Sources of Food and Related (In)Security for Urban Households

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Chair: Mr. Percy Toriro, Municipal Development Partnershipfor Southern and Eastern Africa

The urban difference

- Urban Food Security has been politically invisible. Why?
  - Other urban problems take priority
  - Food security viewed as a rural issue
  - UFS manifests differently to rural
  - Atomized coping strategies mask extent of problem

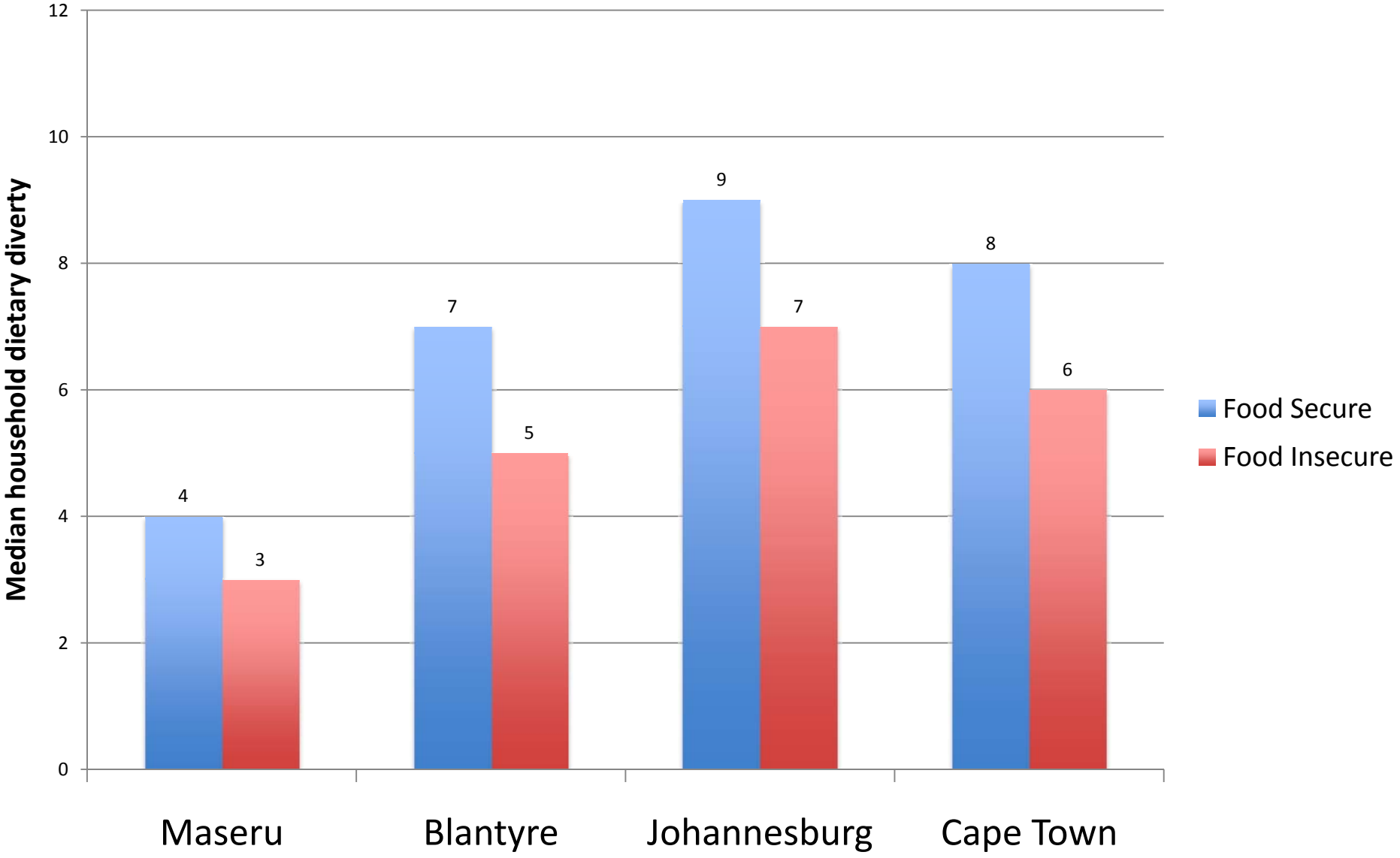
Structure of paper

- What is driving food insecurity in our cities?
  - Poverty
  - Shocks and stresses
  - Urban livelihoods and coping strategies
  - Urban design and management

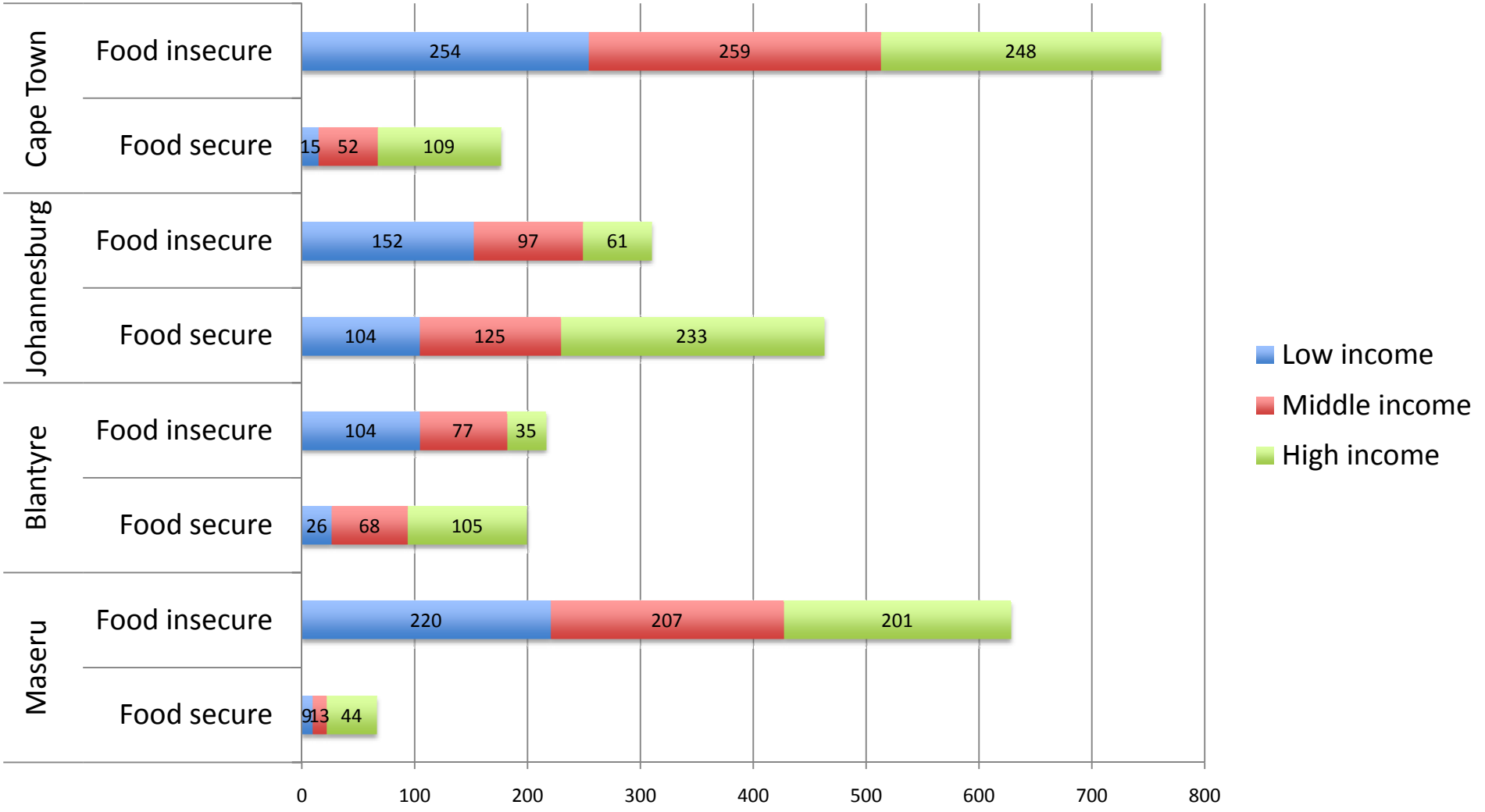
Levels of food insecurity

- Maseru – 90.5% food insecure
- Blantyre – 52.1% food insecure
- Johannesburg – 40.2% food insecure
- Cape Town – 80.0% food insecure

