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Rural roads, welfare and nutrition

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ANH Academy Week, Addis Ababa
June, 2016



The Question:

What are the impacts of improved market access on household well-being and nutrition?

To what can we attribute these impacts?



Data

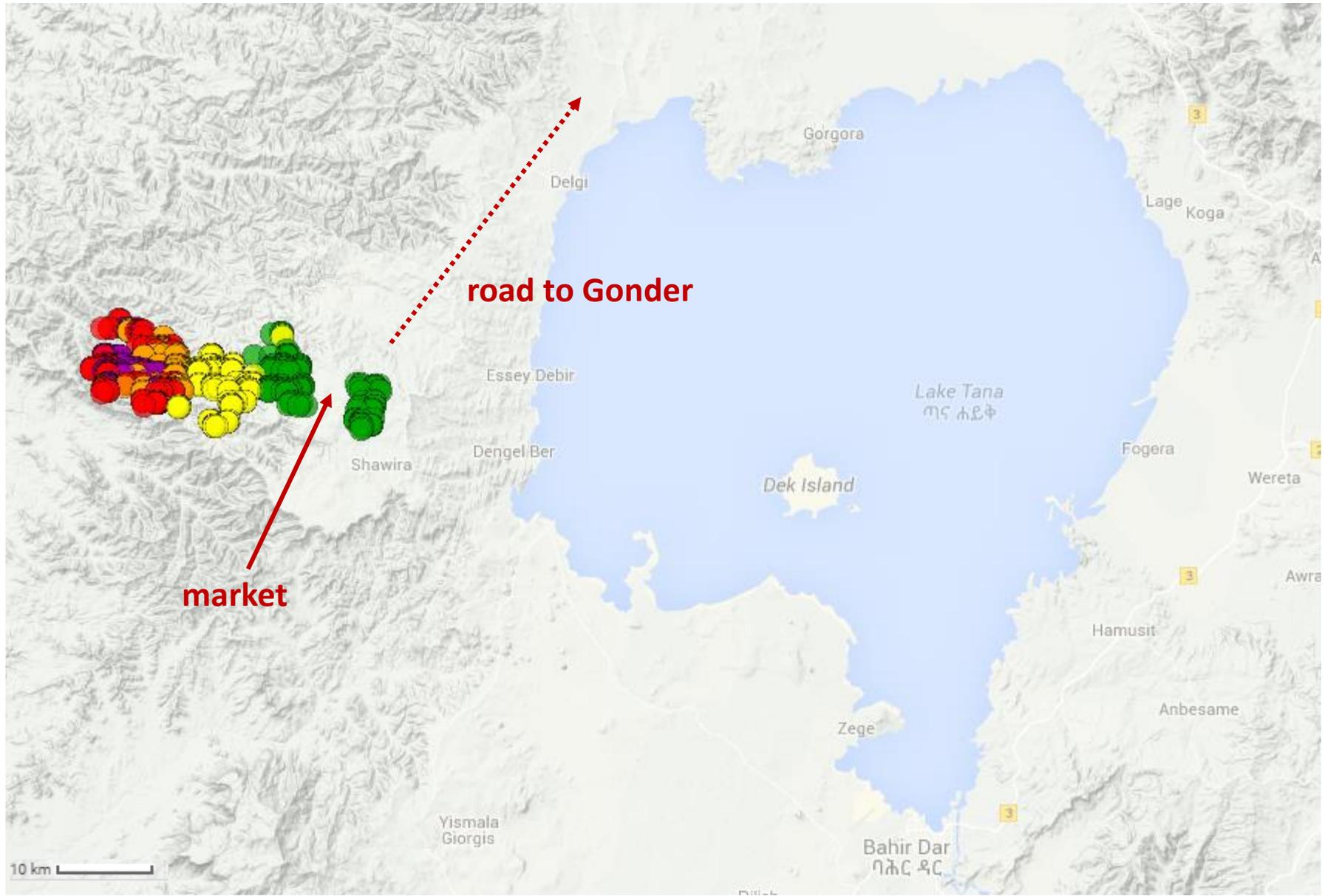
- Survey of 850 households in Alefa woreda (north-western Amhara), 2011
- Sample area selected purposefully
 - Area with large variation in transportation costs over a relatively short distance
 - No passable road, land quality & climate similar throughout
- Households' circumstances differ because of different transport costs...
...not because of land characteristics, etc.



