration of livestock condition and deaths. These include- community feedlot facilities, support to farmers with hay cutting and bailing equipment at subsidised prices, subsidised feed sales and sale points close to farmers.

Conclusions and Recommendations

16. Although all the districts in the country benefitted from food assistance interventions, these are not covering all the people in need and often the level of assistance is not completely covering the food gap at household level. It is therefore recommended that the coverage and adequacy of food assistance programmes be scaled up in accordance with revised food insecurity projections.

17. Drought Relief Policy and Food Deficit Mitigation Strategy should be adhered particularly the multi-sectoral participation of all relevant Government structures, adoption registration, distribution and monitoring strategies that are inclusive. All emergence food assistance programming should include elements that support resilience building activities, including community works programmes.

18. There is an urgent need to revive and improve the Grain Marketing Board district depots and selling points, especially in Matabeleland North province to prevent any possible reductions in access to and availability of maize.

Conclusions and Recommendations

19. Improve in-country staple food distribution to ensure equitable sub-national availability and reduced spatial arbitrage (geographic maize price variations).

20. Gender based violence cases were found to be on the increase in most districts. This however may be attributable to an increase in awareness and reporting and not necessarily to an increase in incidents. The May 2016 Rural Livelihoods Assessment should further investigate the relationship between GBV and food and nutrition insecurity.

21. There is need to increase capacity to address GBV by further equipping traditional leaders, rural health centres and rural police stations with adequate skills and complementary resources to deal with GBV cases in local courts. Awareness raising campaigns related to crucial pieces of legislation relevant to GBV should be promoted in the rural areas.

22. The nutrition situation among rural communities is poor. The Global Acute Malnutrition rate of children aged 6-59 months was found to be 5.7%. This is the highest level ever recorded over the past 15years. The Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM) rate for children aged 6-59 months was 2.1% which is slightly above the 2% threshold for emergency response in Zimbabwe. This is a stark increase over the SAM rate observed over the past 15 years in rural areas which was below 1%.

Conclusions and Recommendations

23. Targeted supplementary feeding for children under five and pregnant and lactating women with moderate acute malnutrition is recommended and where such a programme already exists, scaling up should be considered.
24. Active case-finding (screening) efforts should be scaled up to ensure early detection and referral of malnourished children for treatment and referral facilities and referral systems should be capacitated with skills for management of acute malnutrition.
25. Effort to mobilise more resources to procure more stocks of commodities (Ready to Use Therapeutic Foods,F-75, F-100, Ready to Use Supplementary Foods, corn soya blend) for prevention and treatment of severe acute malnutrition and moderate acute malnutrition to ensure adequate stocks at treatment sites. The precarious nutritional situation requires constant monitoring and full scale nutrition survey should be nested in the May 2016 Rural Livelihoods Assessment.

Conclusions and Recommendations

26. Projections for the period April 2016 to March 2017 (the coming consumption year) will be provided following the May Rural Livelihoods Assessments whose results will be expected early June 2016. This will take into account results of both the first and second round crop and livestock assessments by the Ministry of Agriculture, Mechanisation and Irrigation Development.
27. There is need to develop a well coordinated response strategy with clear deliverables, number of beneficiaries, areas, sectors involved, package of intervention etc in order to maximise on available resources.

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