



Patterns of social safety nets, weather shocks, and household food security status in Malawi

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Roundtable discussion on social protection programmes and climate resilience in Malawi

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Introduction

Increasing frequency and intensity of weather shocks

- Over past 5 decades- 19 major floods and 7 droughts
- 2015/16 season (El Nino) - late onset of rains, prolonged dry spells, floods
- 2019/20 season (Cyclone Idai) - floods
- 2021/22 season (cyclone Gombe and Anna)–floods

Shocks have negative outcomes on welfare

- Reduced agricultural production and income for smallholder farmers
- Loss and damage in monetary cost - in 2015, USD335 million

Social protection policies in Malawi

National Social Support Policy (2012)

- Aimed at reducing poverty and vulnerability of the poor
- Operationalized through the Malawi National Social Support Programme II (MNSSP II) (2018-2023)

National Resilience Strategy (2018-2030)

- Aims at building resilience to economic and environmental shocks
- Covers public works, cash transfers and school feeding

Malawi 2063 agenda

- Long-term goal is to reduce the number of people in need of social protection by creating wealth for all Malawians

Impacts of social protection programmes- literature review

- 🌅 Food security improvements
- 🌅 Improved household resilience
- 🌅 Strengthened livelihoods
- 🌅 Human capital improvements
- 🌅 Improved child-nutrition well-being

Study objectives

- ☀️ Explore patterns of shocks and social protection programmes
- ☀️ Analyse spatial patterns of resilience in Malawi
- ☀️ Explore determinants of household resilience to shocks

Data

- ☀️ **Nationally representative integrated household survey data (IHS)**
- ☀️ **Collected by the National Statistical Office (NSO)**
- ☀️ **Data collected between 2010/11 and 2019/20**
- ☀️ **Multi-topic household and agricultural questionnaires**
 - Shocks faced and coping mechanisms
 - Social safety nets/social protection programmes
 - Food consumption indicators

Methodology

Food consumption scores (FCS)

- Based on frequency of various foods consumed over past 7 days

Reduced Coping Strategies Index (rCSI)

- Measures the behavior of households over the past seven days when they did not have enough food or money to purchase food