Market Access – *Transport Costs*

- Donkey costs (Birr/kg)
 - Cost of renting donkey
 - Weight donkey can carry
- Economic transport costs
 - Include the opportunity cost of time



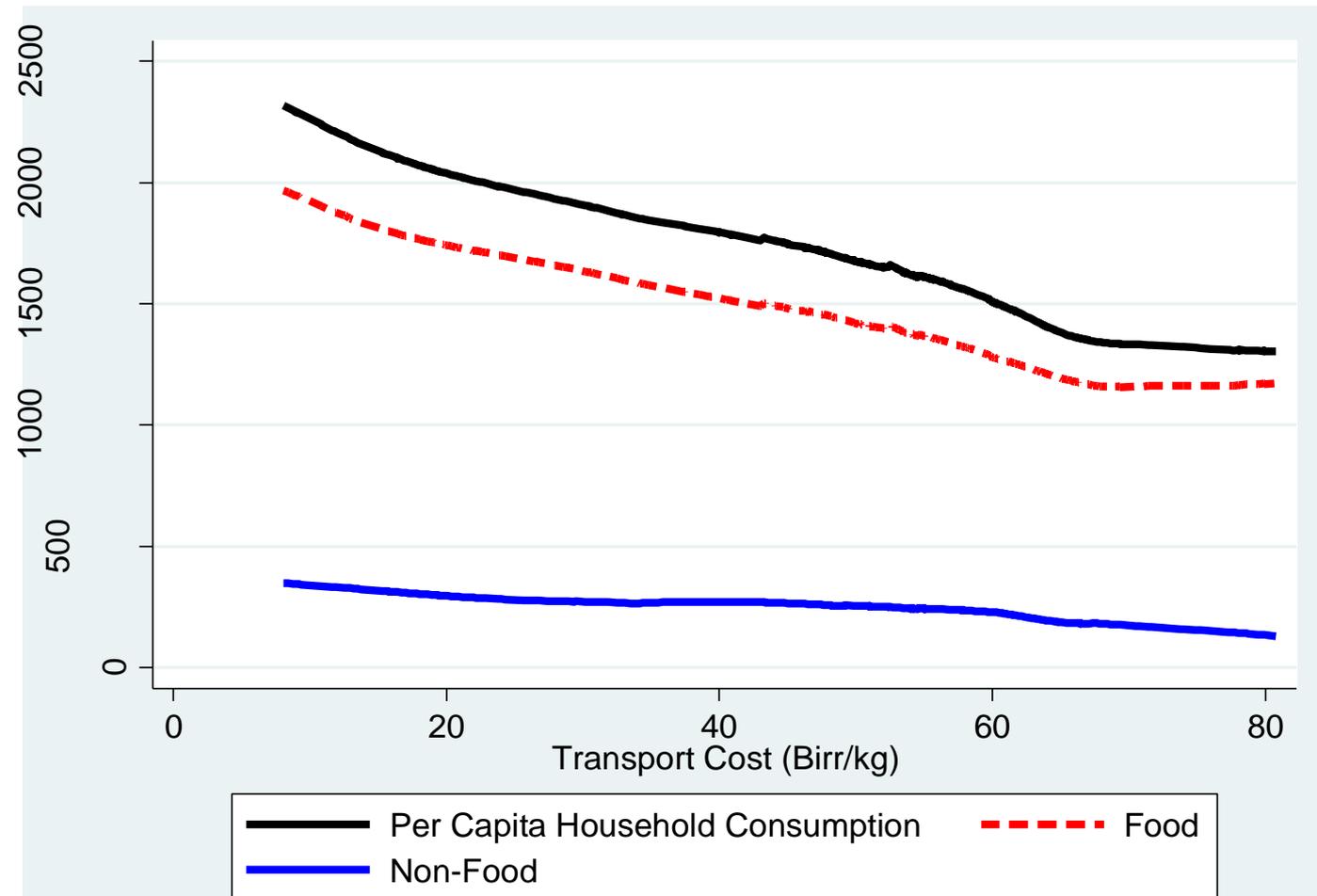