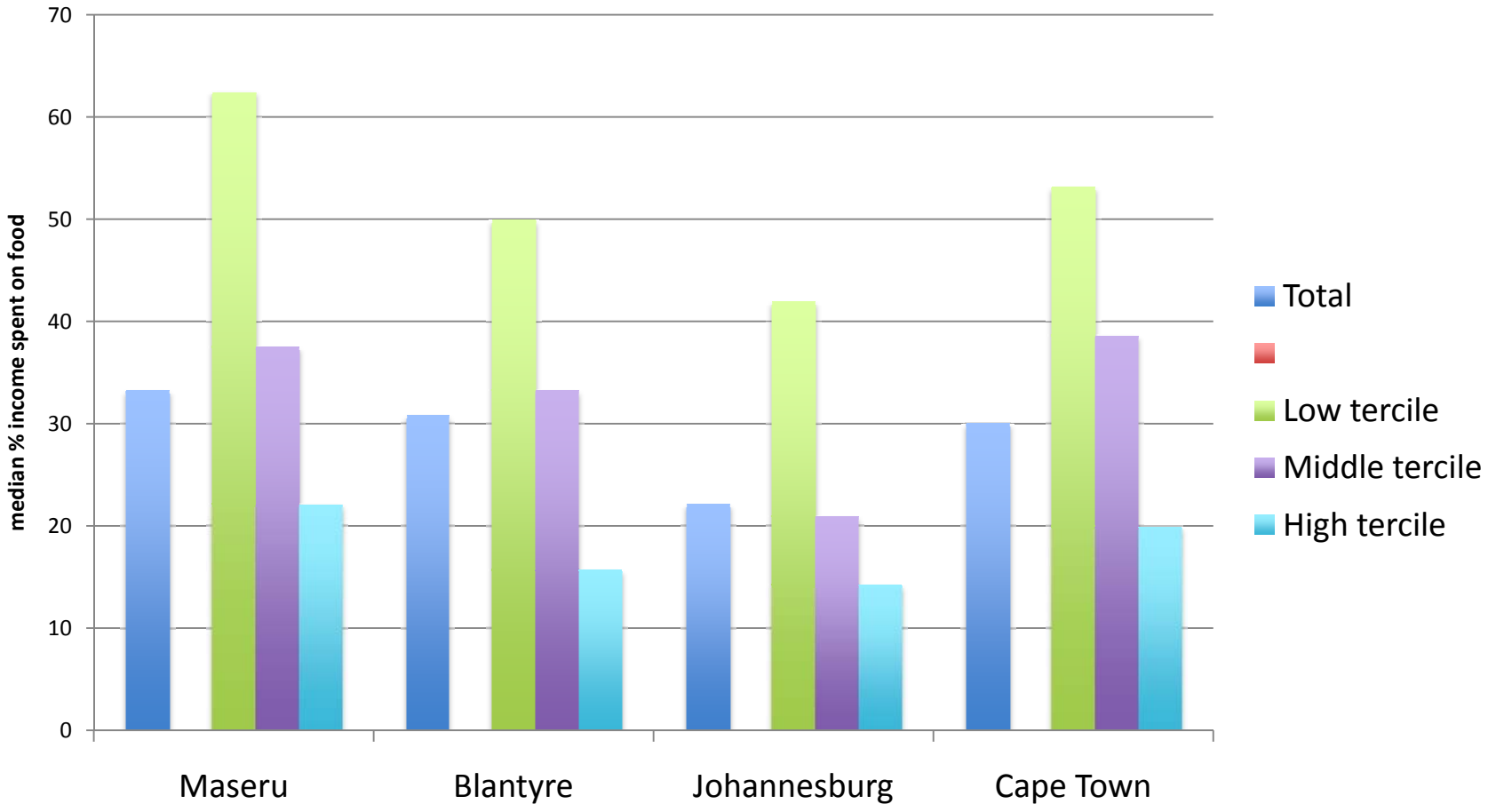
Household dietary diversity



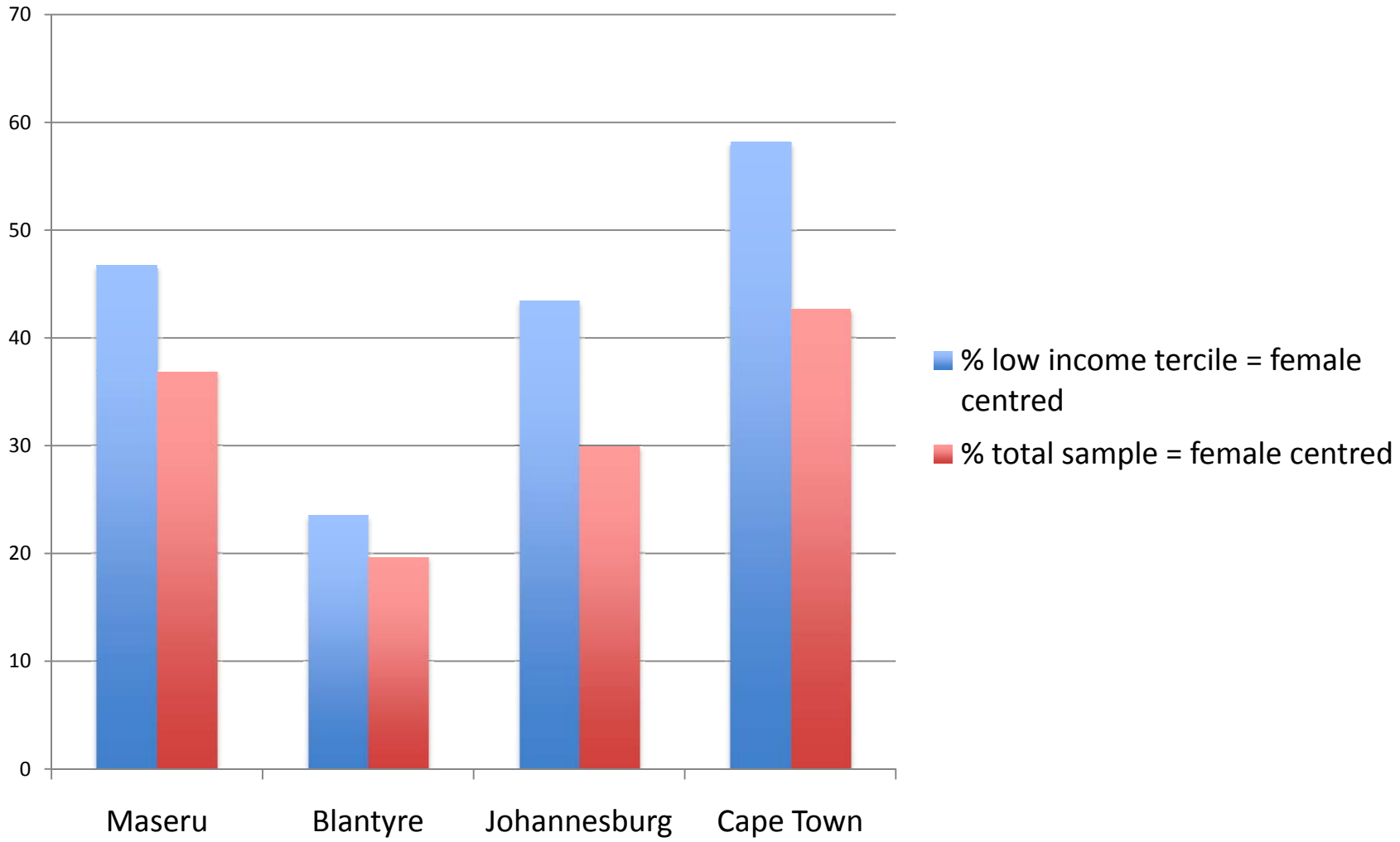
Is poverty the cause of food security?