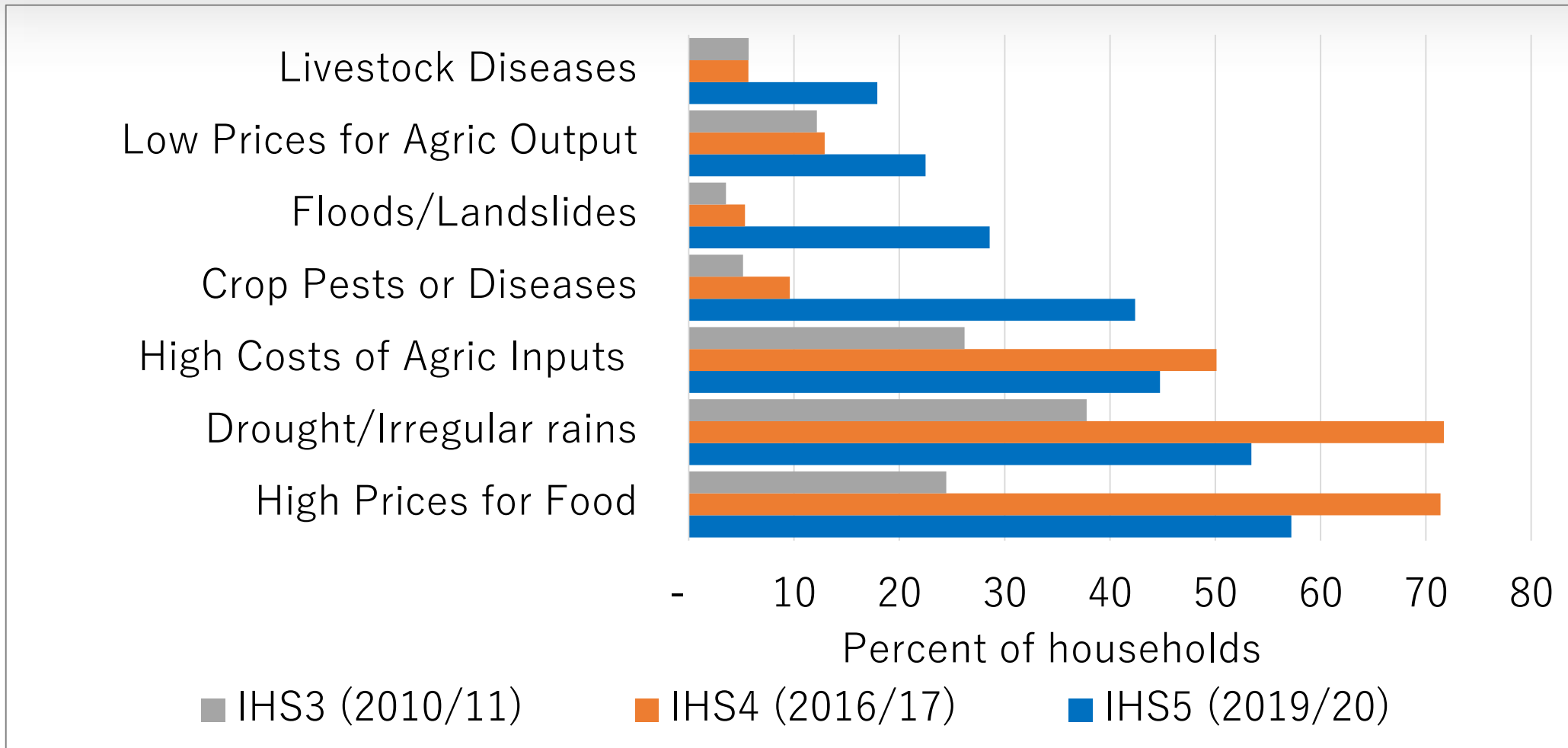
Asset indices

- Constructed based on 31 durable goods and 24 agricultural goods

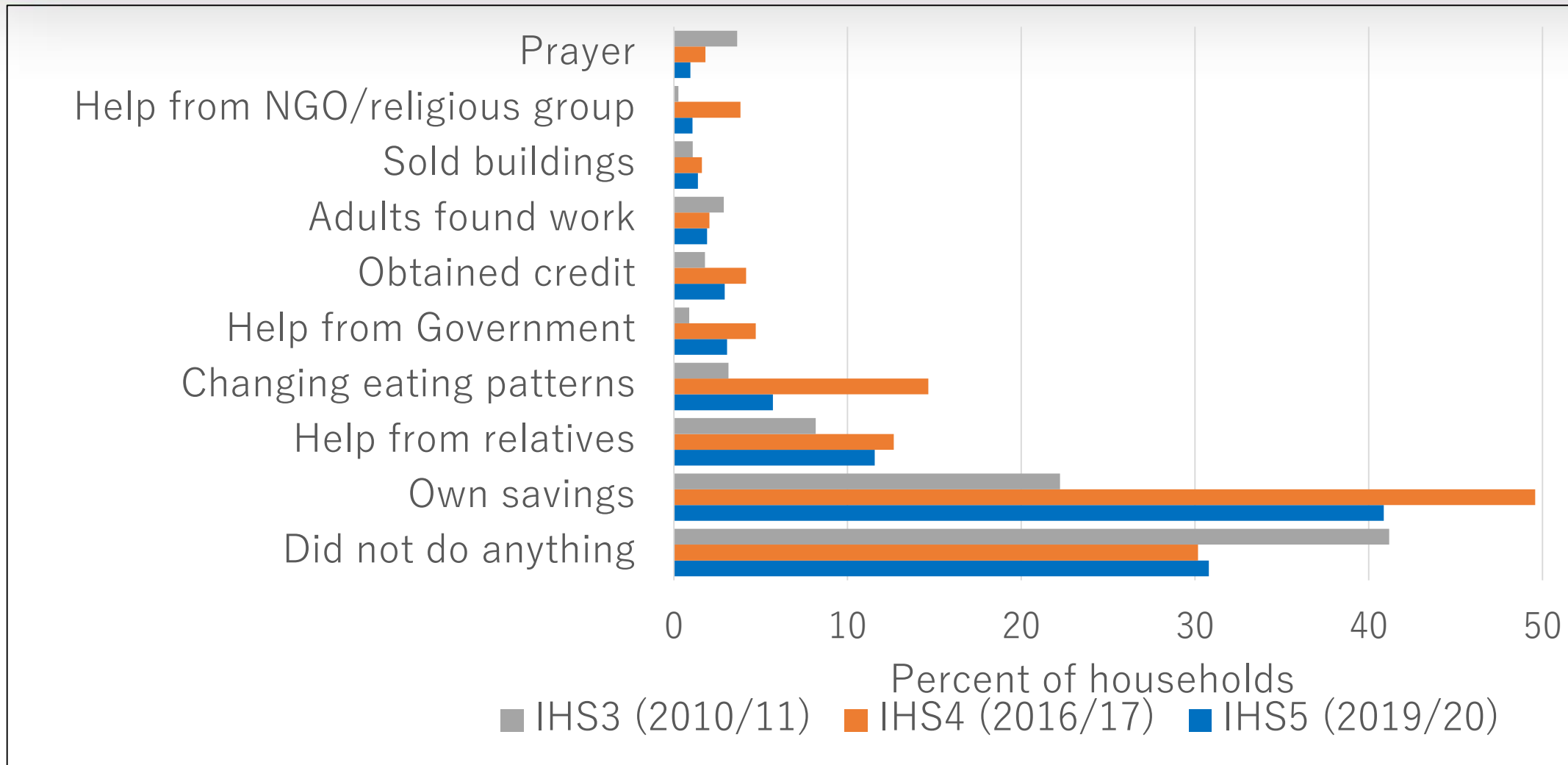
Resilience Indicators for Measurement and Analysis – II (RIMA)

