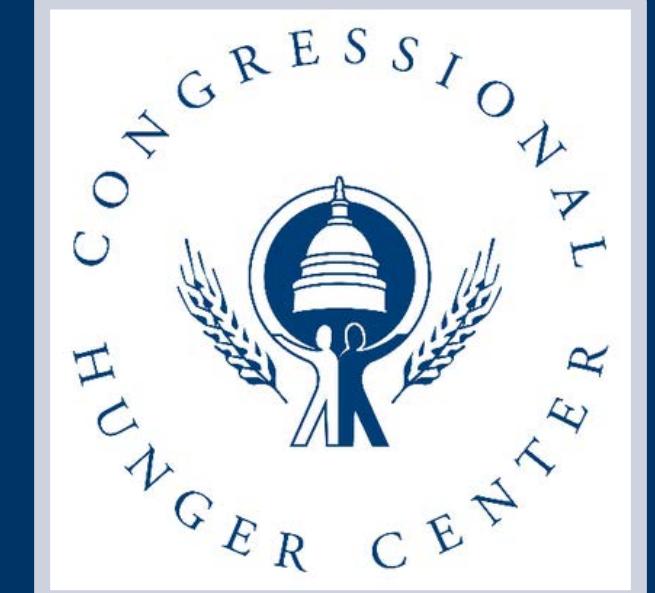


Demystifying the Pathways of Impact of a Livestock Transfer Program on Household Resilience & Food Security in Malawi



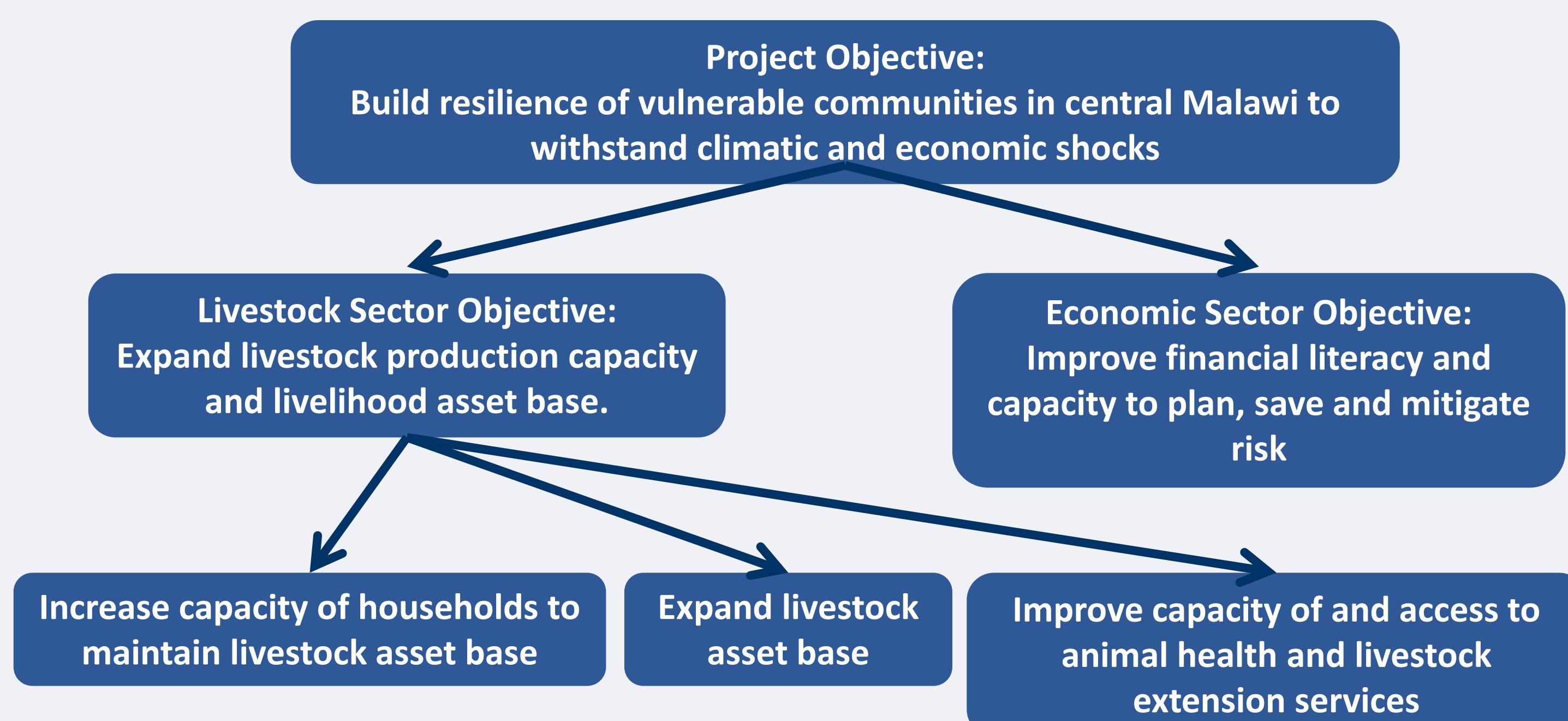
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Land O'Lakes International Development, Congressional Hunger Center