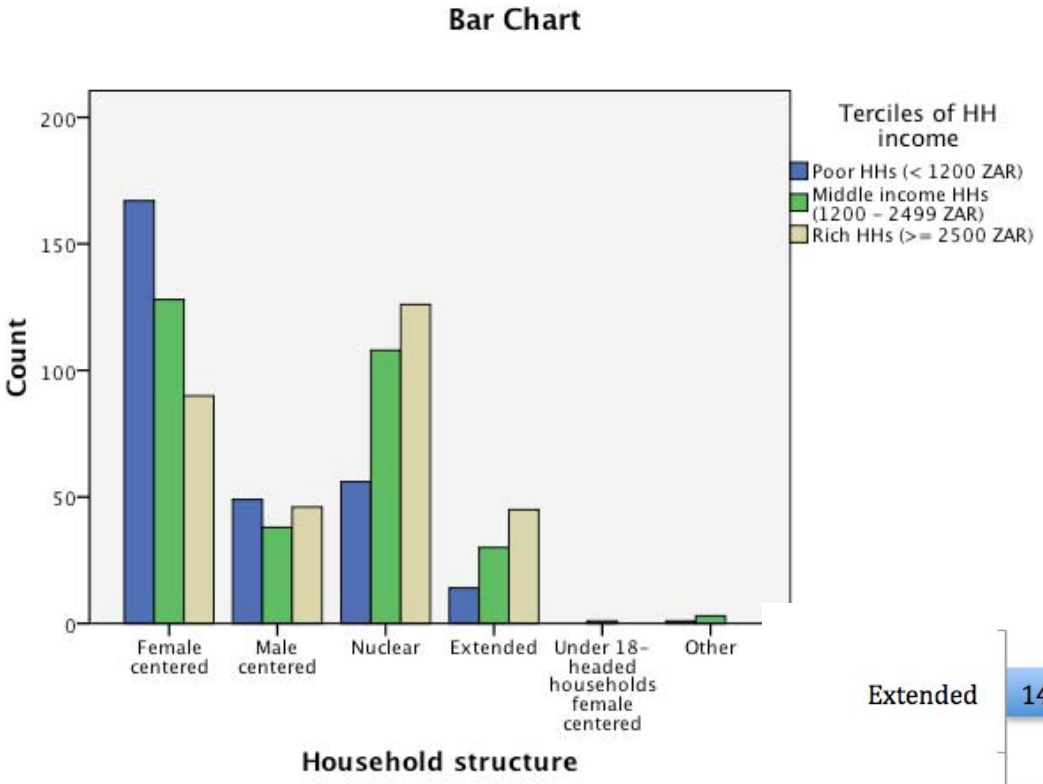
Food expenditure and poverty

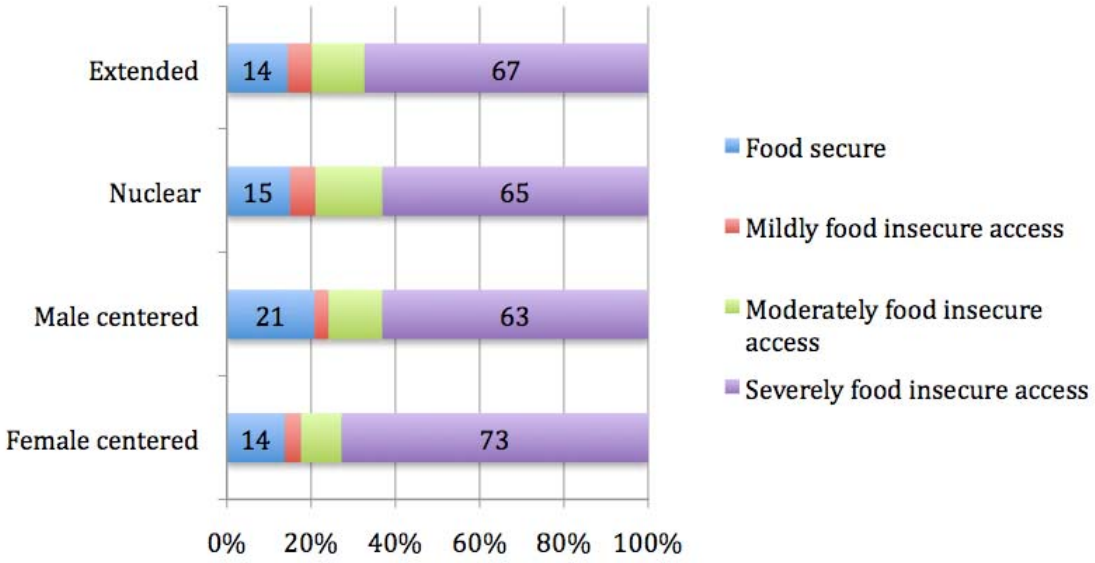


Gender and poverty

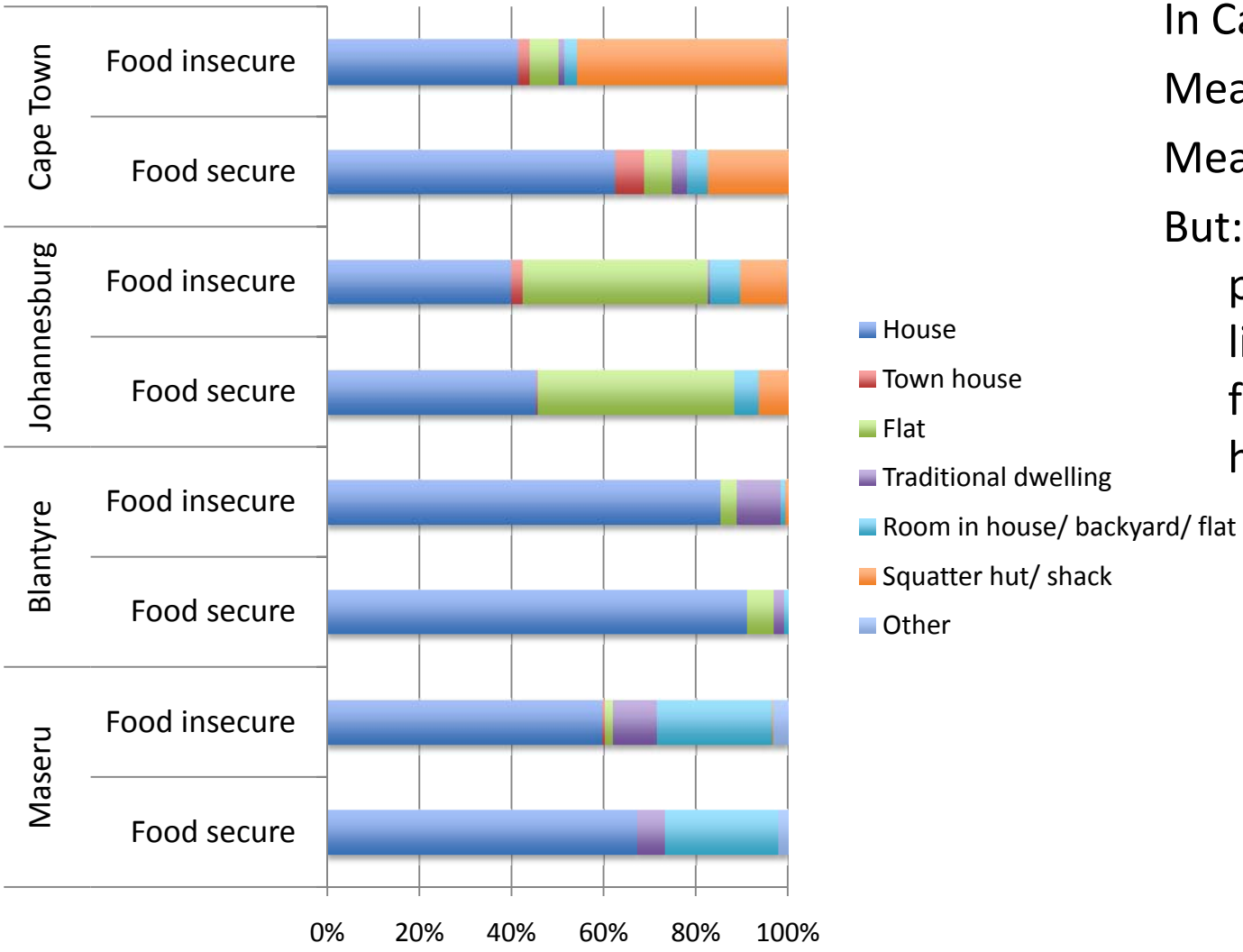


Gender and food security: Cape Town





Housing and poverty



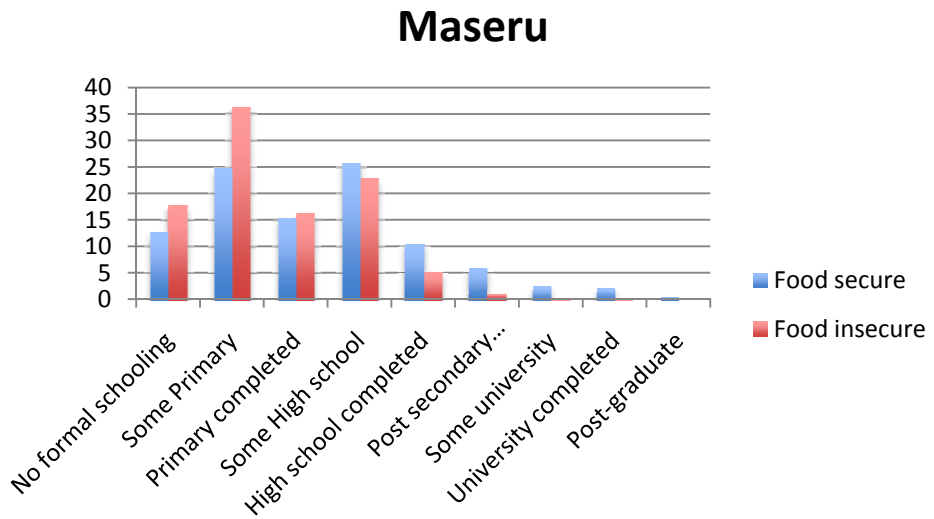
In Cape Town:

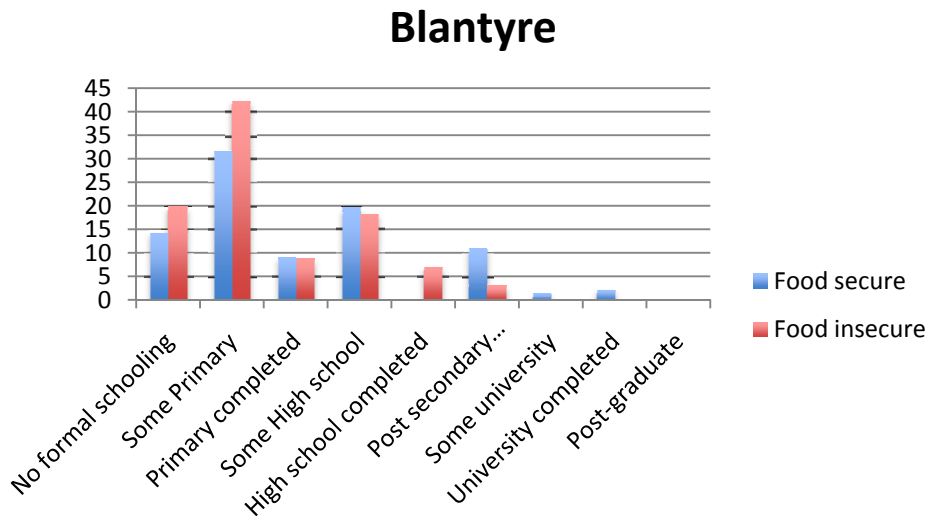
Mean income house:R2000

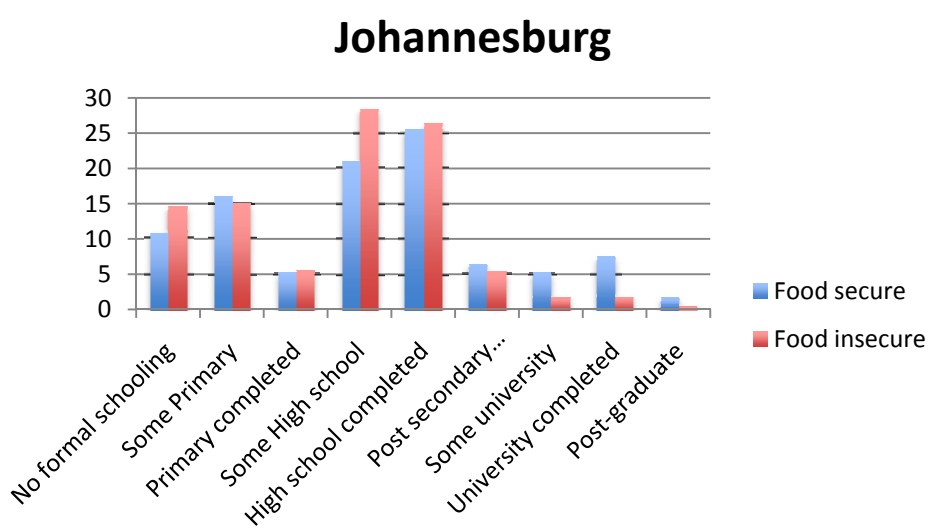
Mean income shack: R1560

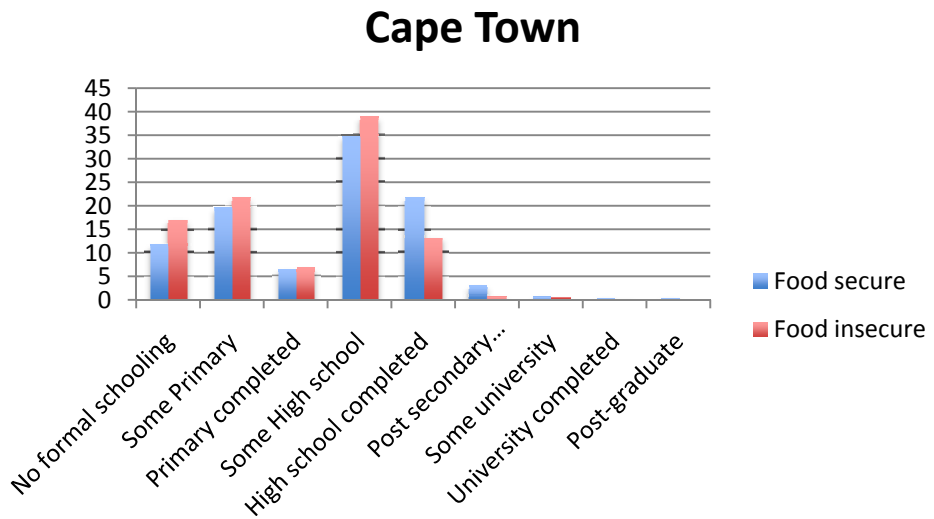
But: shack dwellers 20 percentage points more likely to be severely food insecure than house dwellers

Education

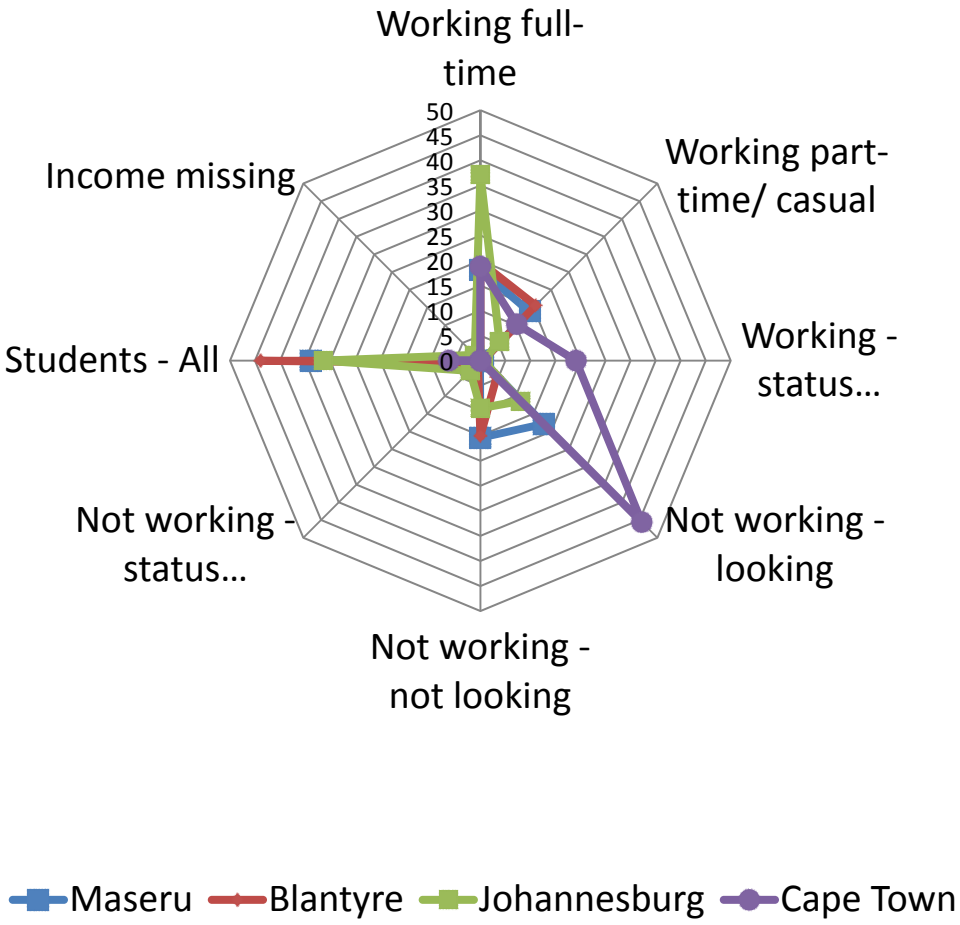

Maseru
40
35
30
25
20
15
10
5
0
No formal schooling
Some Primary
Primary completed
Some High school
High school completed
Post secondary...
Some university
University completed
Post-graduate
Food secure
Food insecure