- Based on four pillars – Access to Basic Services (ABS), Assets (AST), Social Safety Nets (SSN), and Adaptive Capacity (AC)

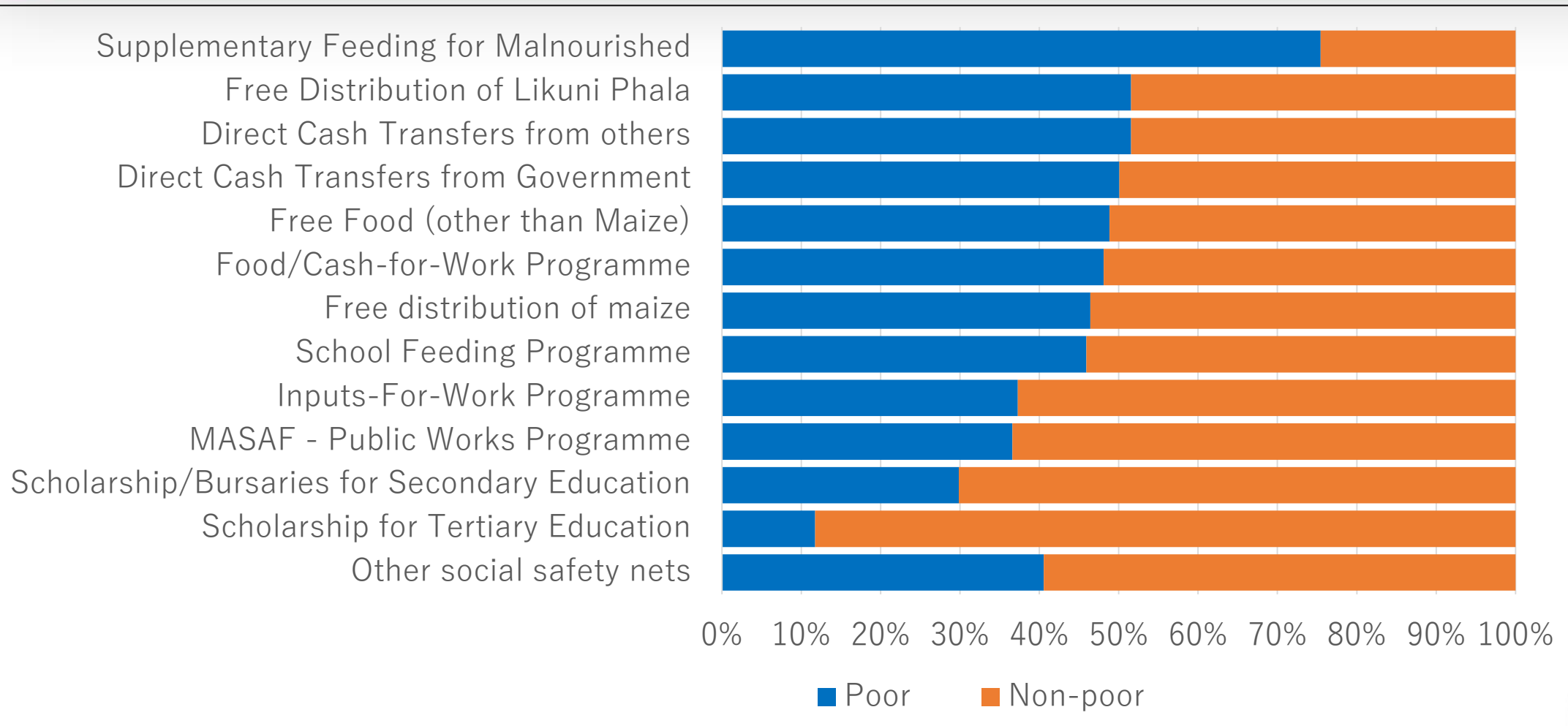
Patterns of major shocks faced by households