road to Gonder

market

10 km

Household Per Capita Consumption & Market Access



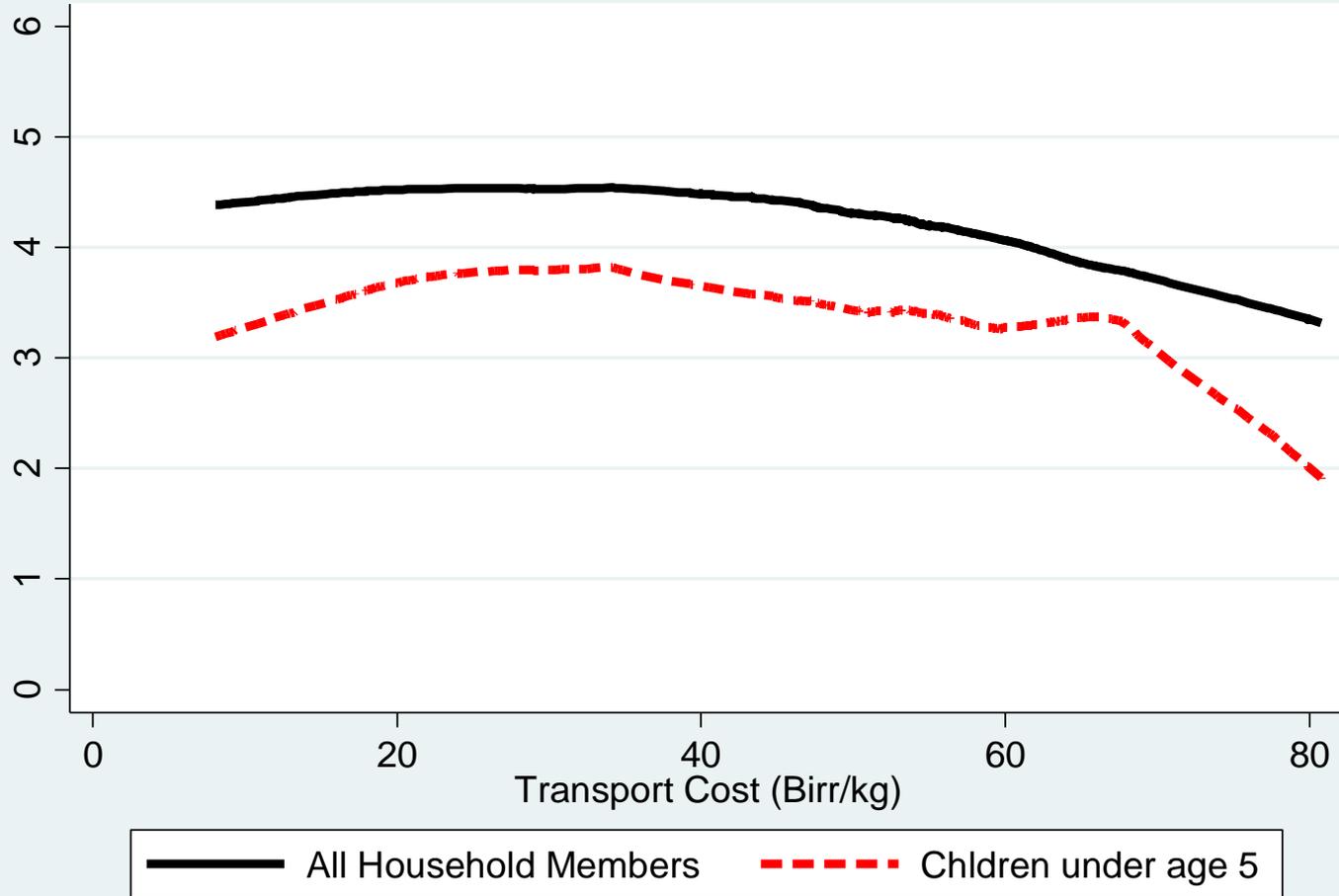
Food Security

- More remote households ate fewer & smaller meals in the past 30 days.