Blantyre
45
40
35
30
25
20
15
10
5
0
No formal schooling
Some Primary
Primary completed
Some High school
High school completed
Post secondary...
Some university
University completed
Post-graduate
Food secure
Food insecure

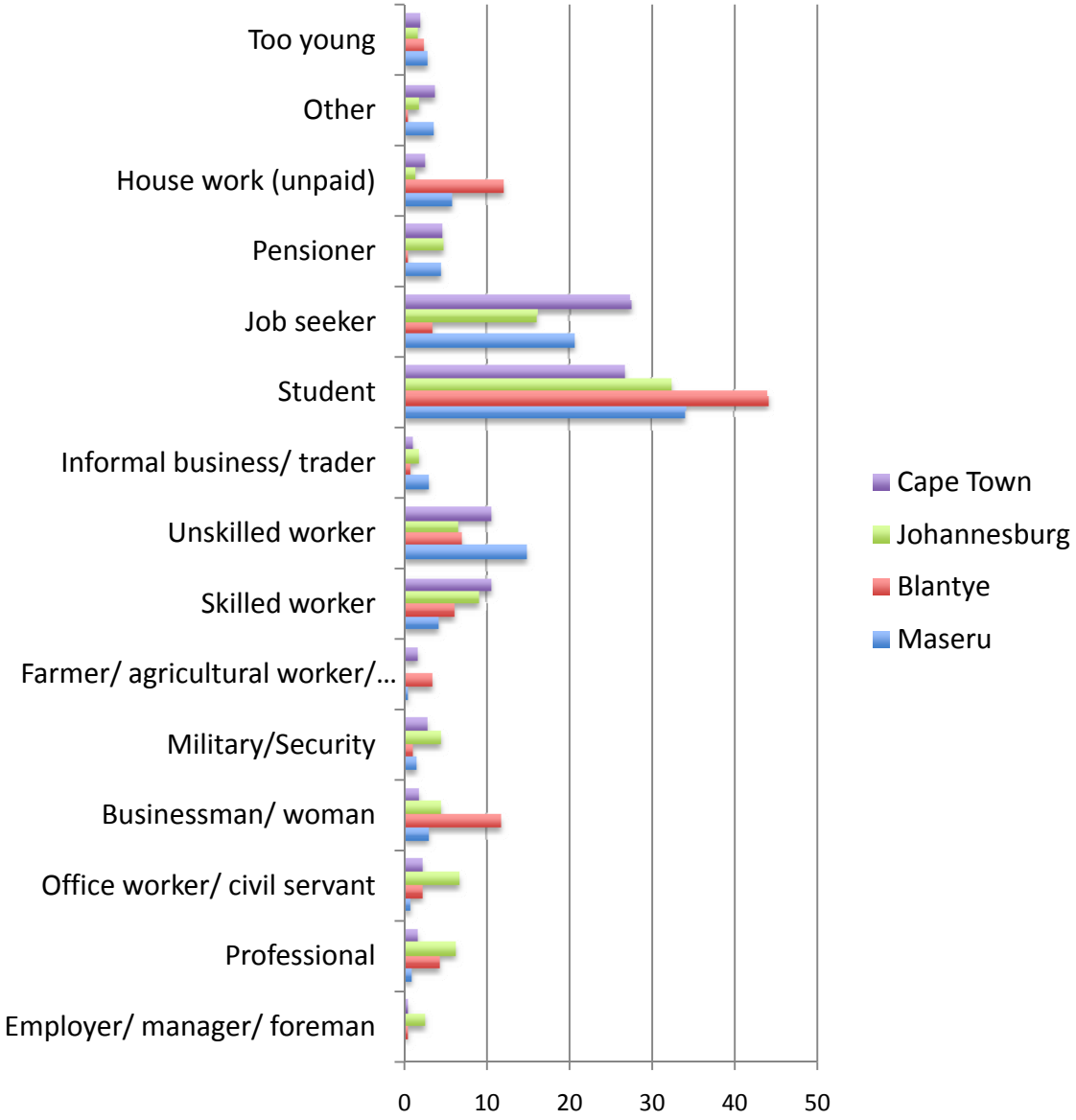

Johannesburg
30
25
20
15
10
5
0
No formal schooling
Some Primary
Primary completed
Some High school
High school completed
Post secondary...
Some university
University completed
Post-graduate
Food secure
Food insecure


Cape Town
45
40
35
30
25
20
15
10
5
0
No formal schooling
Some Primary
Primary completed
Some High school
High school completed
Post secondary...
Some university
University completed
Post-graduate
Food secure
Food insecure