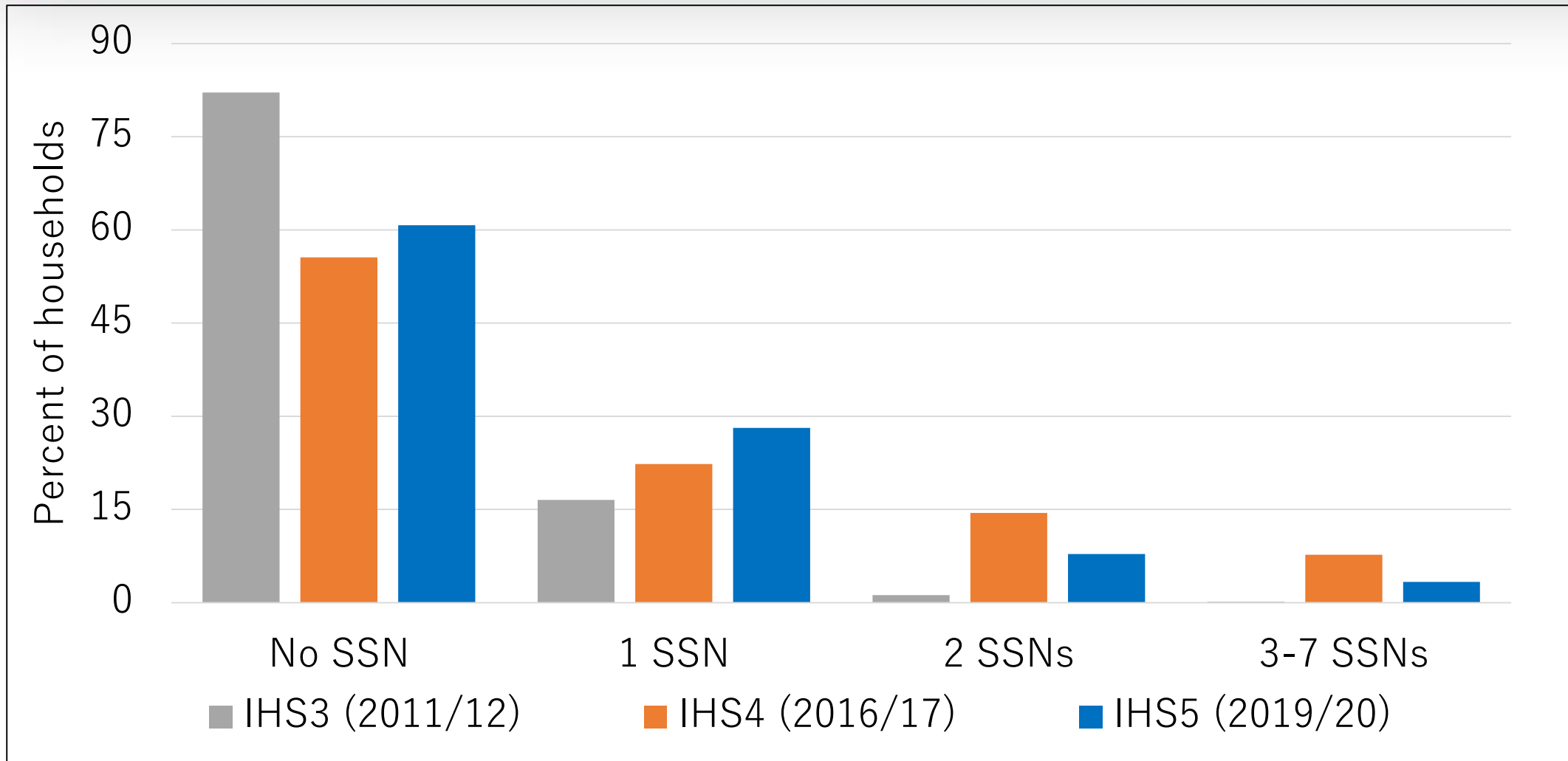
Main mechanisms for mitigating against shocks