Introduction

Livestock focused agricultural development has the potential to improve household resilience and food security while reducing malnutrition. Households keep livestock to produce food, generate income, provide draught power and manure, act as financial instruments, and enhance social status.¹ Livestock activities are often integrated at multiple levels making the roles they fill in the wellbeing of a household complex. In Malawi, the livestock sector is relatively undeveloped.² Livestock projects in Malawi have the potential to improve resilience and nutrition but understanding how activities impact gender dynamics, household consumption patterns, and shock elasticity is imperative to better design approaches while integrating nutrition-sensitive programming.

Livestock for Resilience (L4R) Project Theory of Change



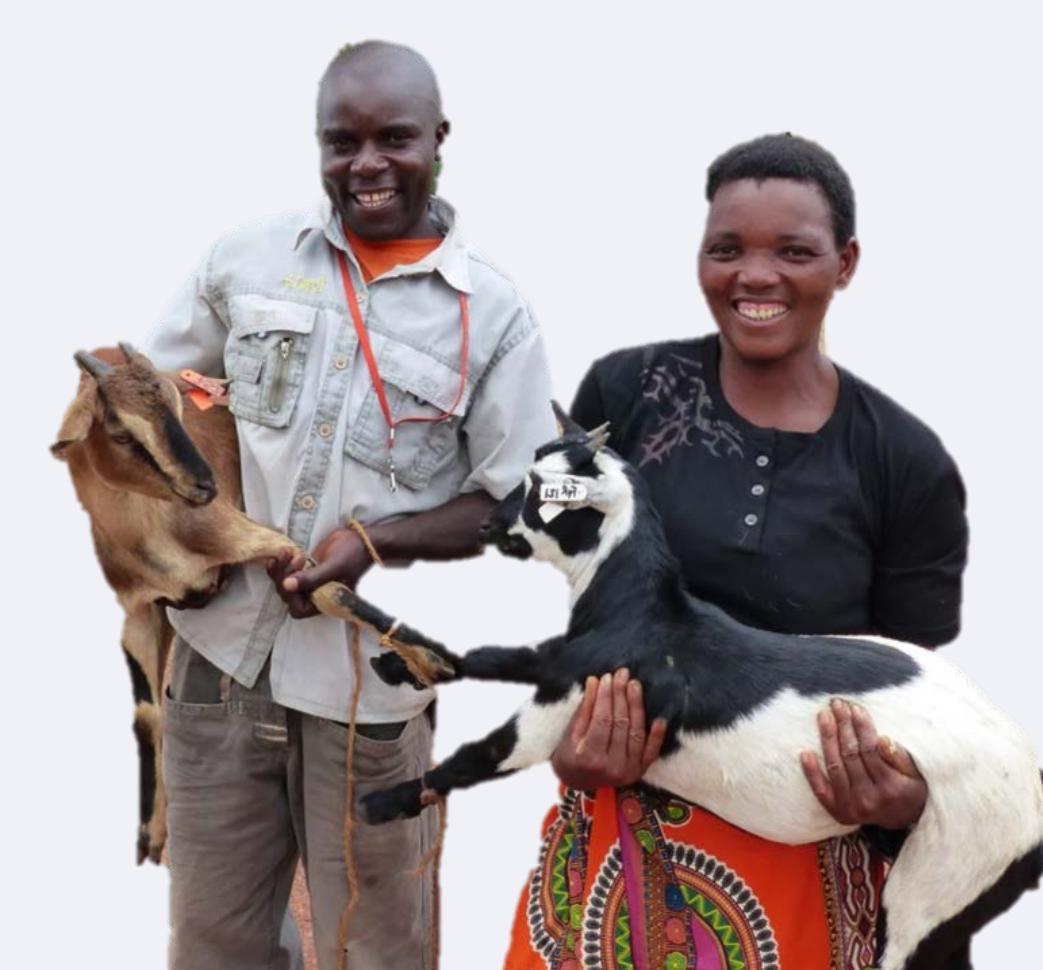
Objective

The objective of this research was to delineate the pathways and types of impact livestock transfer projects have on household resilience and food security.