Levels of employment

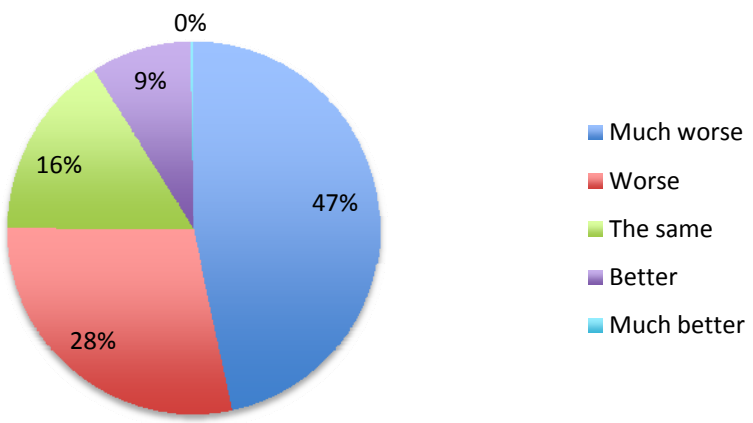


Main types of employment

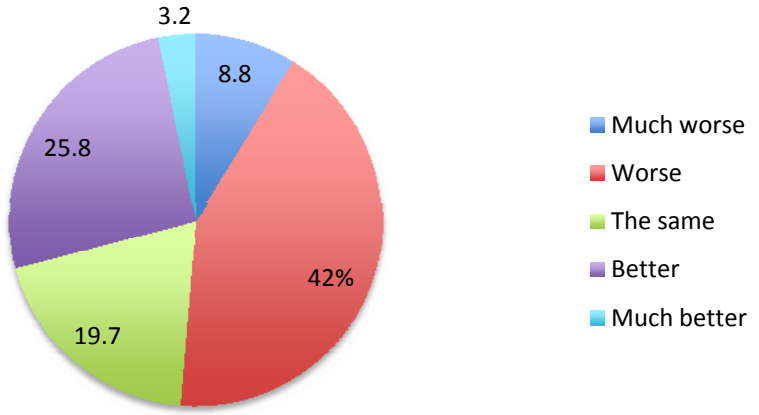


Changing economic circumstances

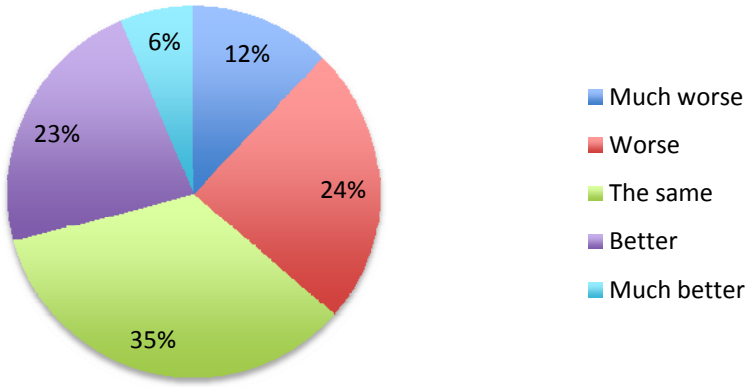
Maseru



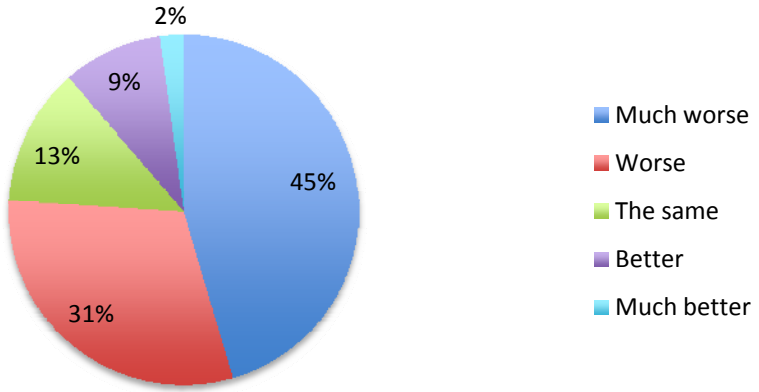
Blantyre



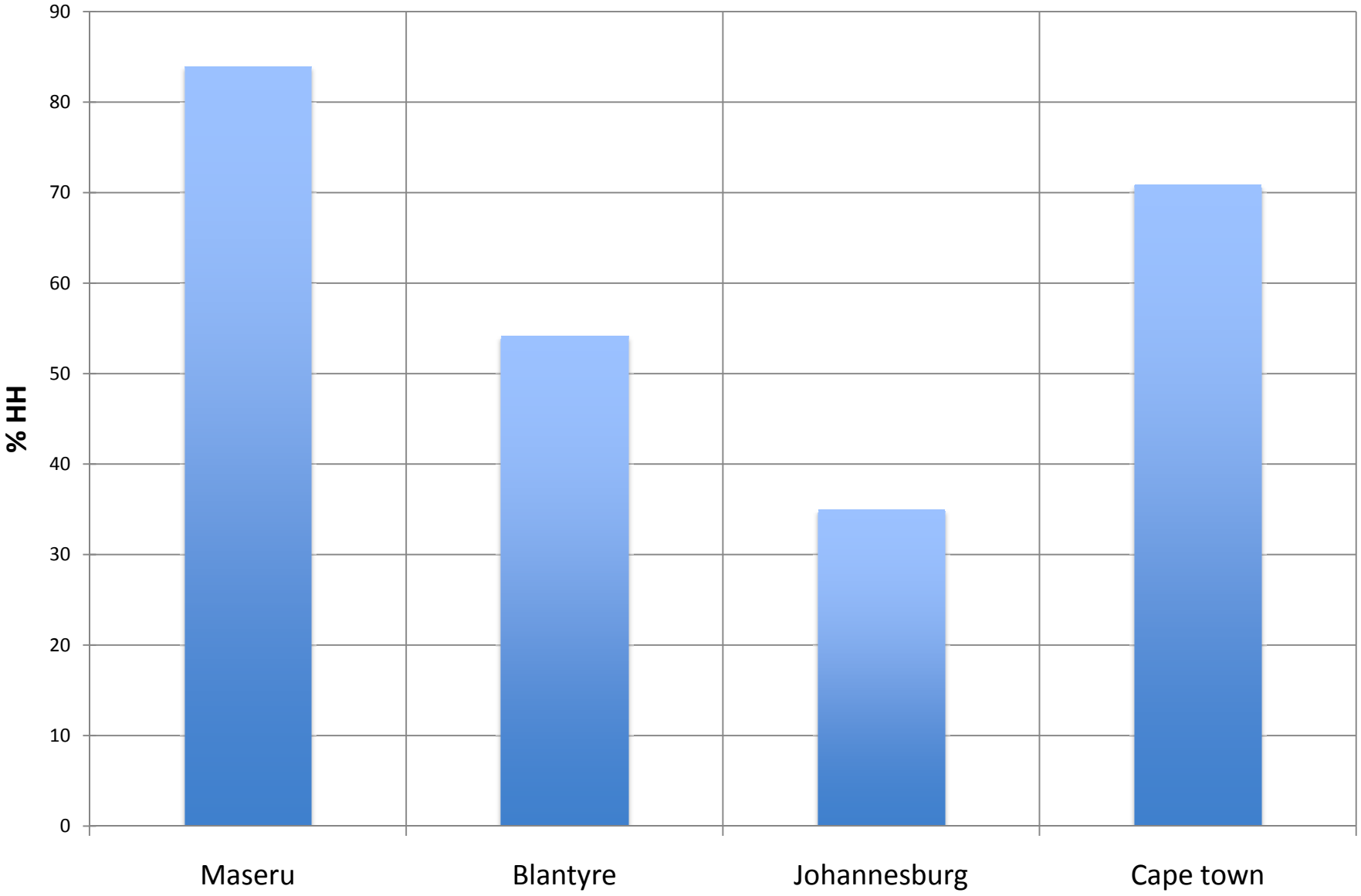
Johannesburg



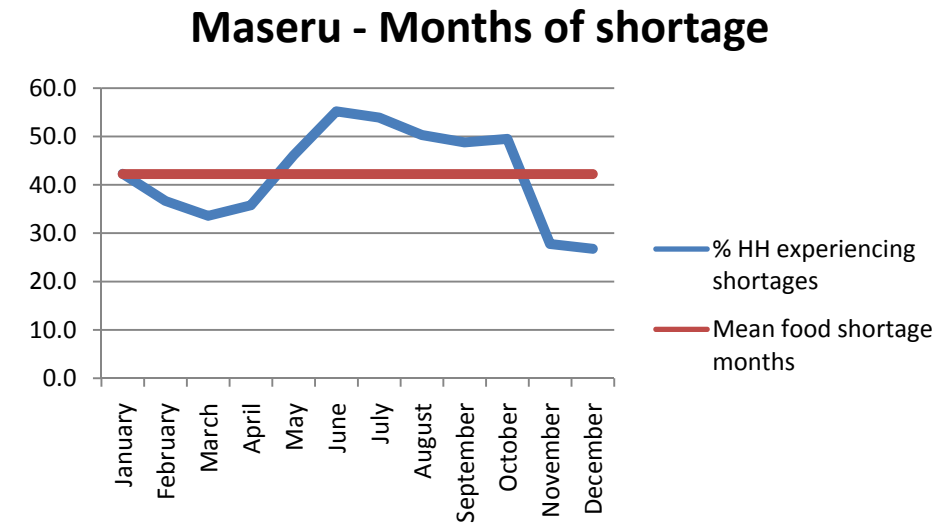
Cape Town

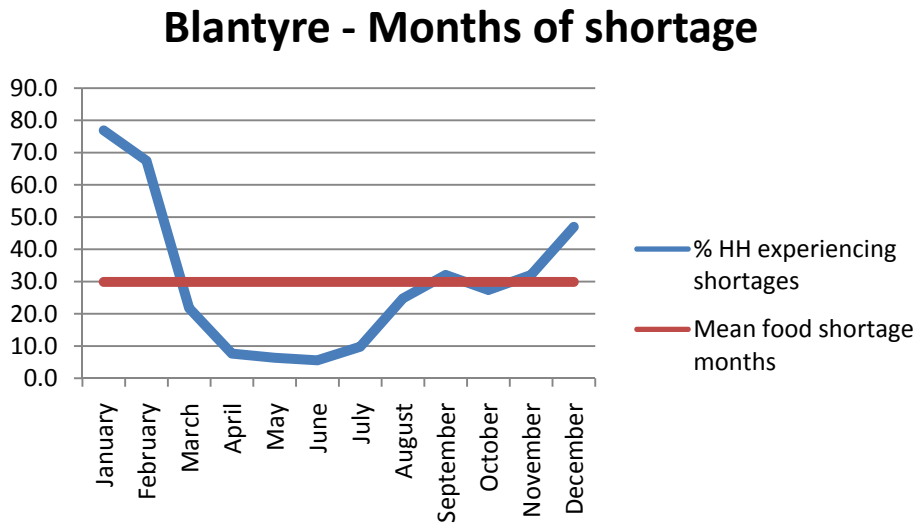


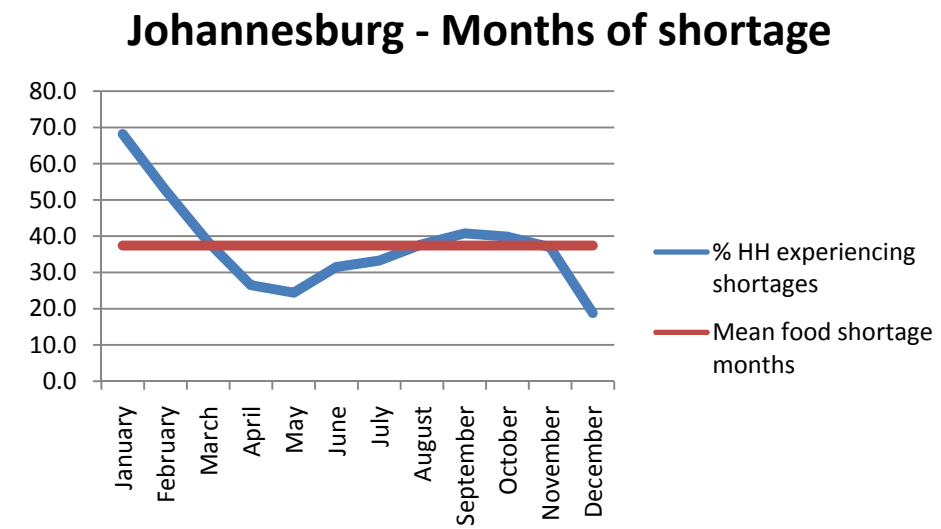
Experienced food shortage in last year

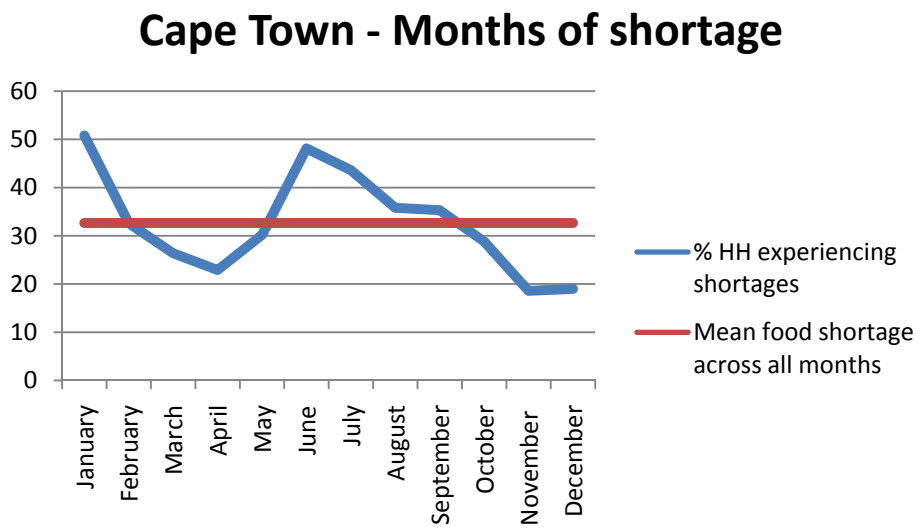


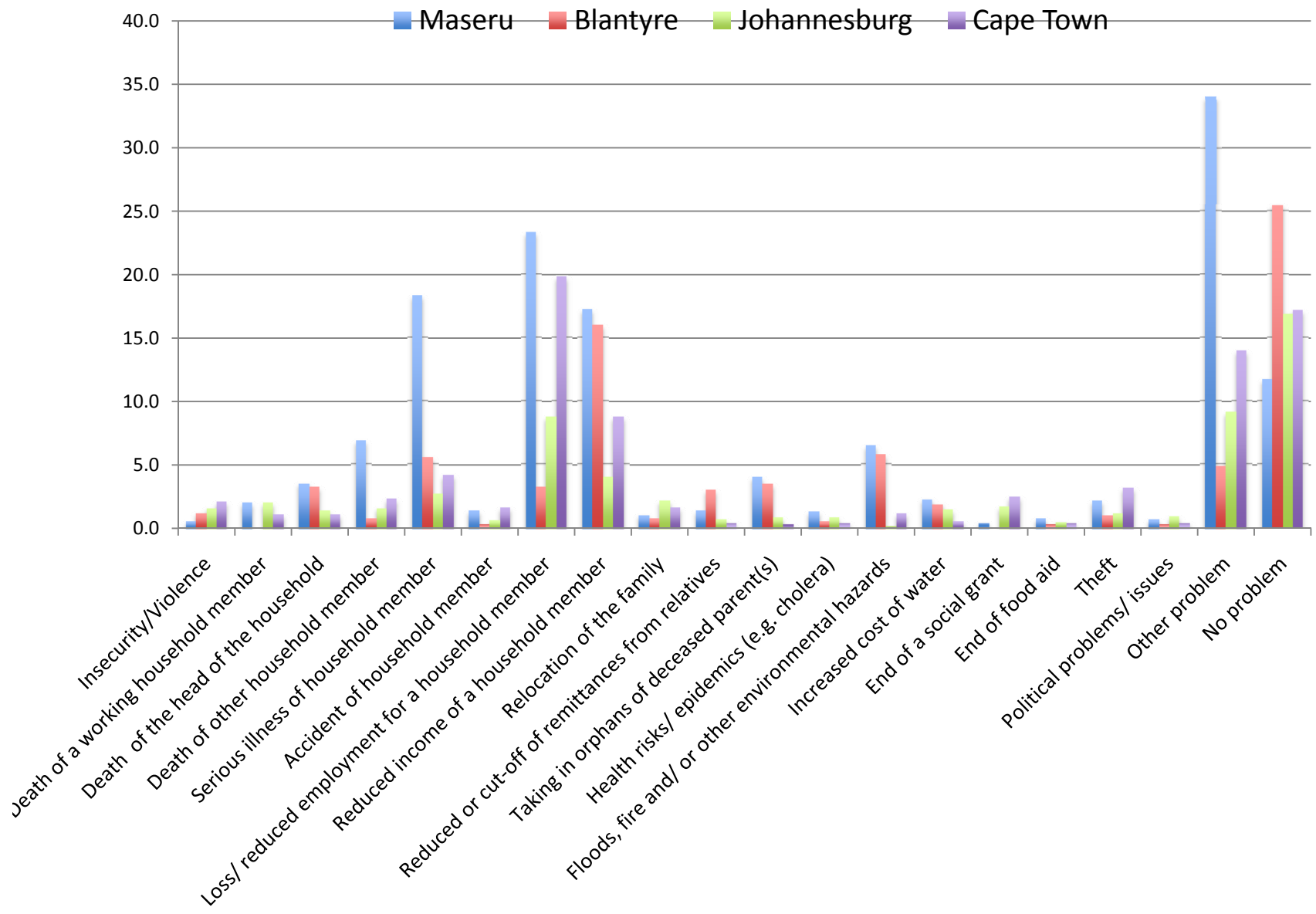
When are people food insecure?