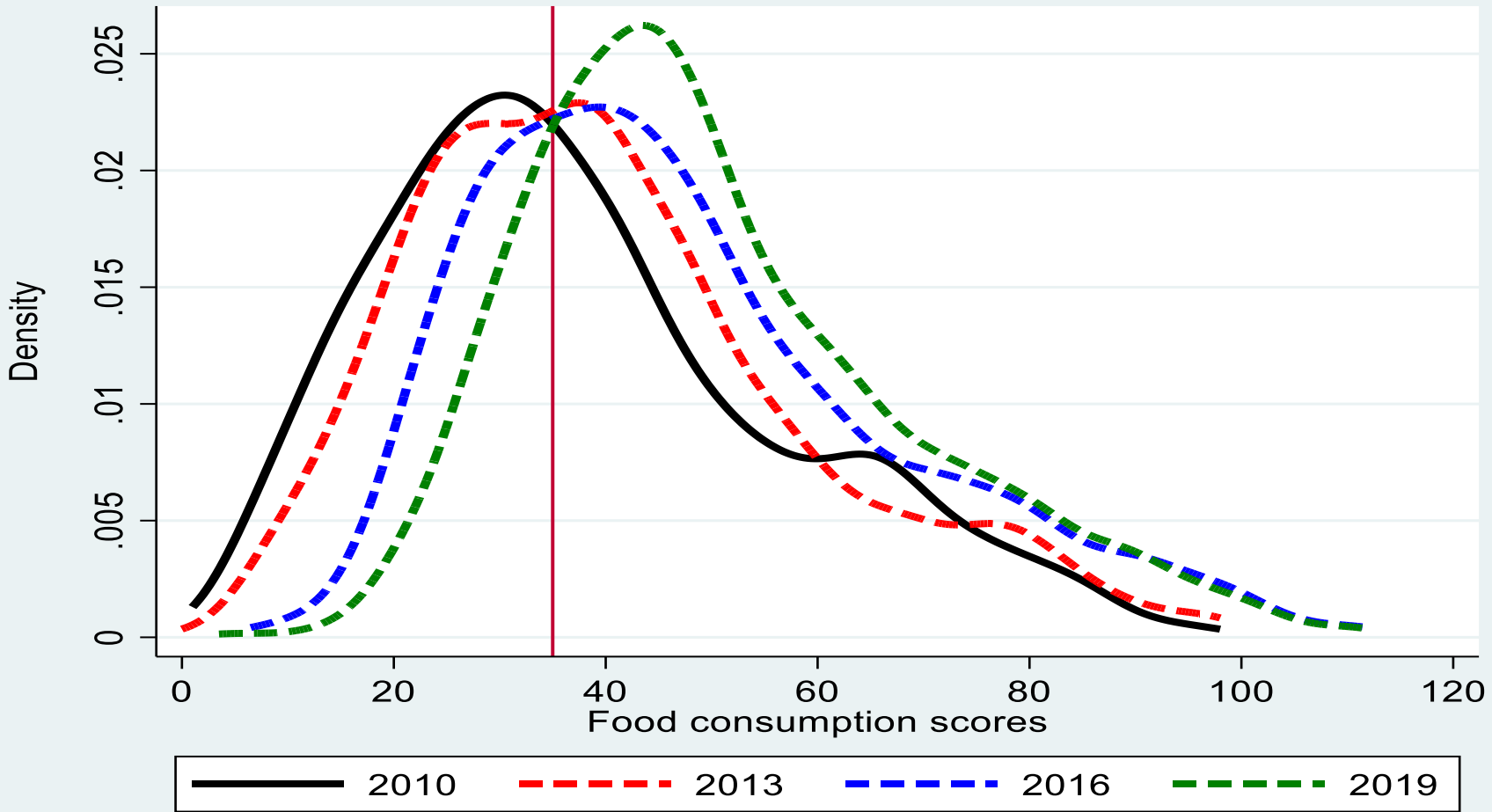
Share of households receiving social safety nets (IHS5: 2019/20)



