

Social and Economic Effects of Covid-19 in Malawi and Implications for Policy Makers

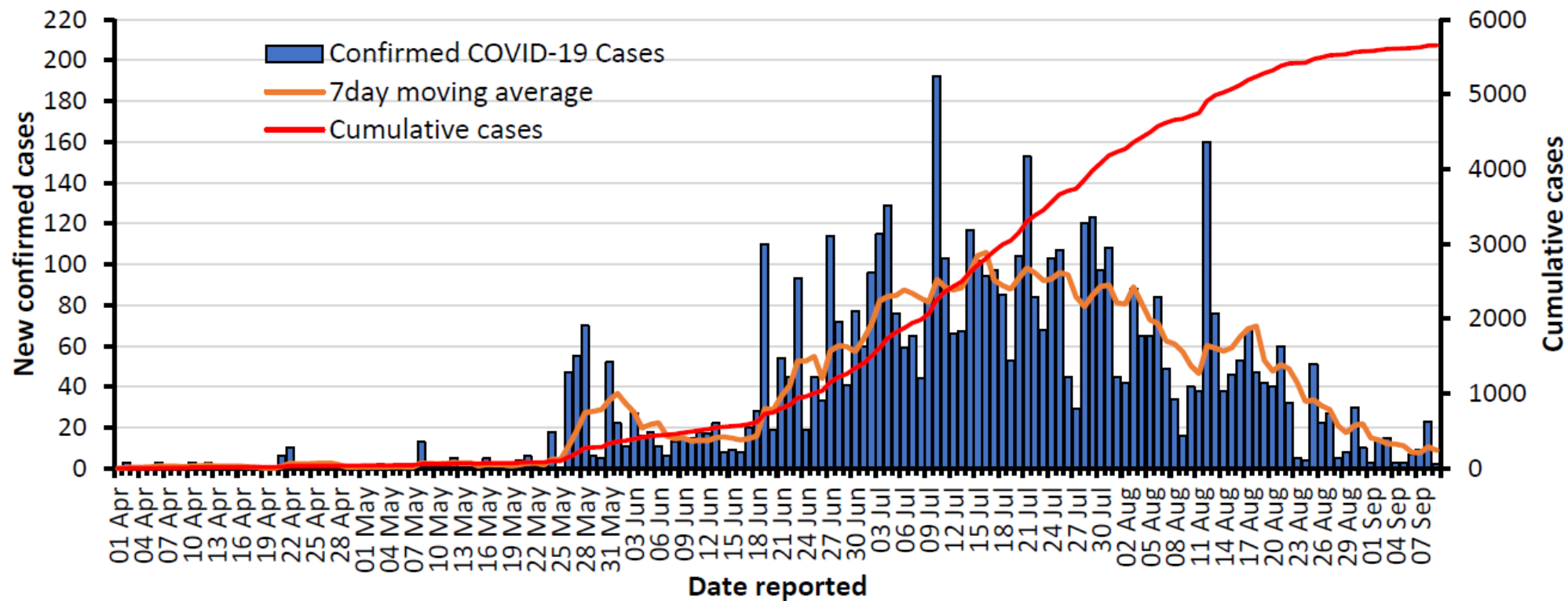
Witness Tapani Alfonso

Institute of Public Opinion and Research-Malawi
11th September 2020



Introduction

- Cabinet Committee on Covid-19: March 8
- State of national Disaster: March 20
 - Closure of schools
 - Restrictions on public gatherings
- First Covid-19 cases in : 2 April 2020
 - - 3 cases (Lilongwe)
 - Borders closed
- Failed attempt to introduce lockdown
- Presidential elections 23 June 2020
- New regulations gazetted 7 August 2020
- Status as of 10 September 2020:
 - 5,655 cases
 - 176 fatalities, 1,796 active e cases, 3,683 recoveries)



Research Studies on Covid-19

- GLD/IPOR Covid-19 Survey (n=4,500)- May-June 2020 (telephone)
- IPOR/OSISA national Covid-19 survey (n=1,346), May- June 2019 (face to face)
- This presentation draws on data from the IPOR-OSISA survey

