



An Early Assessment of the Impact of COVID-19 in Malawi

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DCAFS Thematic Meeting on Impacts of COVID-19

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About MwAPATA Institute

- Malawian-led policy think tank for issues related to agriculture-and economic transformation
- Affiliated with National Planning Commission and Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources
- Technical support from Michigan State University
- Start up funding provided by Agricultural Transformation Initiative

Research at MwAPATA Institute

- i. **Demand-driven**- responds to policymakers' *specific requests*
- ii. **Supply-driven**- analysis geared towards *anticipating major challenges*
- iii. **Reactive/rapid response**- responds to *specific urgent requests*
 - *An Early Assessment of the Impact of COVID-19 on Agri-food Systems in Malawi*

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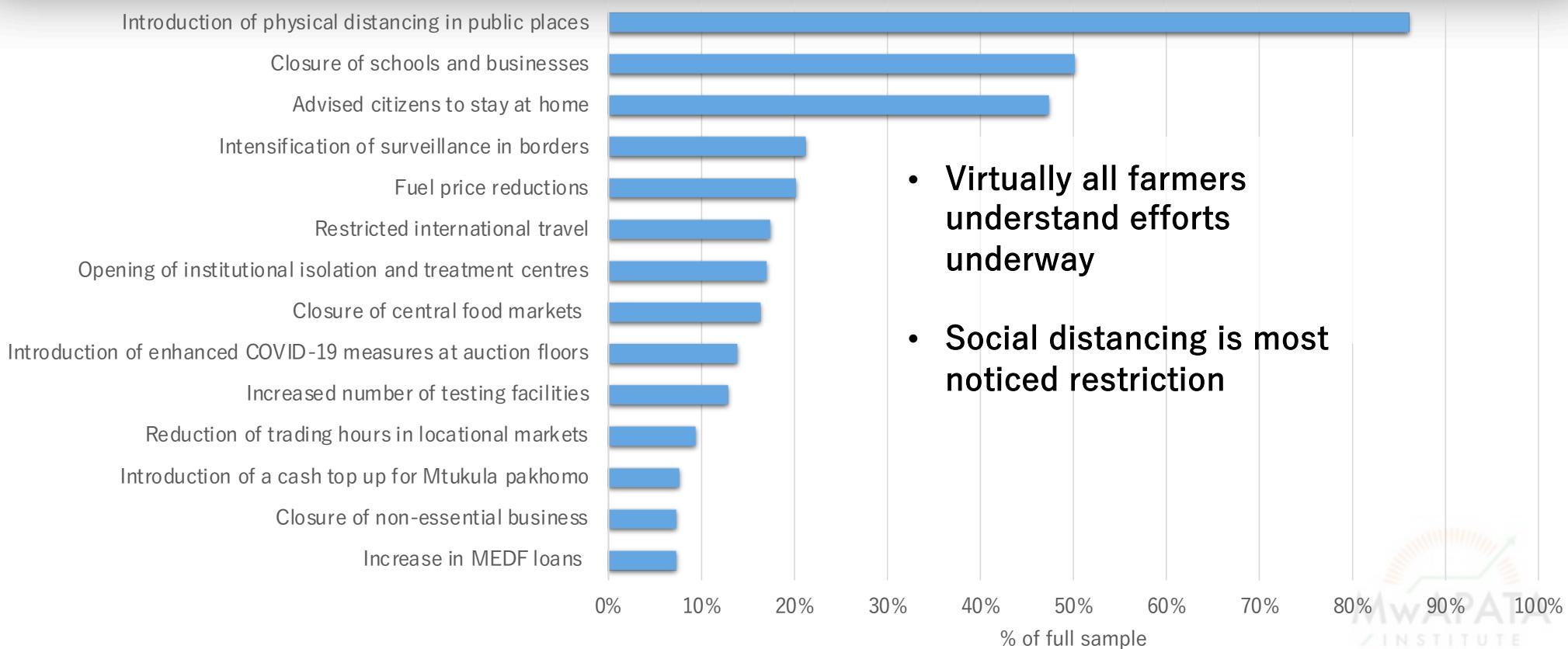
Assessing COVID-19 Impacts

- Drew on existing information and conducted several small-sample surveys in May 2020
- Interviewed respondents throughout agricultural value chain

Awareness of Covid-19 containment measures

- On average, women are more willing to adapt containment measures.
- Rural communities are more apt to adopt measures like hand washing than other measures