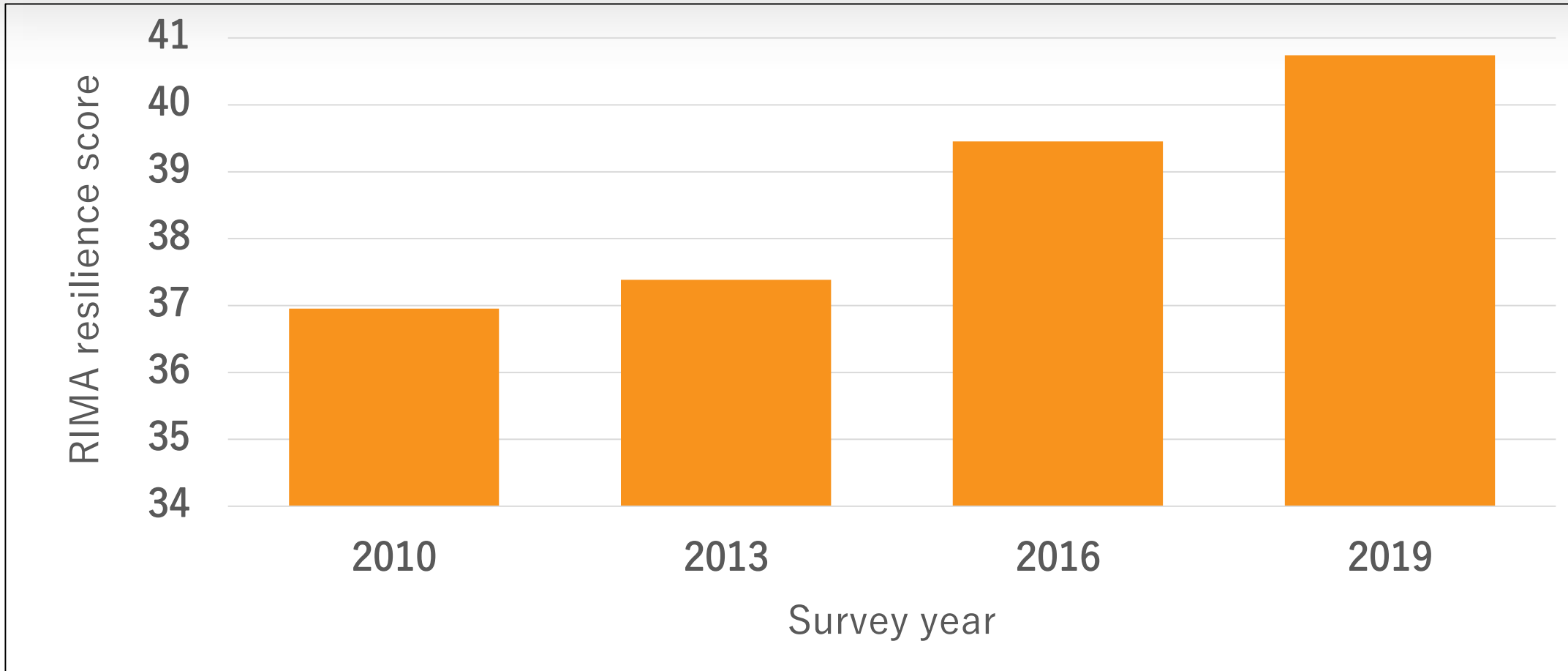
Number of social safety nets received



Food consumption status over time

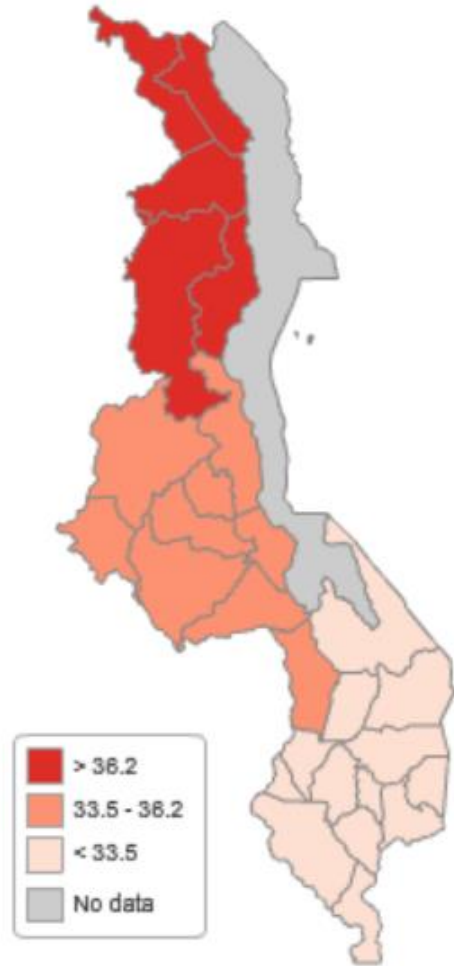


Household resilience over time

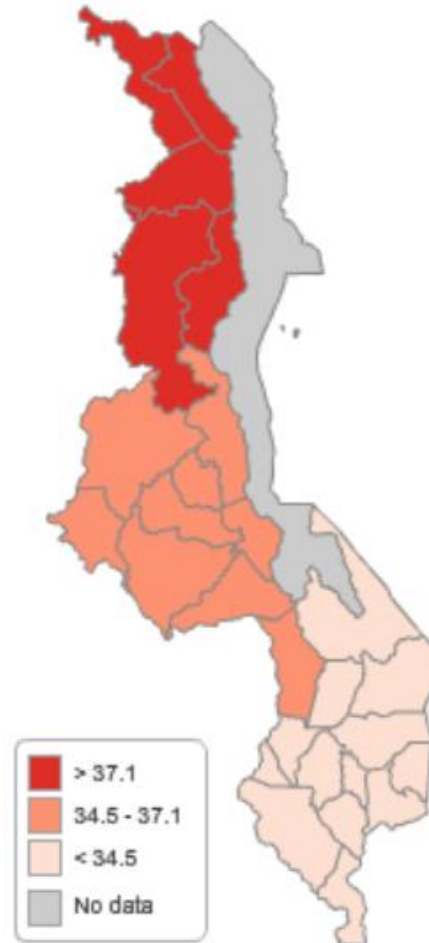