Methods

Data was collected throughout a 23-month, USAID/OFDA funded Livestock for Resilience project implemented by Land O'Lakes International Development in central Malawi, using a mixed methods approach.

- Baseline, Midterm and Final evaluation quantitative surveys, including household and livestock assets, education, income, dietary diversity and food security indicators were performed.
- Midterm and Final evaluation qualitative key informant and focus group discussions with project participants and key stakeholders were held.
- Informal conversations with project participants, livestock vendors, key stakeholders and market observations during the last nine months of project implementation were conducted by the primary author.
- Routine statistical analyses were paired with theme analysis for qualitative interpretation.



Findings

N=533 member households surveyed in project final evaluation

Mean Household Size: **5.5 people**

\$287USD* Mean Household Annual Income

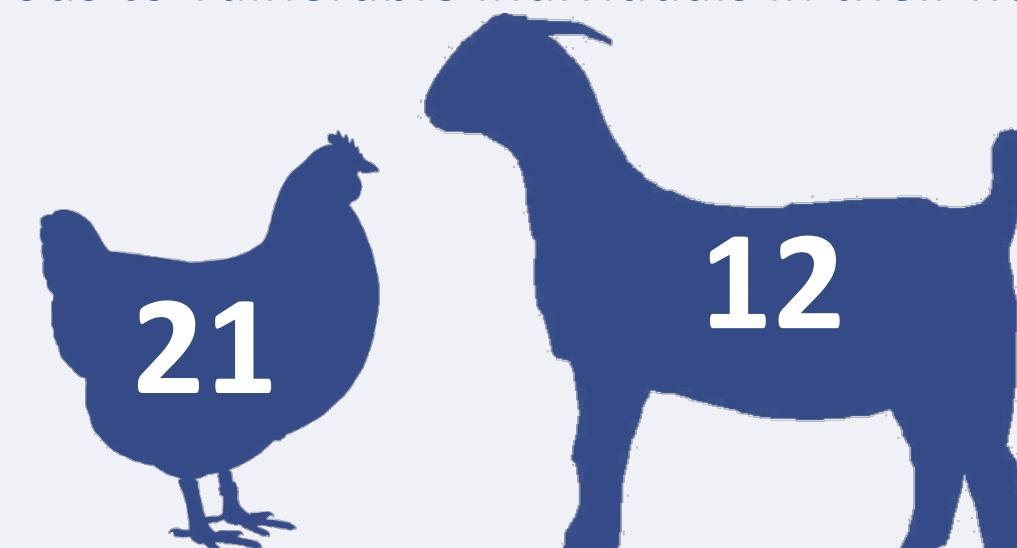
80% of Households owned chickens, **55%** owned goats

449 Households belong to a Village Savings and Loans Association

And **374** have active savings

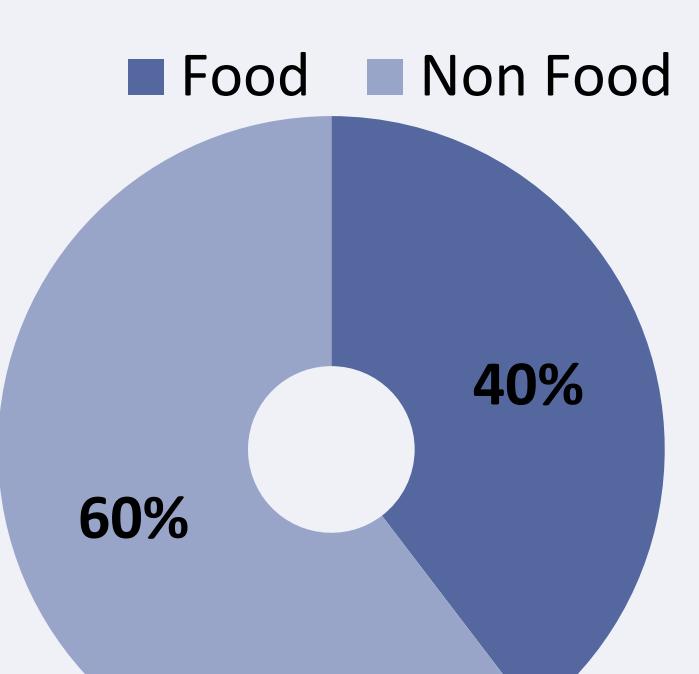
Mean savings by women = **\$19.62**** vs. **\$16.44 **** = Mean savings by men