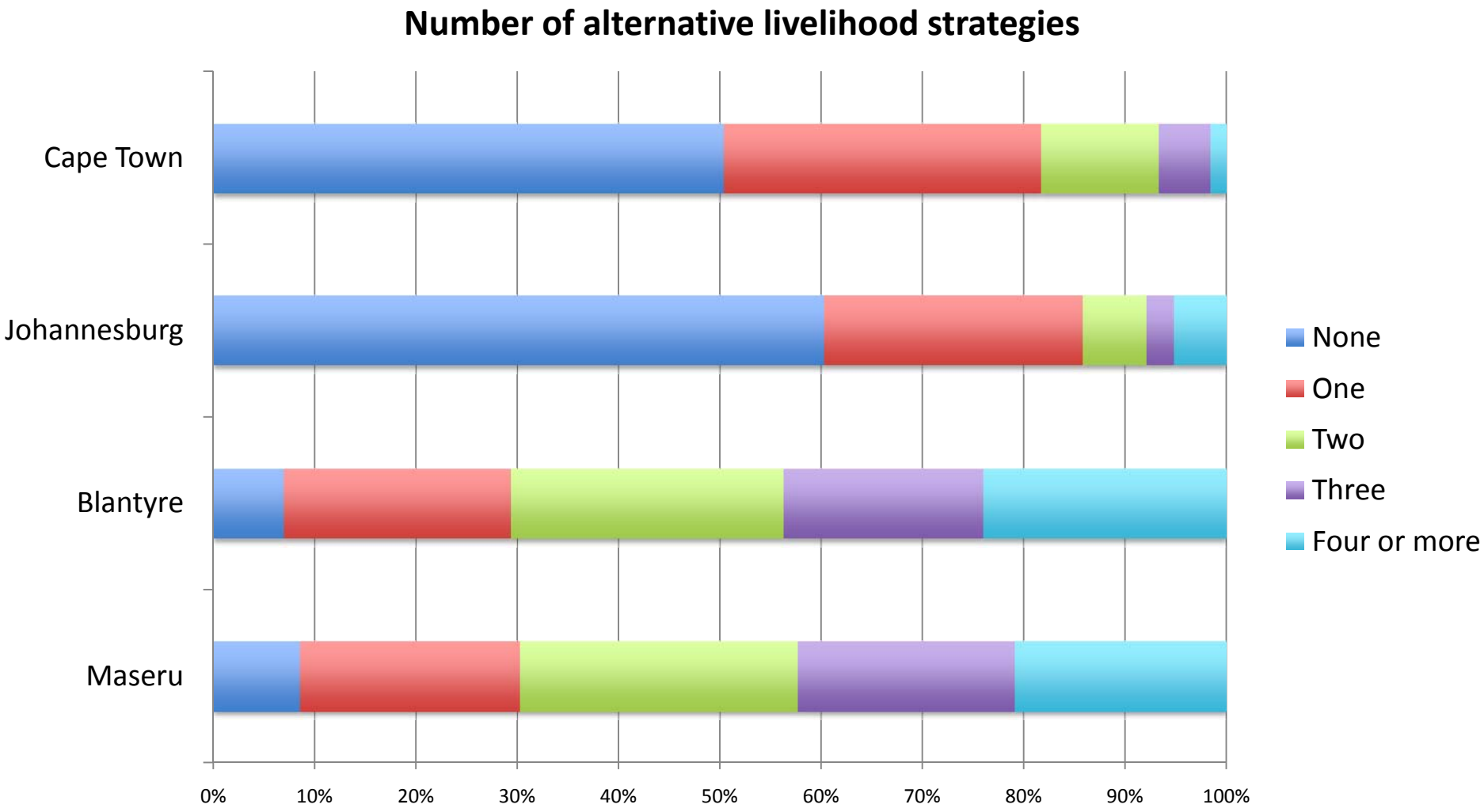



Maseru
Blantyre
Johannesburg
Cape Town
40.0
35.0
30.0
25.0
20.0
15.0
10.0
5.0
0.0
Insecurity/Violence
Death of a working household member
Death of the head of the household
Death of other household member
Serious illness of household member
Accident of household member
Loss/ reduced employment for a household member
Reduced income of a household member
Relocation of the family
Reduced or cut-off of remittances from relatives
Taking in orphans of deceased parent(s)
Health risks/ epidemics (e.g. cholera)
Floods, fire and/ or other environmental hazards
Increased cost of water
End of a social grant
End of food aid
Theft
Political problems/ issues
Other problem
No problem

Problems

- Food prices have been a major problem
- Other economic factors: job loss, reduced income are also significant
- Illness and death relatively important in Maseru
- Orphans, remittances and natural hazards impact Maseru and Blantyre
- Some crime, theft, end of grants in Cape Town and Johannesburg

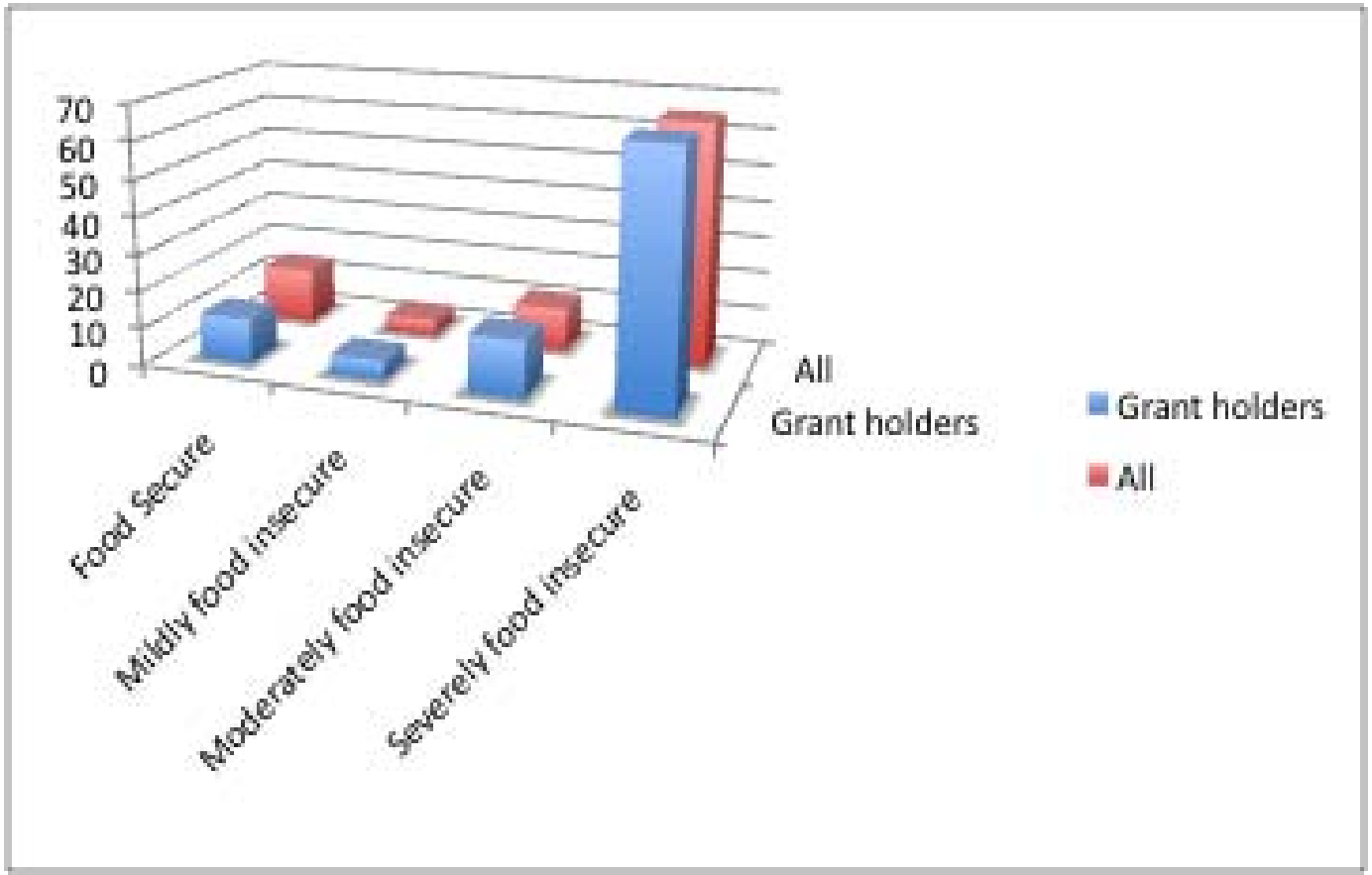
How households survive in urban areas



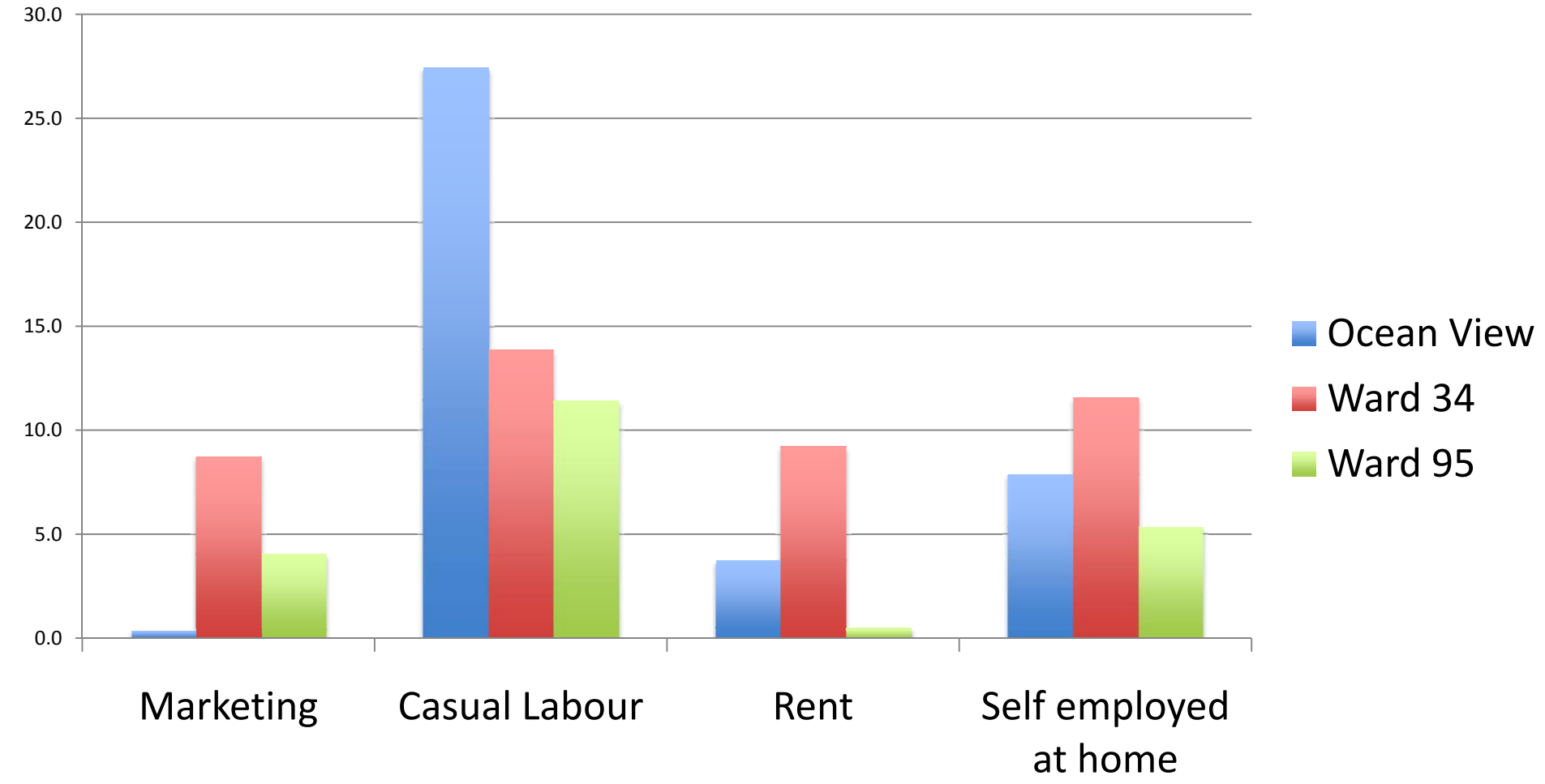
Why are South African cities different?