Temporal analysis of resilience—by region

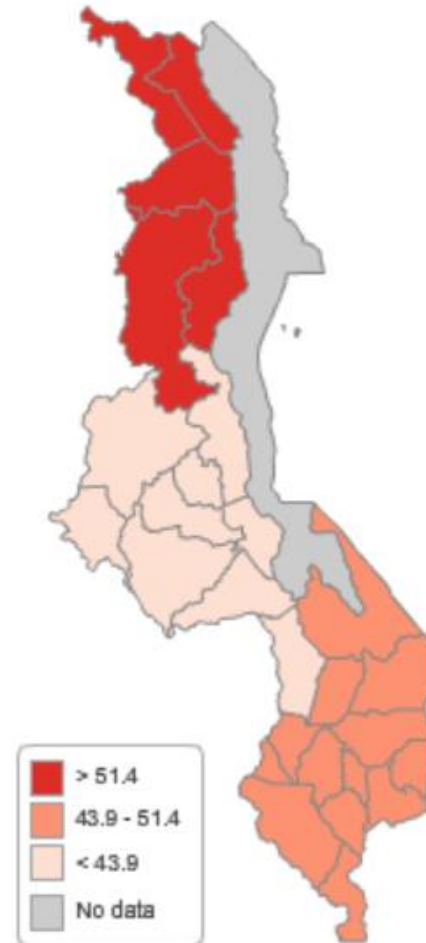
2010



2016

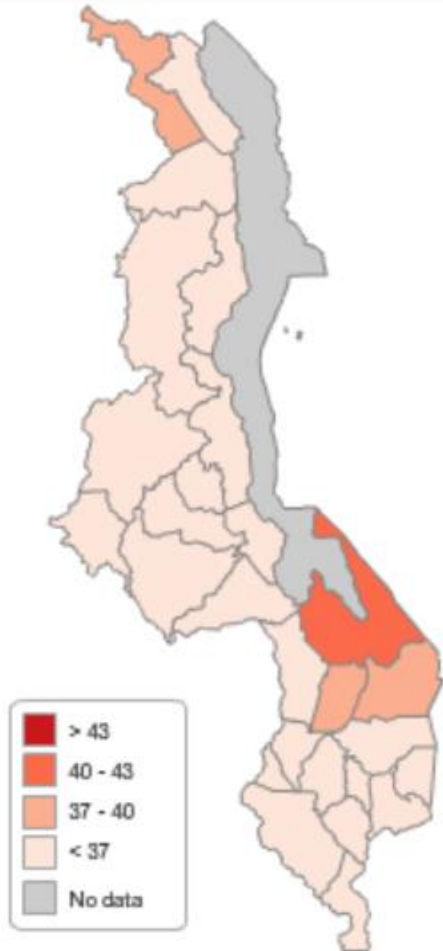


2019

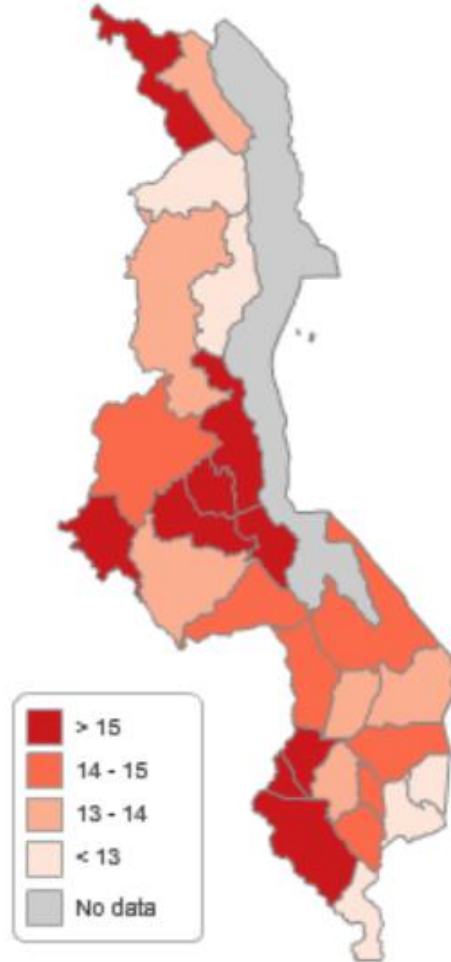


Spatial analysis—by resilience components (district level)