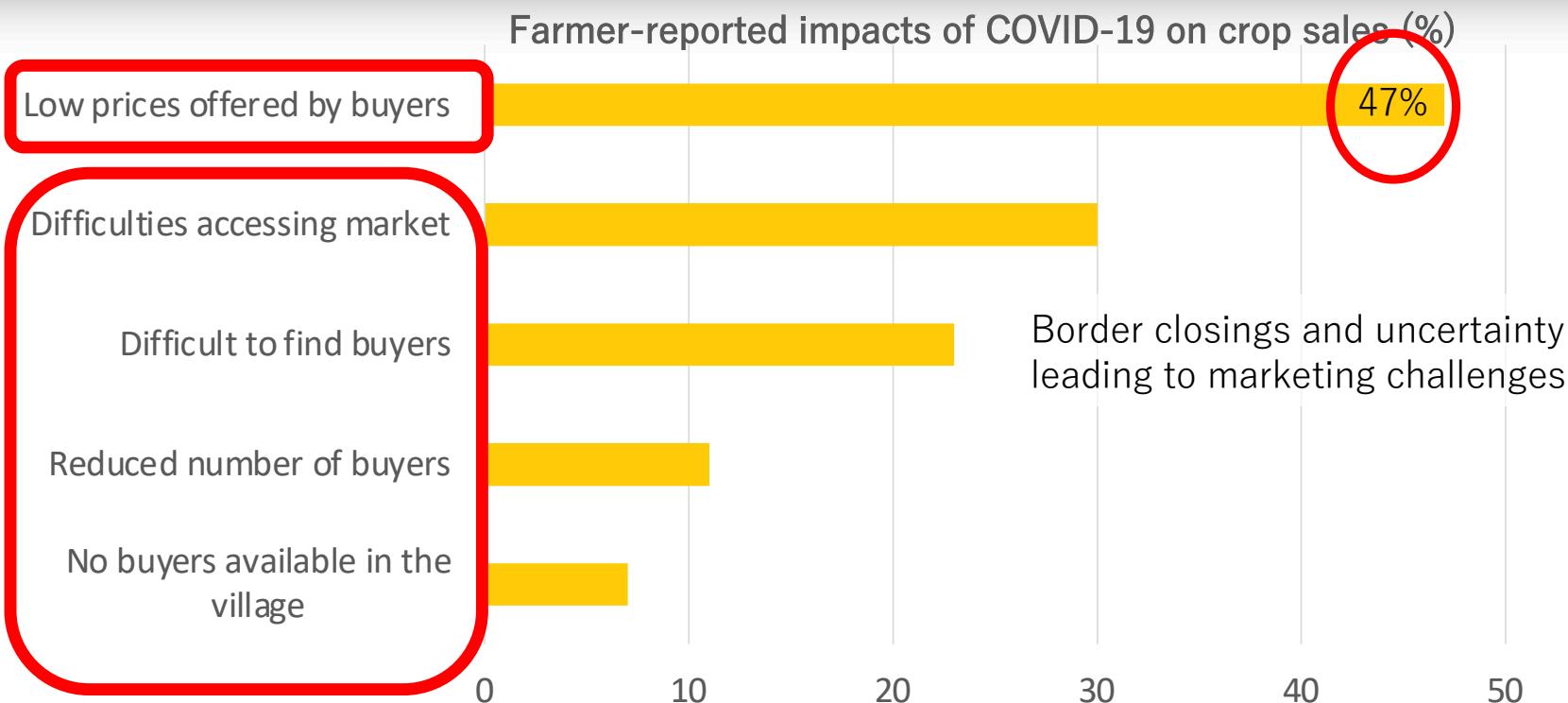
Respondents awareness of government measures to contain COVID-19



Covid-19 and Food Security

- 18% of the households experienced labor disruptions and harvesting delays
 - May have affected post-harvest losses.
- 56% of households expect a drop in maize production next year if the pandemic persists.
- Production most likely impact through:
 - Delays in the land preparation
 - Difficulty procuring inputs, specifically fertilizers and seeds.