44% of households feel better able to feed animal source foods to vulnerable individuals in their home

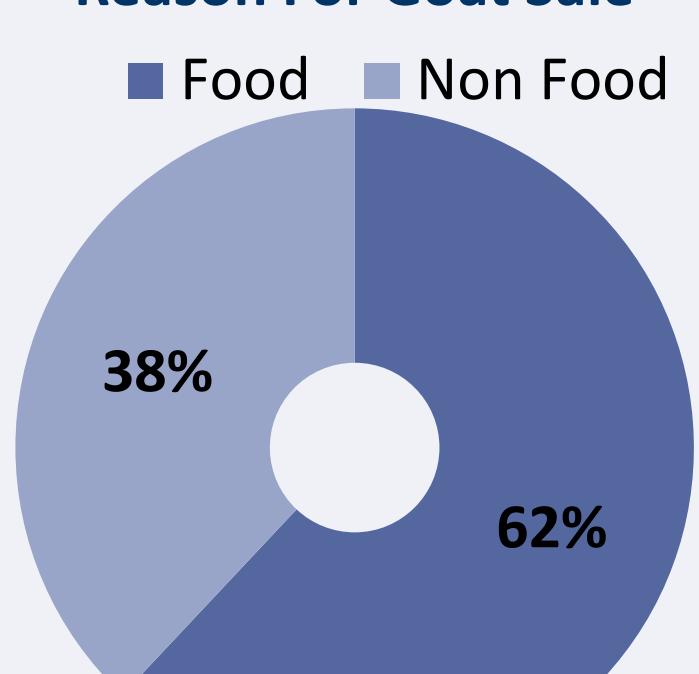


Herd size preferred by farmers to voluntarily sell livestock, rather than for need based sales