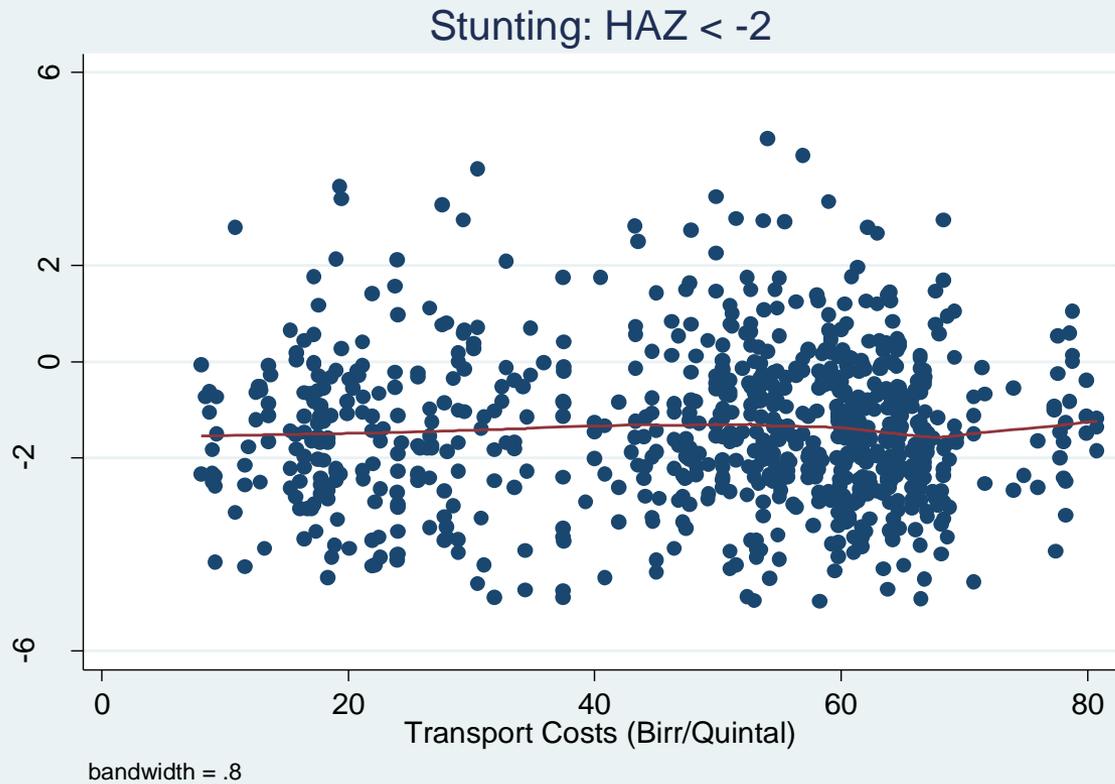


Dietary Diversity

Average Number of Food Groups in Household Diet



Child Stunting



- 36 percent stunted
- Statistically not different by remoteness

What can explain the relationship between market access and wellbeing?

- Agricultural Production
(despite similarities in land productivity)
- Terms of trade: price paid for consumed goods is higher, price received for marketed ag output is lower (because of transportation costs)
 - Marketed surplus
 - Purchased consumption items



Conclusions

Households with greater market access have...

- Greater consumption
- More food security
- Greater dietary diversity



Conclusions

- But, no discernable effects on nutrition outcomes
- Why?
 - Number of food groups low for all households
 - Food consumption alone is not enough to affect nutrition outcomes
 - Limited access to clean water, sanitation & healthcare throughout the survey area
 - Education levels are extremely low in this context





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