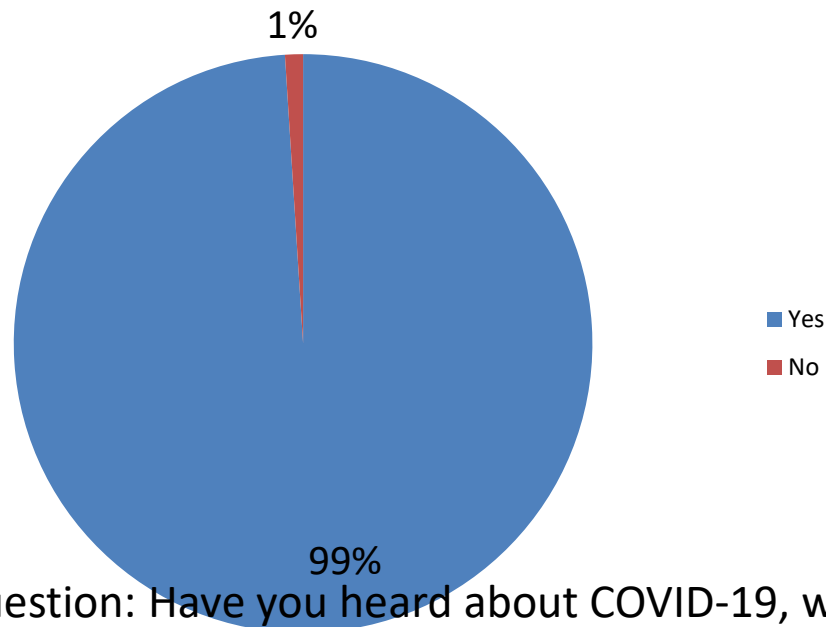


Findings...

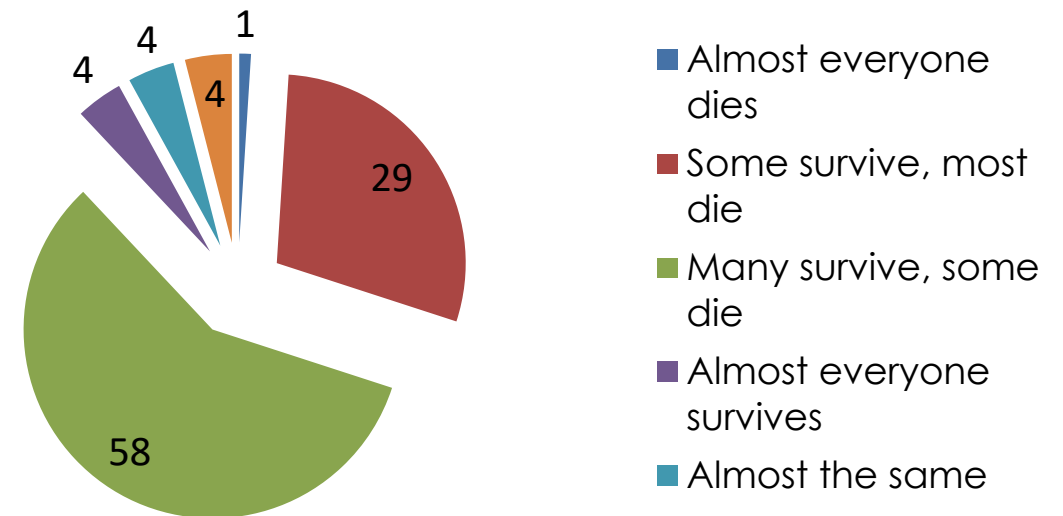
➤ knowledge of Covid-19

- Unanimous knowledge among the citizens (99.9%)
- 7/10 people think Covid-19 is a serious problem, only 2/10 underrating it

Knowledge of Covid-19



How severe are most cases of Covid-19?



Question: Have you heard about COVID-19, which many people also refer to as coronavirus?
How serious of a problem do you think the COVID-19 pandemic is for Malawi?