Reason For Chicken Sale

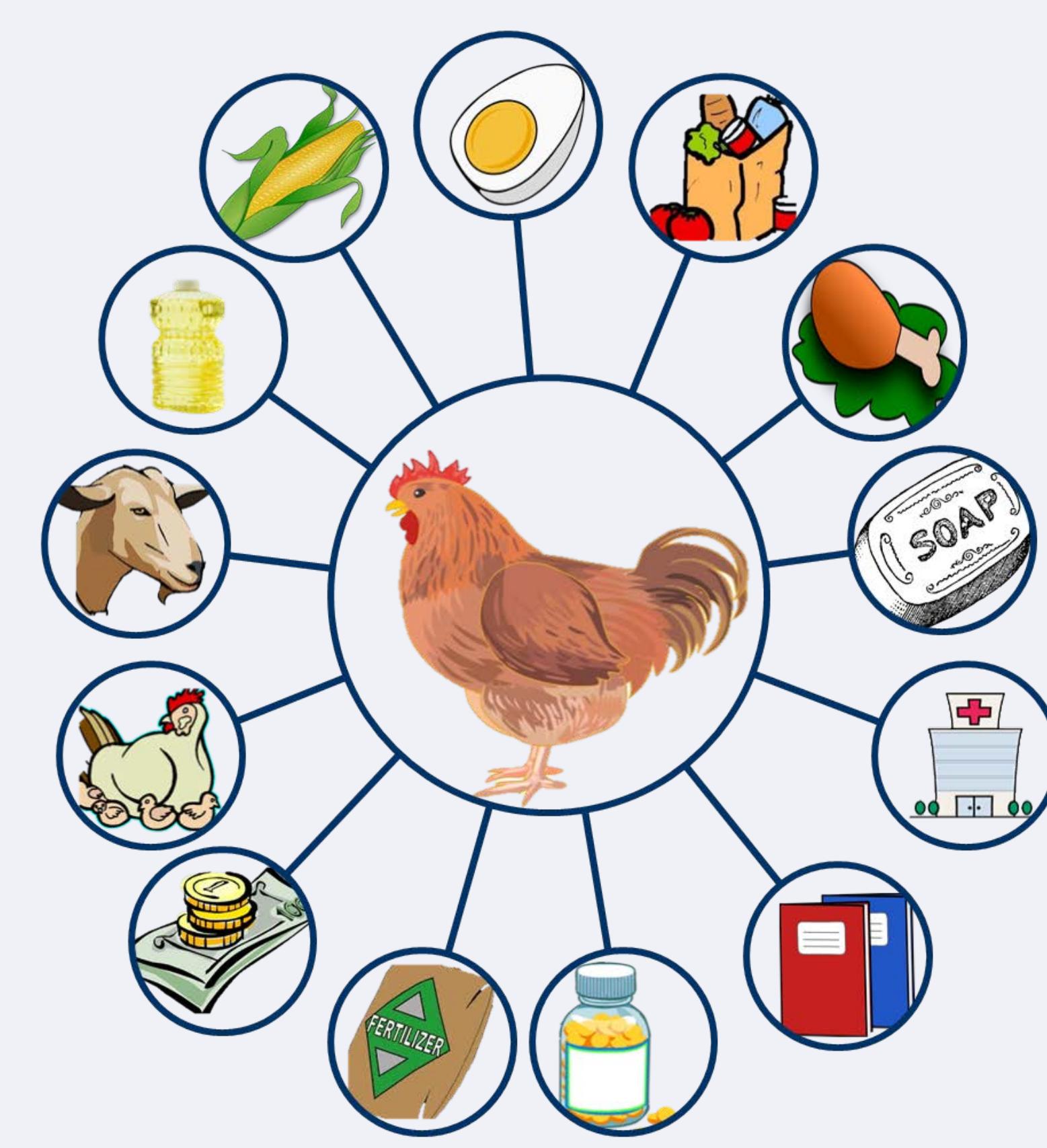


Reason For Goat Sale



Livestock Asset Base in Project Area, Before and After Project[†]

Chickens		Goats			
2014	2016	2014	2016		
Mean	7	11.3	Mean	3.5	4.2
Median	6	10	Median	3	4

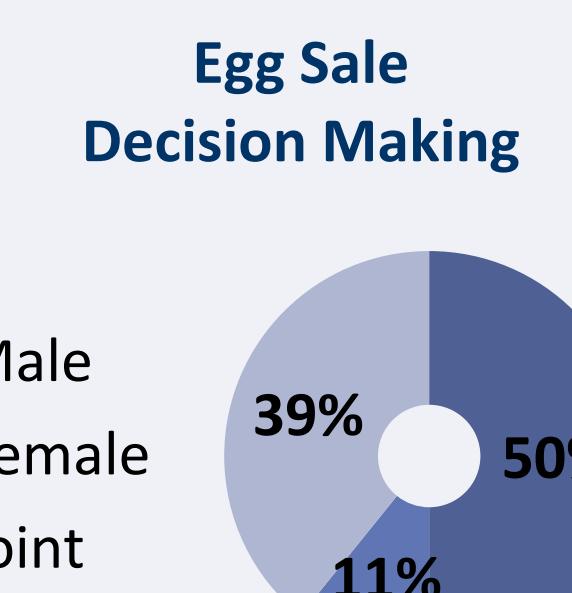
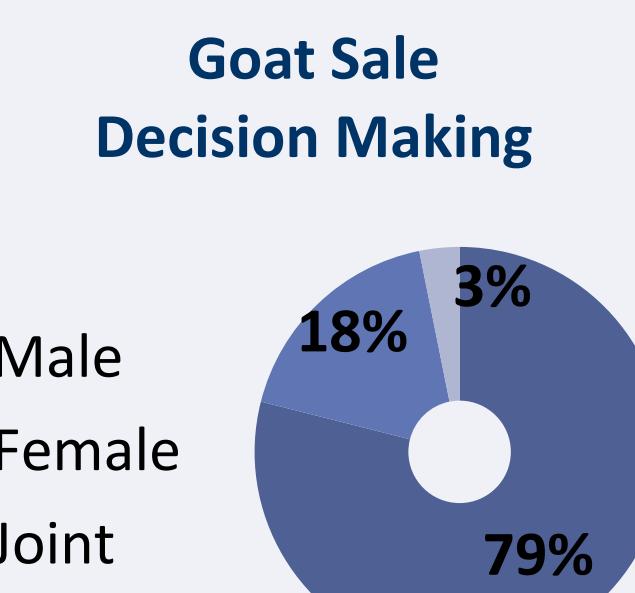


Livestock assets are converted into both food and non food items for households. This is highly seasonal and need dependent.