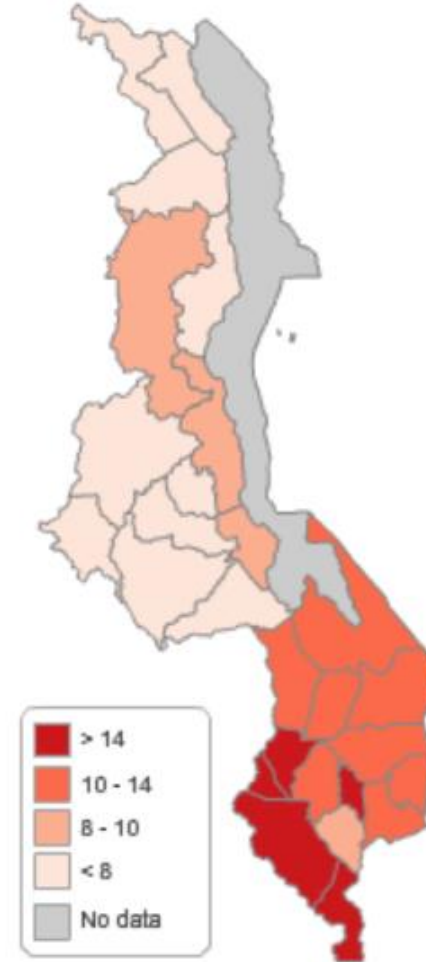
Access to basic services



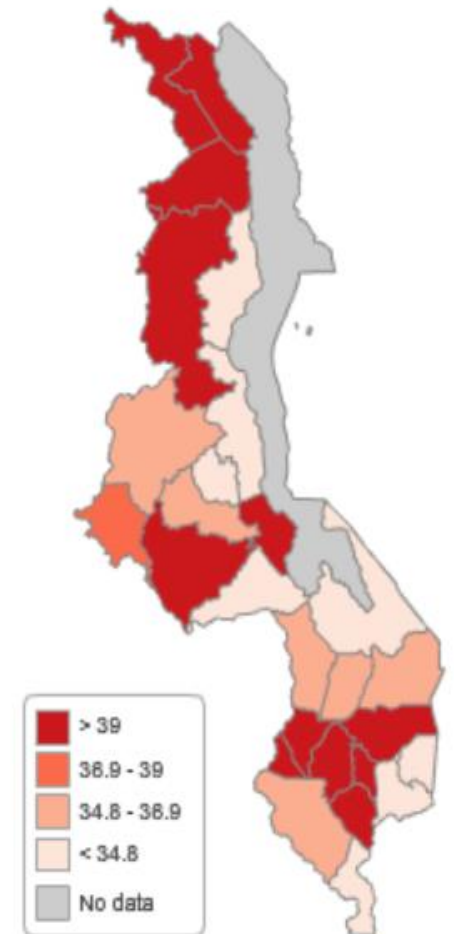
Assets



Social safety nets



Adaptability



Structure of resilience in Malawi

Assets and adaptive capacity are the most important pillars

- Followed by access to social safety nets

Southern region districts have largest scores of social safety nets

- Reflecting the focus of most social-safety programs by various actors

Northern region districts have largest adaptive capacity scores

- Education, self-employment, literacy rates, etc.

Factors affecting resilience

Positive relationship

- Education
- Cash transfers have the largest impact amongst social safety nets
- School feeding programmes also have positive impact

Negative relationship

- Rural households
- Female-headed households
- Chronic illness in household
- Distance to road

Conclusion

- 🌅 **Households' resilience to food insecurity has been improving**
- 🌅 **Assets and adaptive capacity are the most relevant pillars**
 - Southern region : social safety net; Northern region: adaptive capacity
- 🌅 **Education: biggest positive relationship with resilience**
- 🌅 **Cash transfers: largest impact amongst social safety nets**
- 🌅 **School feeding programmes: positive relationship with resilience**
- 🌅 **Factors associated with lower resilience**
 - Female household head, longer distances to the road and chronic illness in the household

Policy recommendations

Improve basic social services to rural households

- Access to roads and markets

Improve adaptability of households

- Self-employment activities and improvement of education

Reprogramming of social safety nets

- Productive assets, land, livestock
- Better targeting of programmes

Adoption of climate-smart technologies and practices

- Mitigate against drought, irregular rains

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