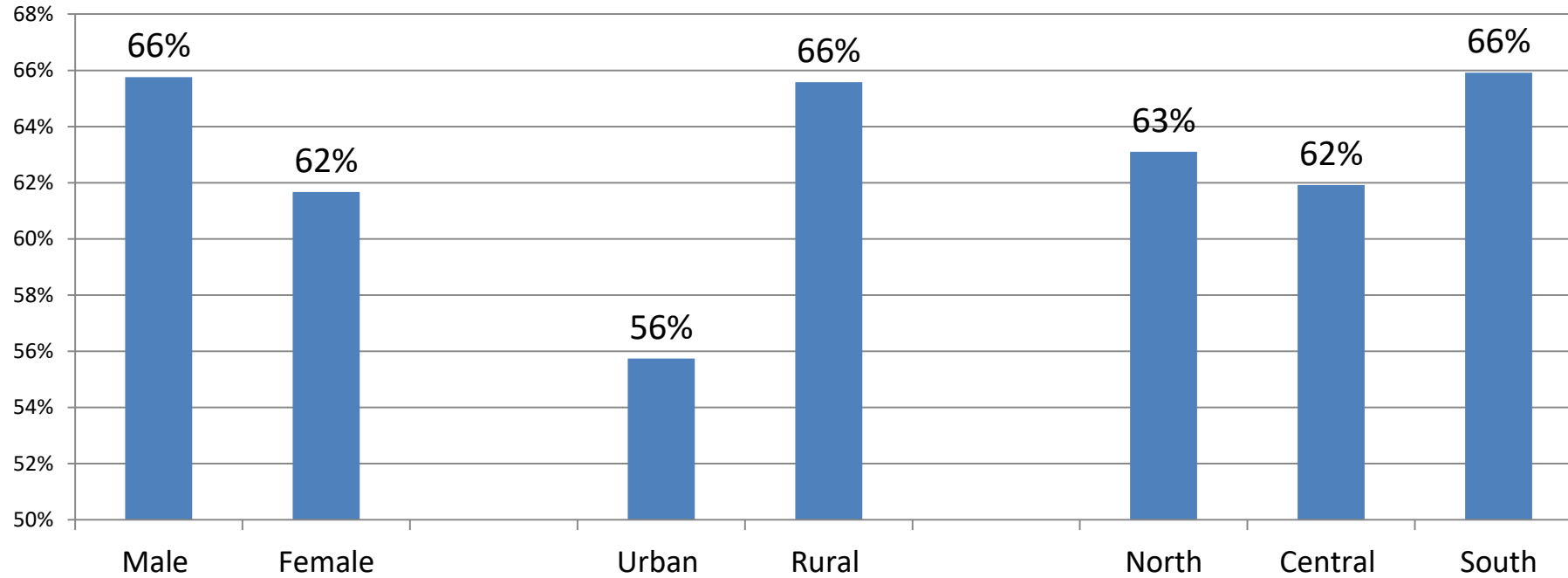
➤ **Are Malawians afraid of Covid-19?**

- Most Malawians (8/10) expressed fear that Covid-19 is a serious problem in the country (83%)
- A two thirds majority of Malawians (64%) are afraid of getting Corona Virus
- Mostly men, rural dwellers and people from the southern region are afraid of getting Covid-19 (66%)