- Not grants
- In Cape Town: 0 or 1 alternative strategy:

Total population 81%
Grant receiving 79%

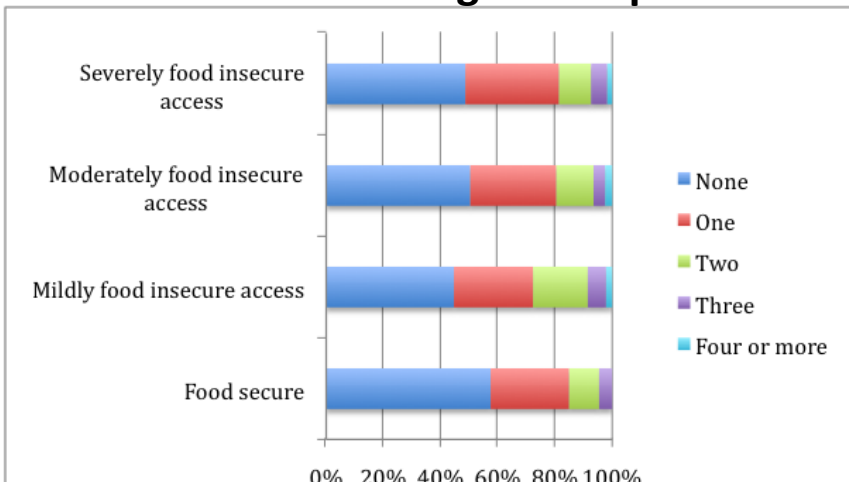


Spatial determination of strategies in Cape Town

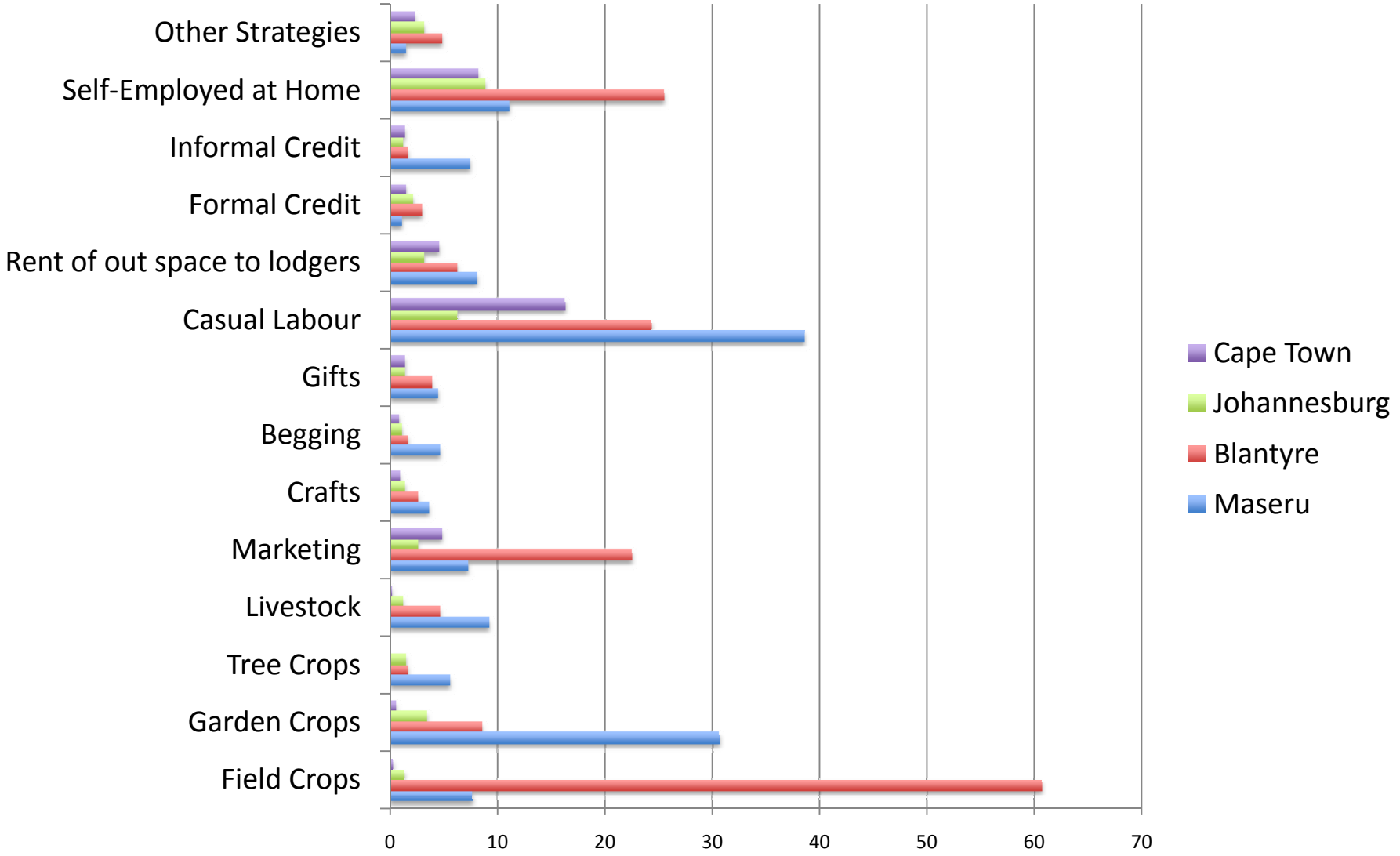


Livelihoods and UFS

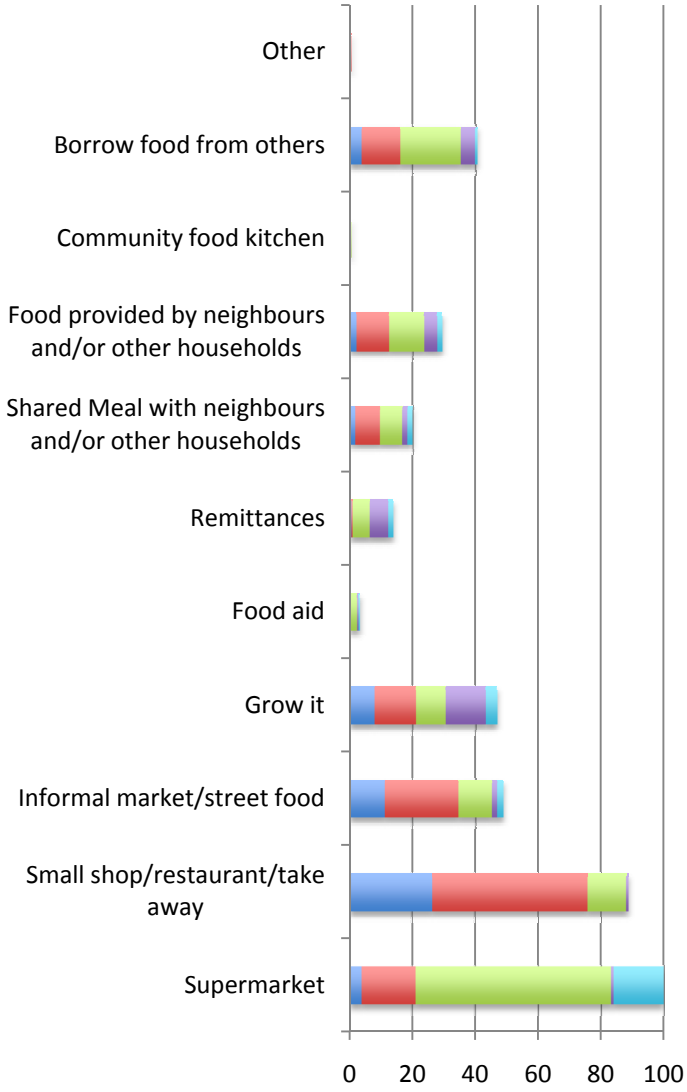
Number of livelihood strategies – Cape Town

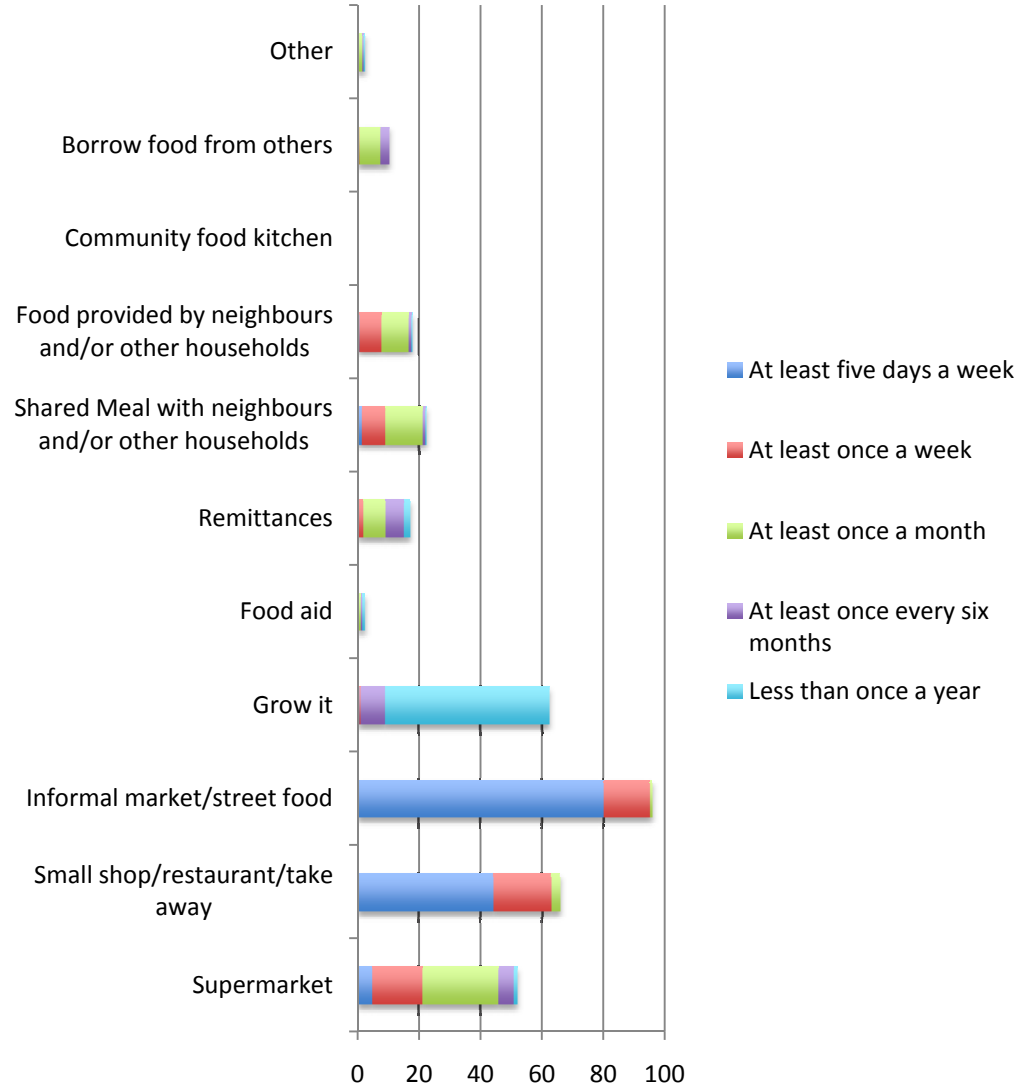


What strategies?