* Exchange rate \$1USD = 623 MWK (365-day average) ** Significantly different, p=0.05 † if HH owns at least 1 of species

Findings

Livestock Sale Decision Making by Gender



Annual Household Slaughter For Consumption of Small Livestock Products

% of HH Slaughtering Livestock

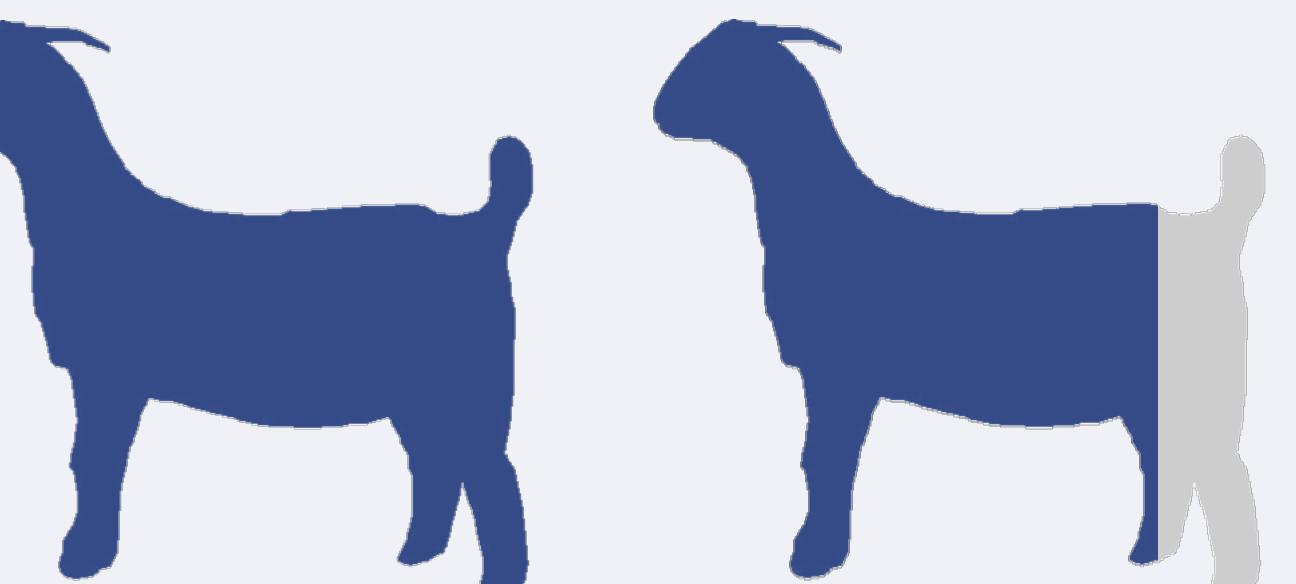
HH Slaughtered Goat(s) for Consumption

■ Yes
■ No

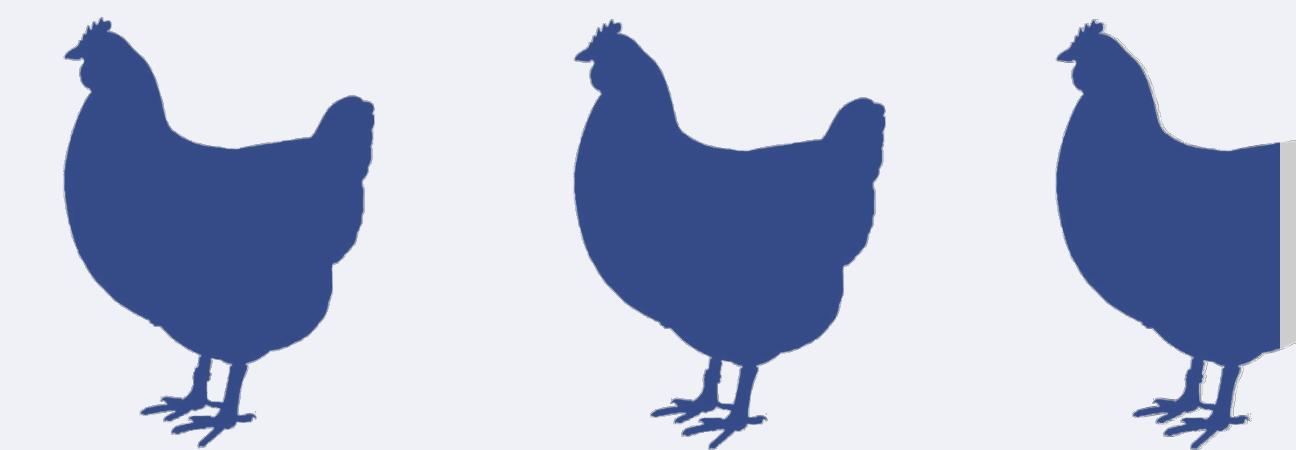
HH Slaughtered Chicken(s) for Consumption