➤ **Are Malawians afraid of Covid-19?**

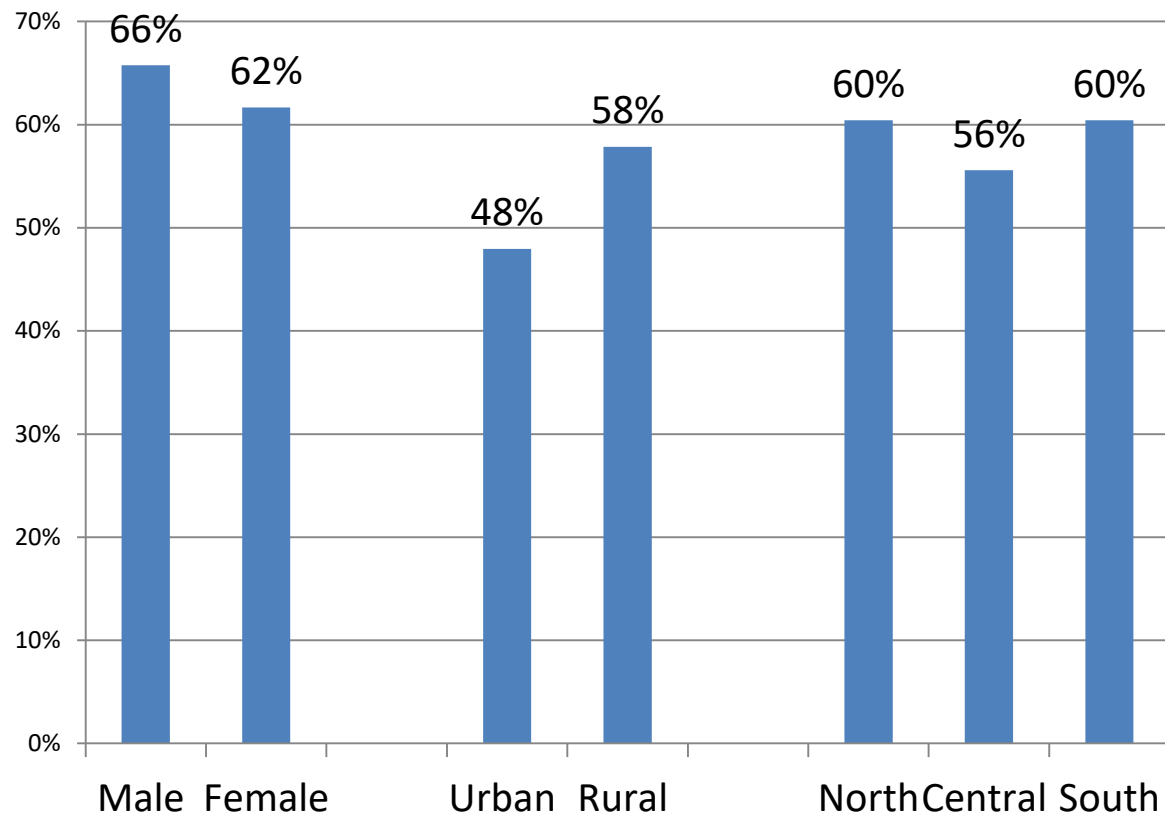
- Two thirds of Malawians are worried that a member of their household can get Covid-19 (65%)
- Above half of Malawians (56%) are worried that they can die from Covid-19 pandemic
- Mostly men(60%), rural people(58%) and people from northern and southern regions (60%) are seriously worried of dying from Covid-19
- About two thirds of the citizens feel there is a high probability of them getting infected with Covid-19 in the near future (63%)

Fear of getting Covid-19 by gender, locality and region



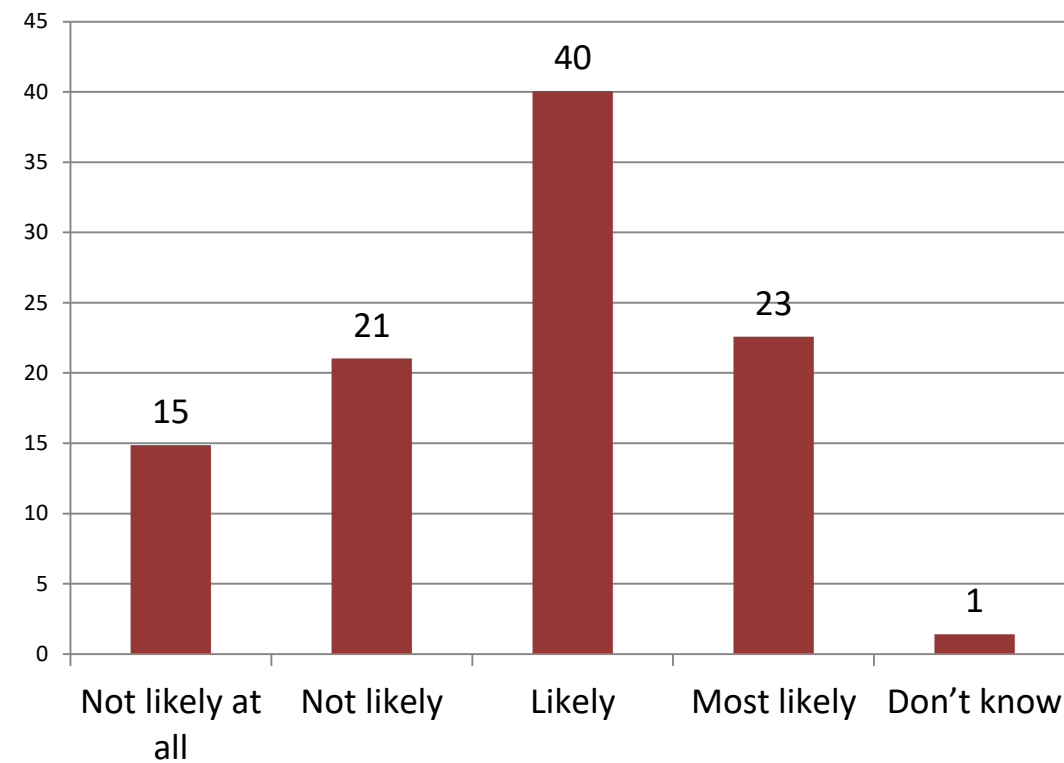
Question: How worried are you about getting COVID-19? Would you say you are