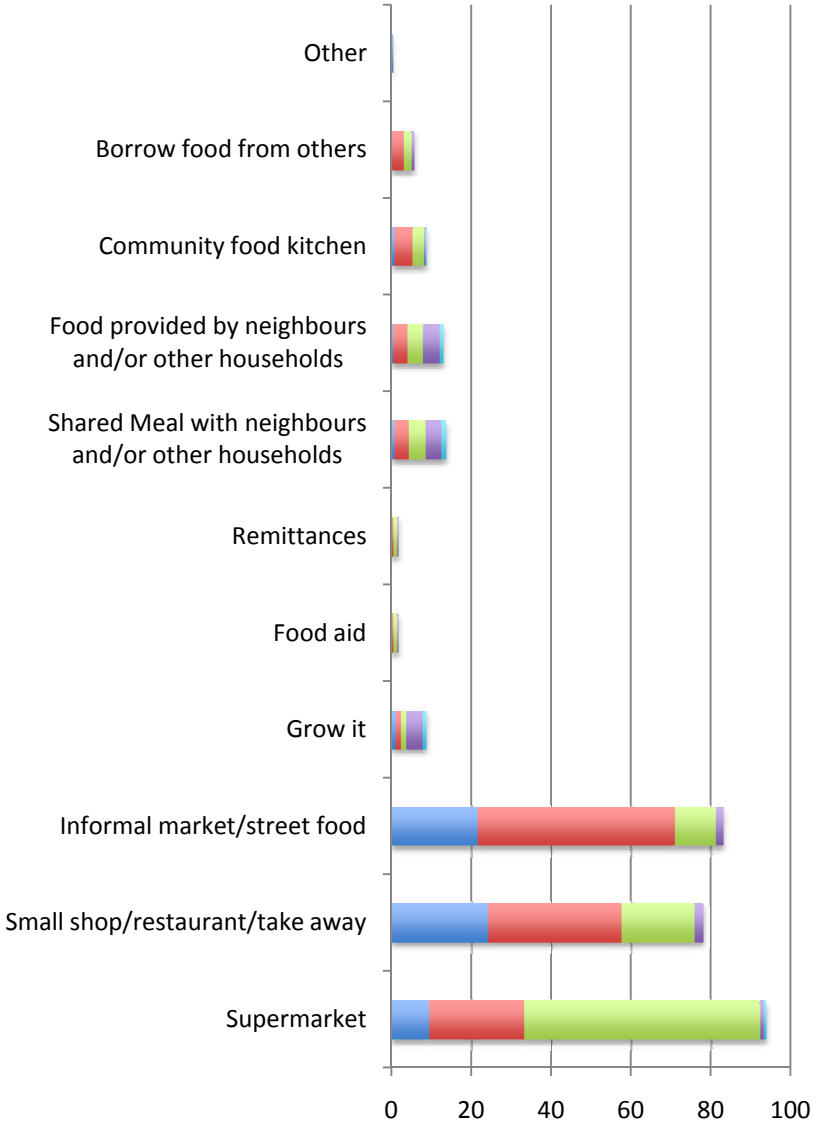


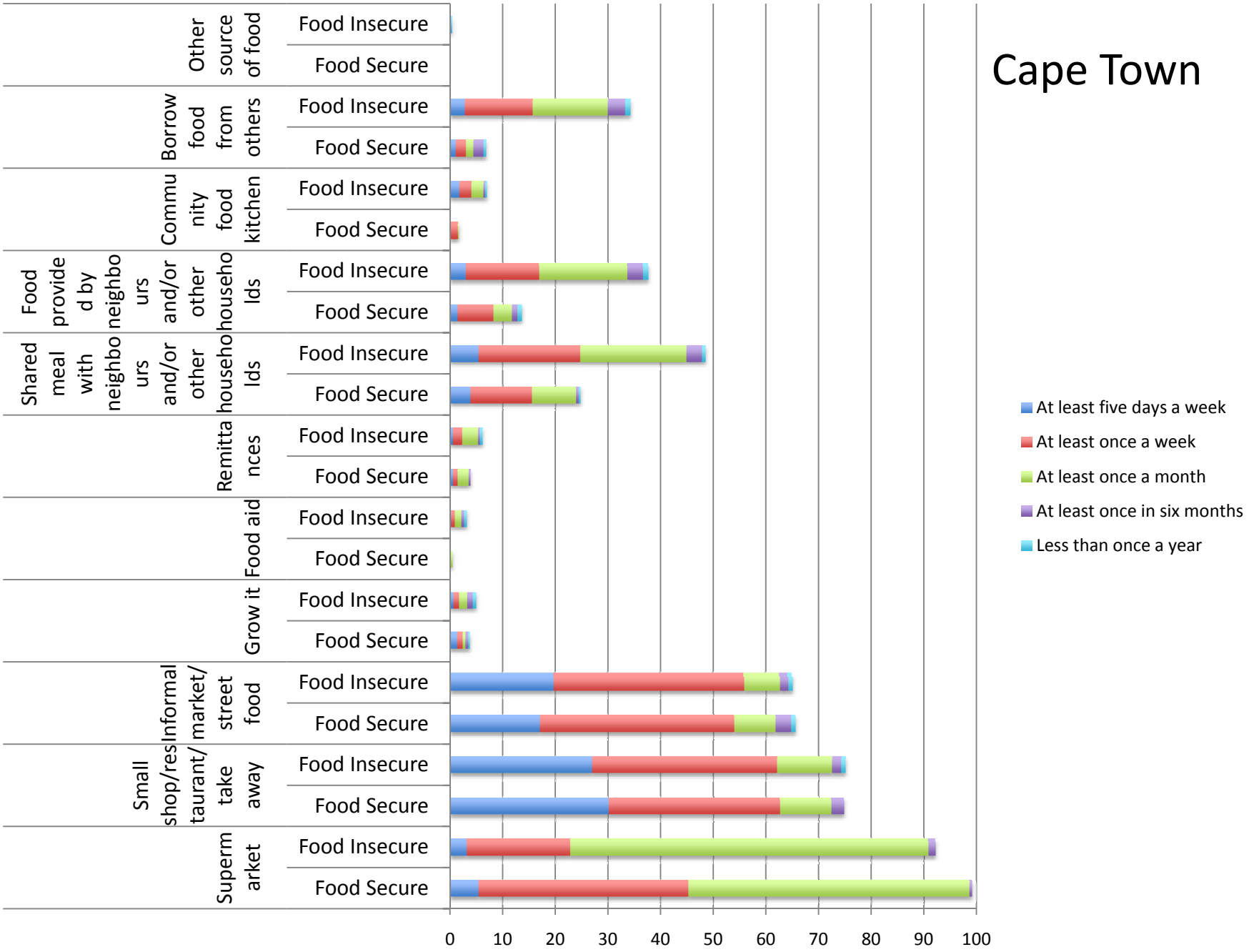
Maseru and Blantyre





Johannesburg and Cape Town

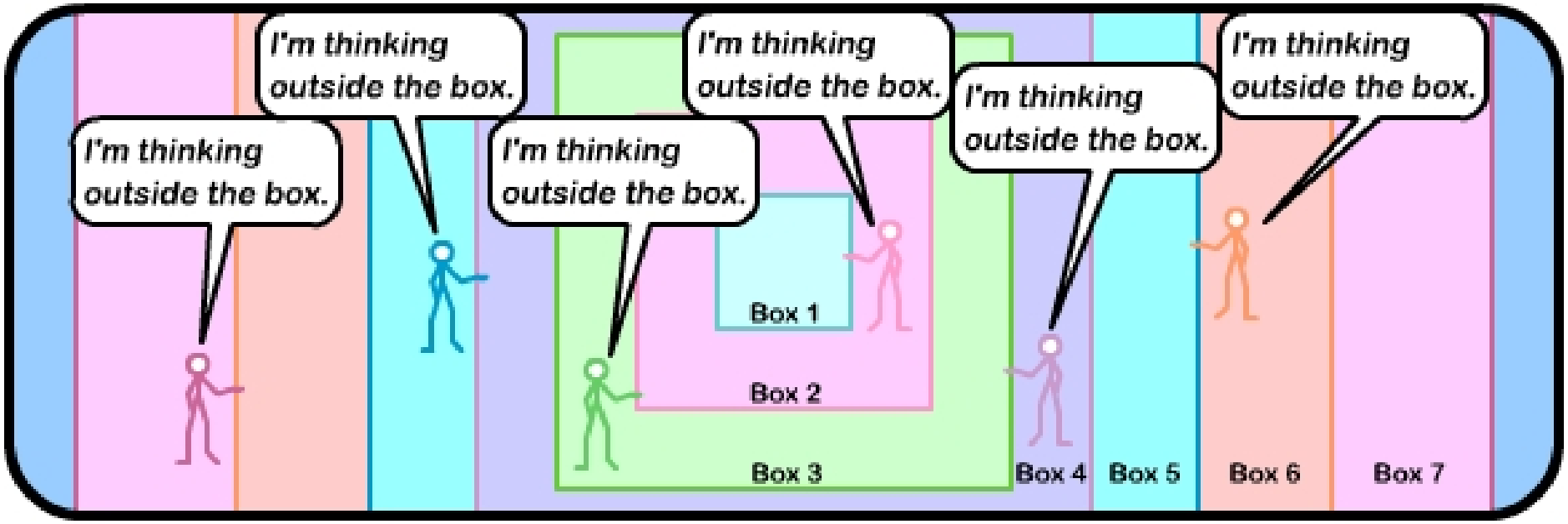



Cape Town
Other source of food
Borrow food from others
Community food kitchen
Food provided by neighbours and/or other households
Shared meal with neighbours and/or other households
Remittances
Food aid
Grow it
Informal market/ street food
Small shop/restaurant/ take away
Supermarket
Food Insecure
Food Secure
0
10
20
30
40
50
60
70
80
90
100
At least five days a week
At least once a week
At least once a month
At least once in six months
Less than once a year

Conclusions

- Poverty – strong links, but need to understand multifaceted nature
- Shocks and stresses – food prices, income and other economic factors
- Urban livelihoods and coping strategies – South Africa v. elsewhere. Diversify livelihood strategies.
- Urban design and management – thinking outside the box

A final challenge…



No you're not.