■ Yes
■ No

1.8



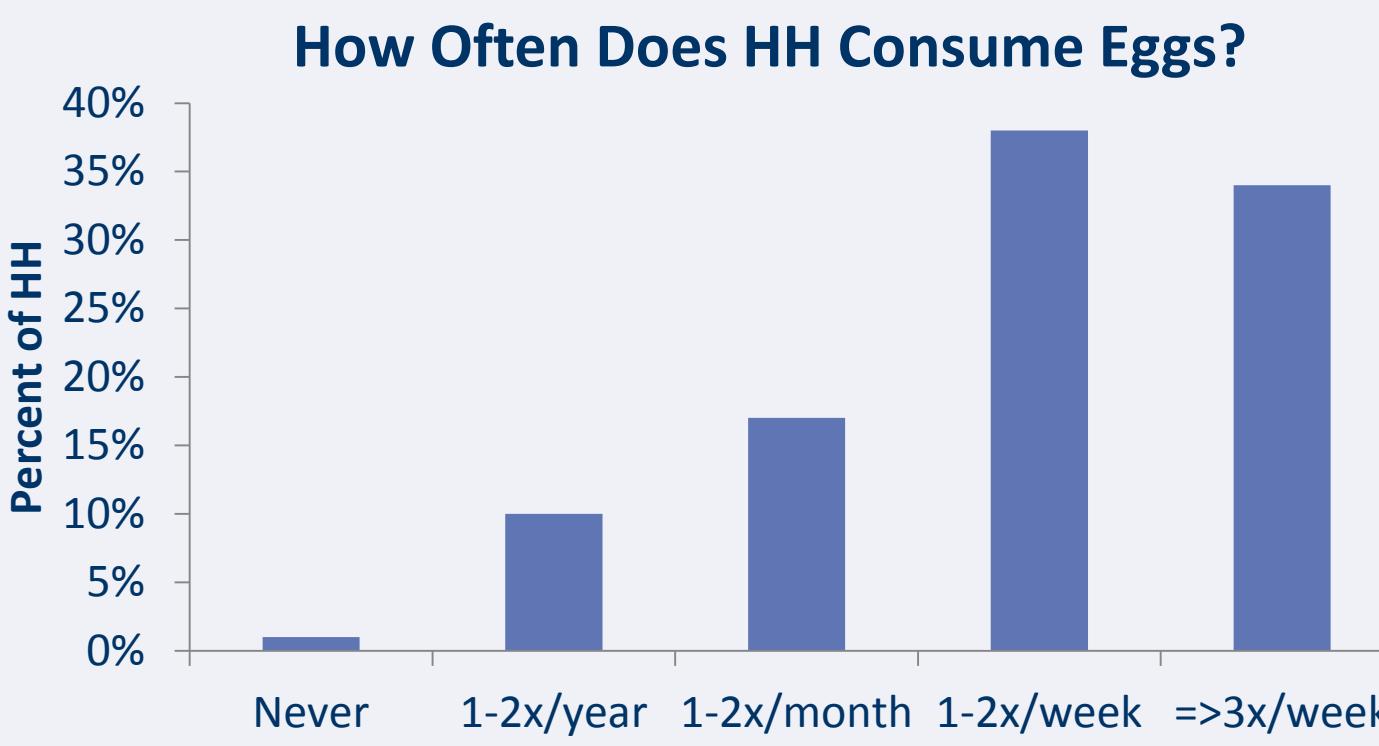
2.7



Household Egg Consumption

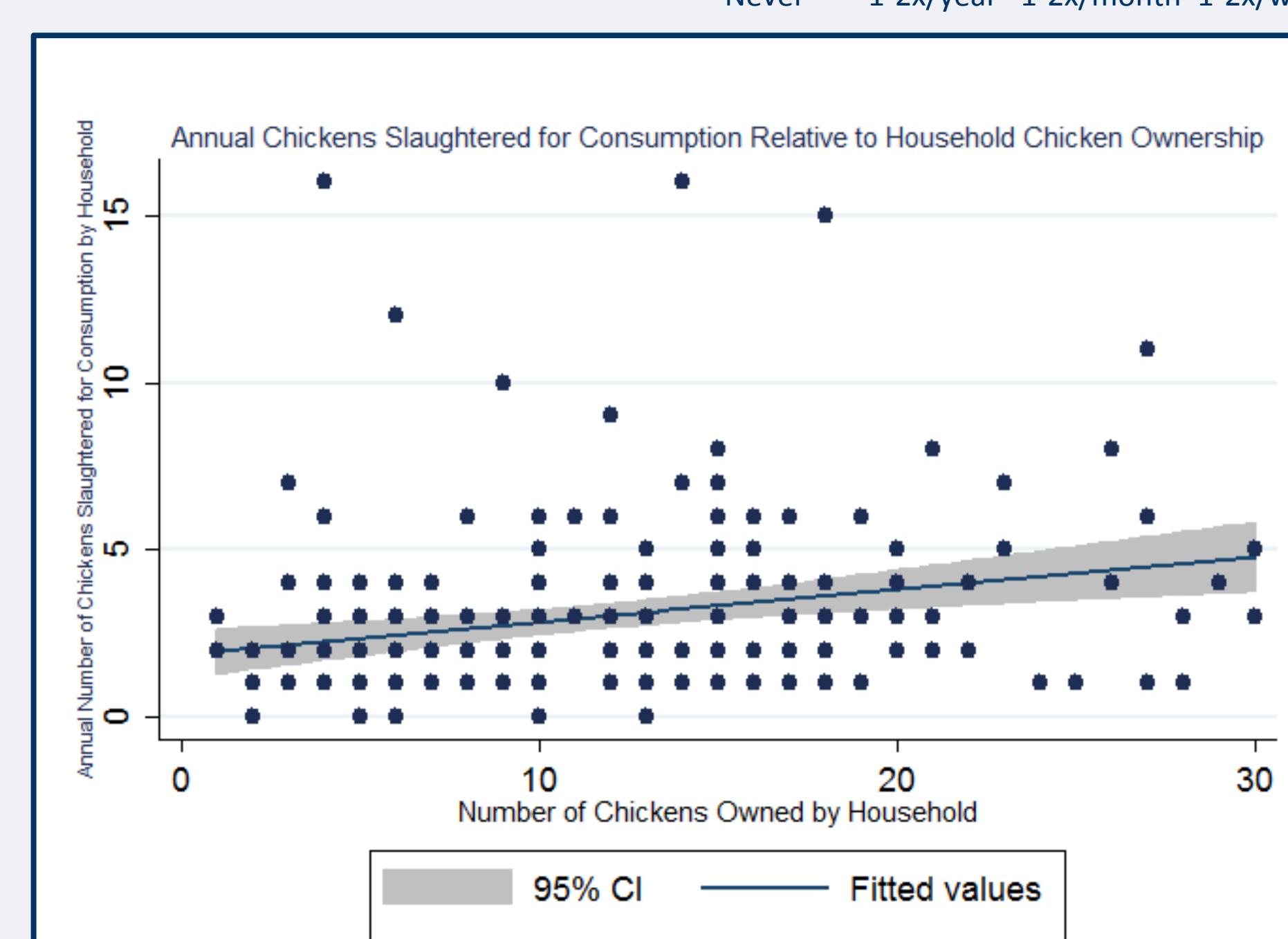
HH Consumes Eggs

■ Yes
■ No



71%

of eggs consumed are purchased



Conclusions

- Livestock development interventions have **multiple pathways of impact**; not all directly or even indirectly relate to increased consumption of animal source foods. The majority of households sold livestock, especially chickens, **to meet household needs other than food needs**. While most chicken owning households reported they consumed eggs at least once weekly, the majority of eggs consumed were purchased.
- Even if households have viable flock and herd sizes, **household consumption of home produced animal source protein does not increase correspondingly**. This has major implications when designing nutrition sensitive animal source food interventions that encourage home production of chickens and goats.
- Households often rely on piecework, crop sales and Village Savings and Loan Association (VSLA) loans when faced with financial needs and preferentially turn to this **before selling livestock, especially goats**. Goat sales appear to be reserved for serious emergency needs and bulk staple food purchases in the lean season.
- Major gender differences exist** in the decision making process to sell or slaughter livestock; **women most often decide on chicken sales**, while men dominate goat sale decisions.
- Pairing a **livestock asset transfer project with other consumption smoothing mechanisms such as VSLA** access was integral to the success of the project as viewed by project staff and project members
- VSLAs enabled women to partake in financial decision making** and positively influence household savings and spending practices. Men's engagement in VSLA activities further **empowered women** as men realized the value of VSLAs and actively encouraged their wives' participation.

References

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- Malawi Agriculture Sector Wide Approach; A prioritized and harmonized agriculture development agenda: 2011-2015. 2011. Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security, 2011.

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