Fear of dying from Covid-19 by gender, locality and region



Question: How worried are you about dying of COVID-19. Would you say you are

Probability of being infected in the future



Question: Do you think that there is a chance that you will become infected with corona virus or COVID-19 in the future? Do you think that is almost certain, likely, just a small chance or no chance at all?

Findings...

➤ Attitudes towards Covid-19

- Majority of Malawians (97%) are willing to go for Covid-19 testing if they show signs and symptoms or exposed to anyone suspicious
- Two thirds of Malawians (63%) are ready to wear face masks
- Majority (92%) are ready to practise hand washing / sanitizing
- About three quarters of Malawians are also ready to practice social distance from those infected (73%) .

Question: Covid-19 symptoms include fever, a dry cough, shortness of breath and tiredness. If you had these symptoms at this time, how willing would you be to be tested if you have these symptoms

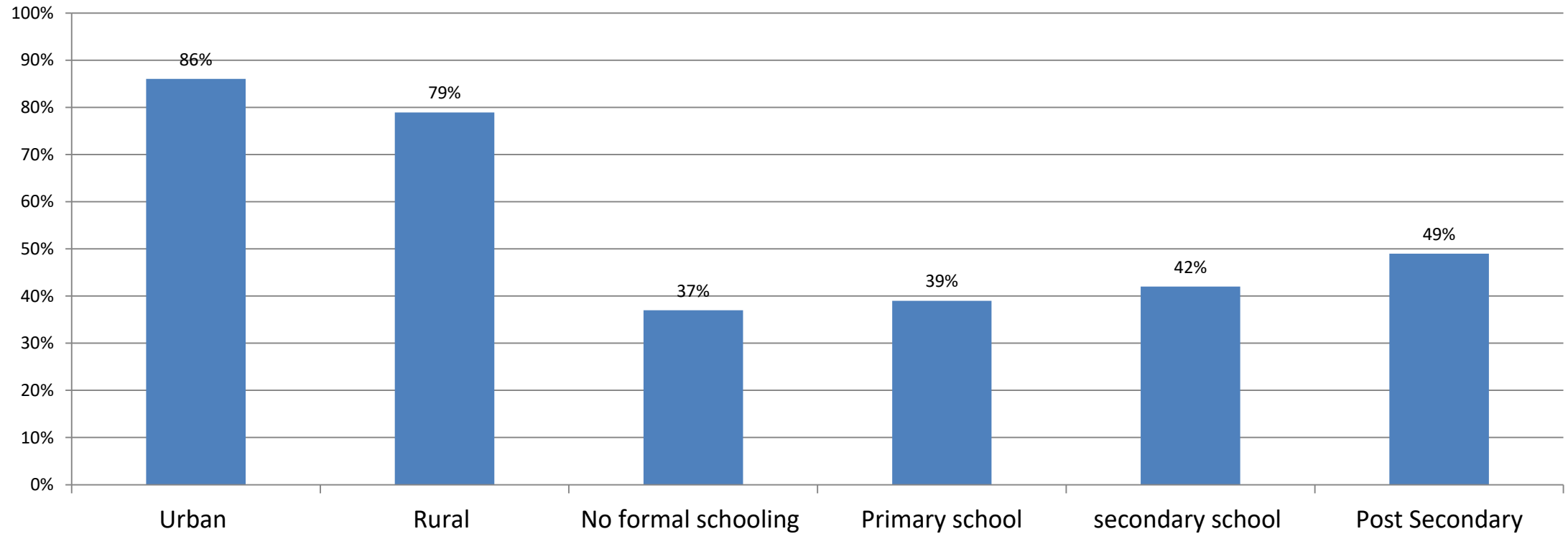
Findings...