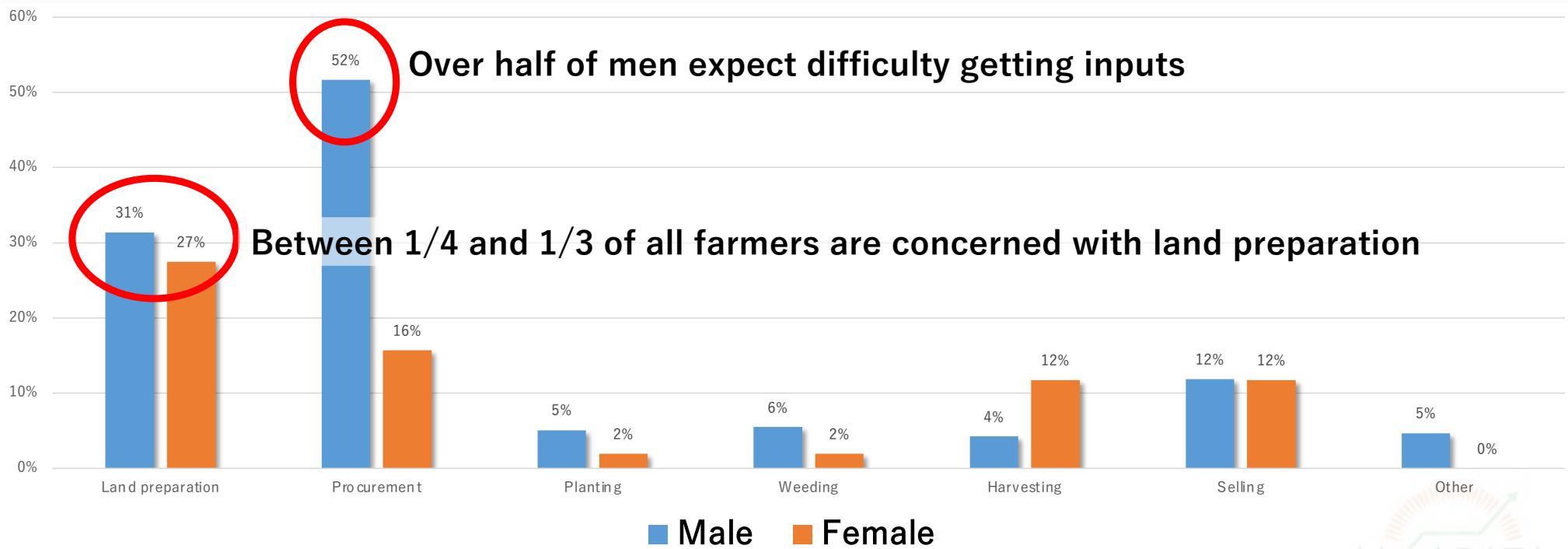
Selling adversely affected



Impact on food wholesalers and retailers

- 77% of businesses strongly impacted by COVID-19
 - Fewer customers in the markets
 - High transport costs
 - Movement restrictions
- 89% reported food sourcing has been adversely affected
 - High prices, or
 - Difficulty finding suppliers

Percentage of respondents anticipating adverse effects for the 2020/21 main season



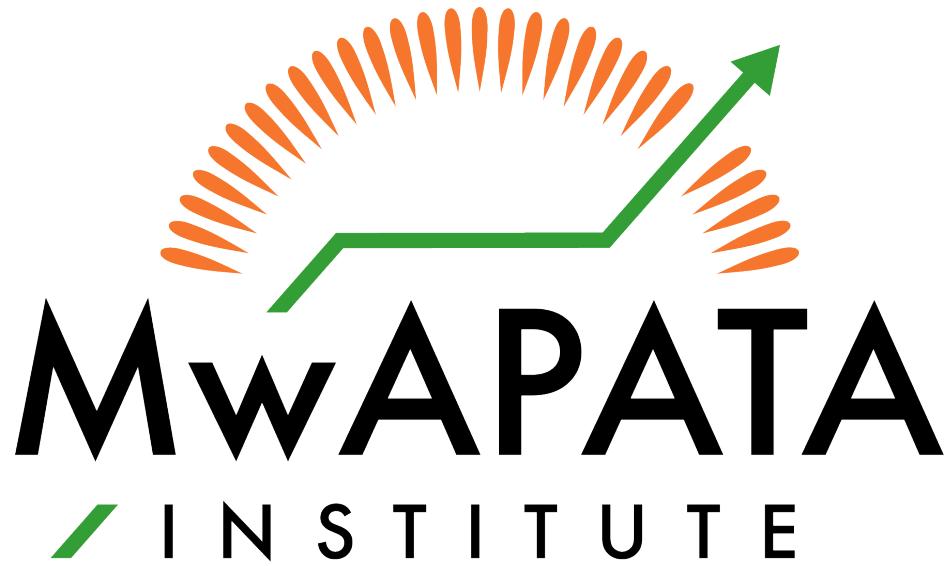
Policy and Regulatory Issues

- Monitor food prices
 - Early warning system for economic impacts
 - Price spikes could have several causes -> warning signals need investigation
- Social safety nets could:
 - Ease economic impact of pandemic
 - Improve compliance with (reduce incentive to violate) mitigation measures…
 - …thereby reducing health impacts.
- While the whole food system is affected…
- Input supply chains are in most urgent need of attention
 - Reliance on international fertilizer/seed producers
- Good health policy = good economic policy
 - Current health monitoring may lead to underestimating impacts

More details available

Many more details available in the full Working Paper
(or Policy Brief), available at:

<https://www.mwapata.mw/publications>



Zikomo