➤ **economic impacts of Covid-19**

- Majority of Malawians (80%) say their households are economically hit by Covid-19
- About half of Malawians (46%) lament of serious economic impacts.
- Urban dwellers (86%) in serious economic problems compared to the rural folks (79%)
- Those with high levels of education are economic challenged compared to those with less education

Findings ...

Negative economic impact of Covid-19 at the household level by locality and education?



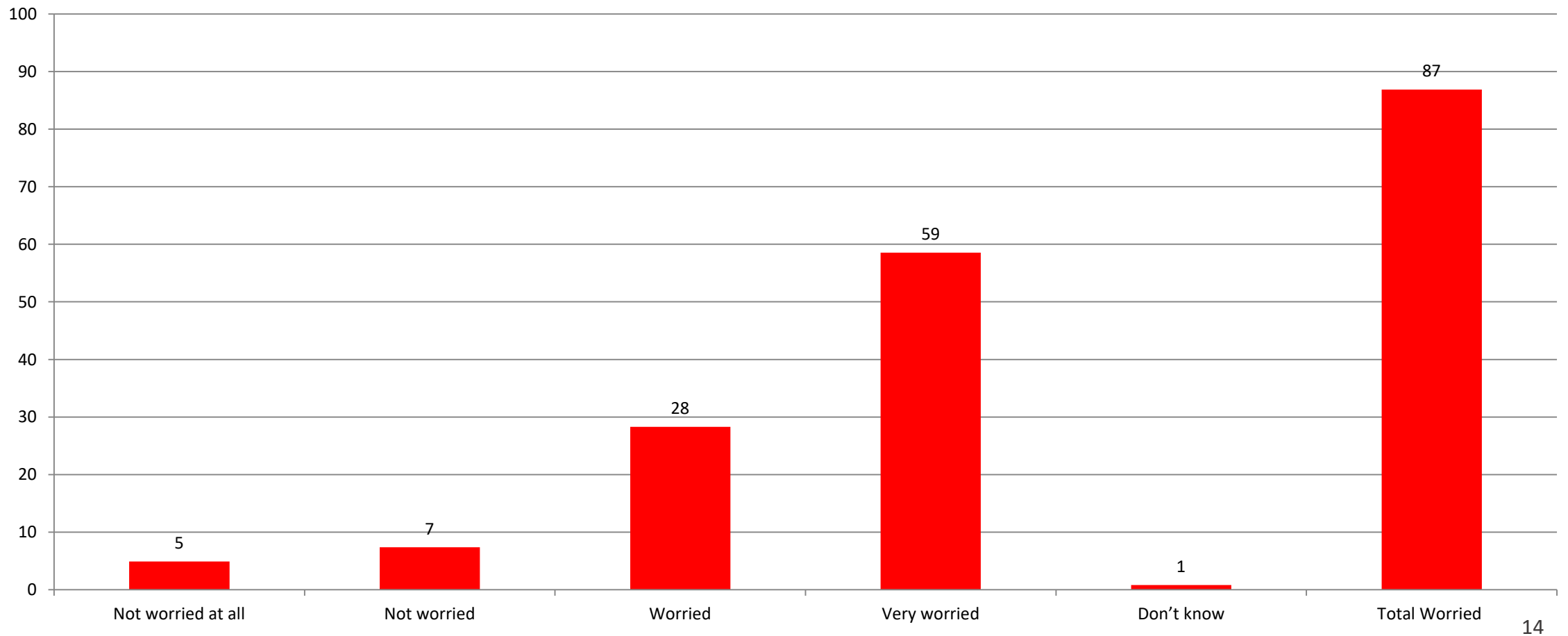
Findings...

➤ economic impacts of Covid-19

- majority of Malawians (87%) are worried that the Covid-19 Pandemic has negatively affected the economy of the country.
- about 6 out of the 10 (58%) seriously worried that the Covid-19 pandemic has left Malawi's economy in tatters
- unfortunately, a plurality (63%) of Malawians have no confidence in the way government was managing the situation

Question: Are you worried that your household's economic situation will be negatively affected by the COVID-19 pandemic? Would you say you are

Worry over the negative impact of Covid-19 on the National economy



□ Policy implications

- Perceptions of the severity of Covid-19 matters in enforcing regulations
- There is interest to go for Covid-19 testing
- Use of trusted institutions in prevention and management efforts
- Reflection on the survival measures in prevention planning / provision of alternative measures
- Government legitimacy is fundamental (DPP VS MCP)