

# IMPROVING SNAP

*The nation's anti-hunger program*

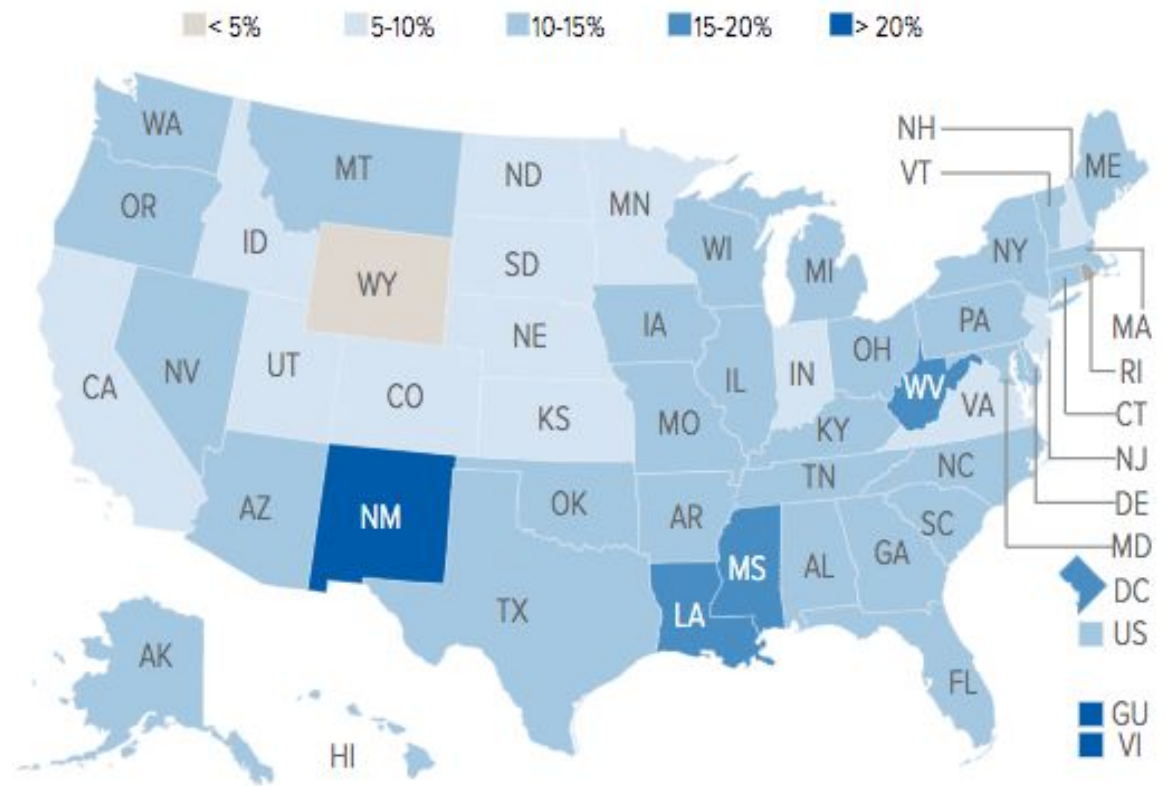


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Irving Campbell & Anil Onal

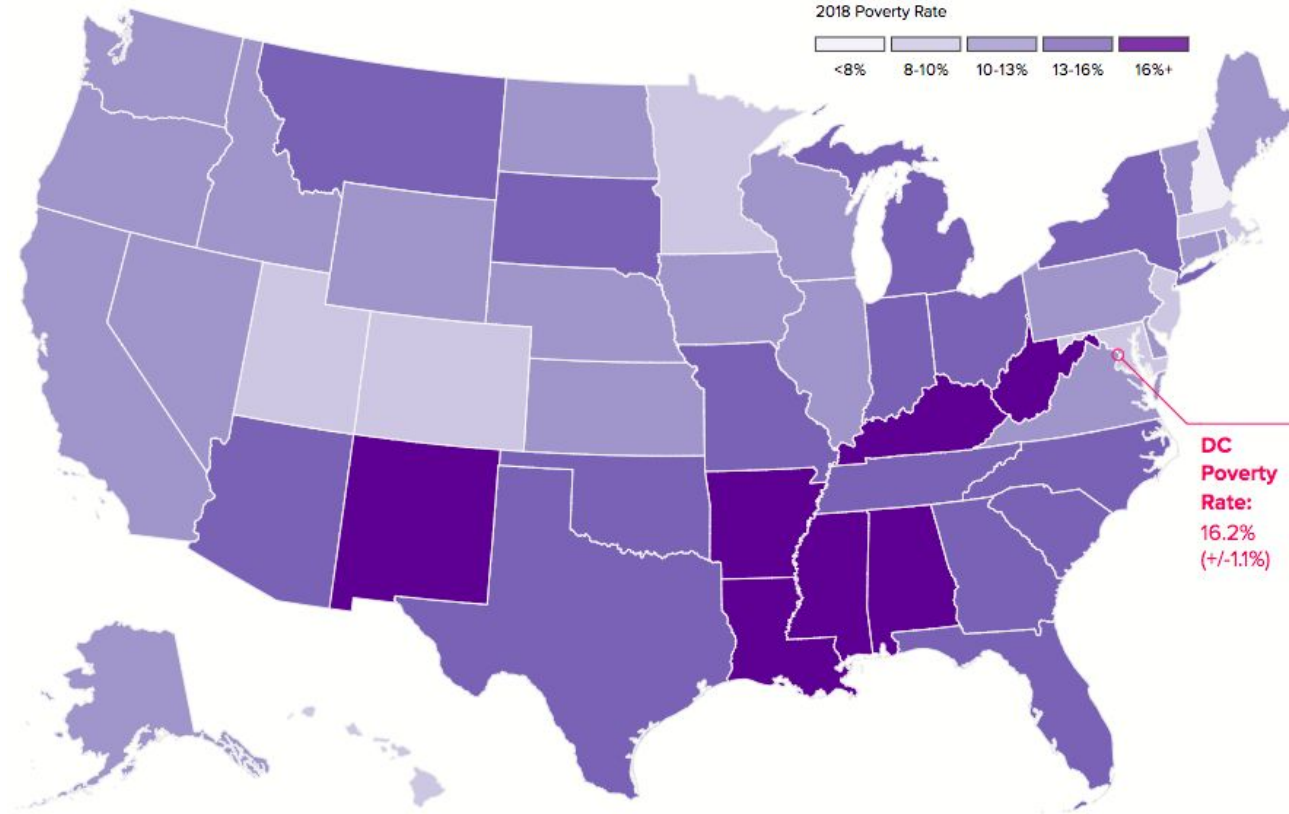
# Number of SNAP beneficiaries % of population, 2018

*USDA says:*  
**40 million**  
beneficiaries  
nationwide  
+  
**20 million** who  
could not be  
reached



## Poverty rate % of population, 2018

On average,  
SNAP coverage  
follows the  
poverty rate.  
But, there are  
exceptions.



Two questions to examine:

1. Is SNAP reaching enough people?
2. How can we improve SNAP's targeting?

## Data:

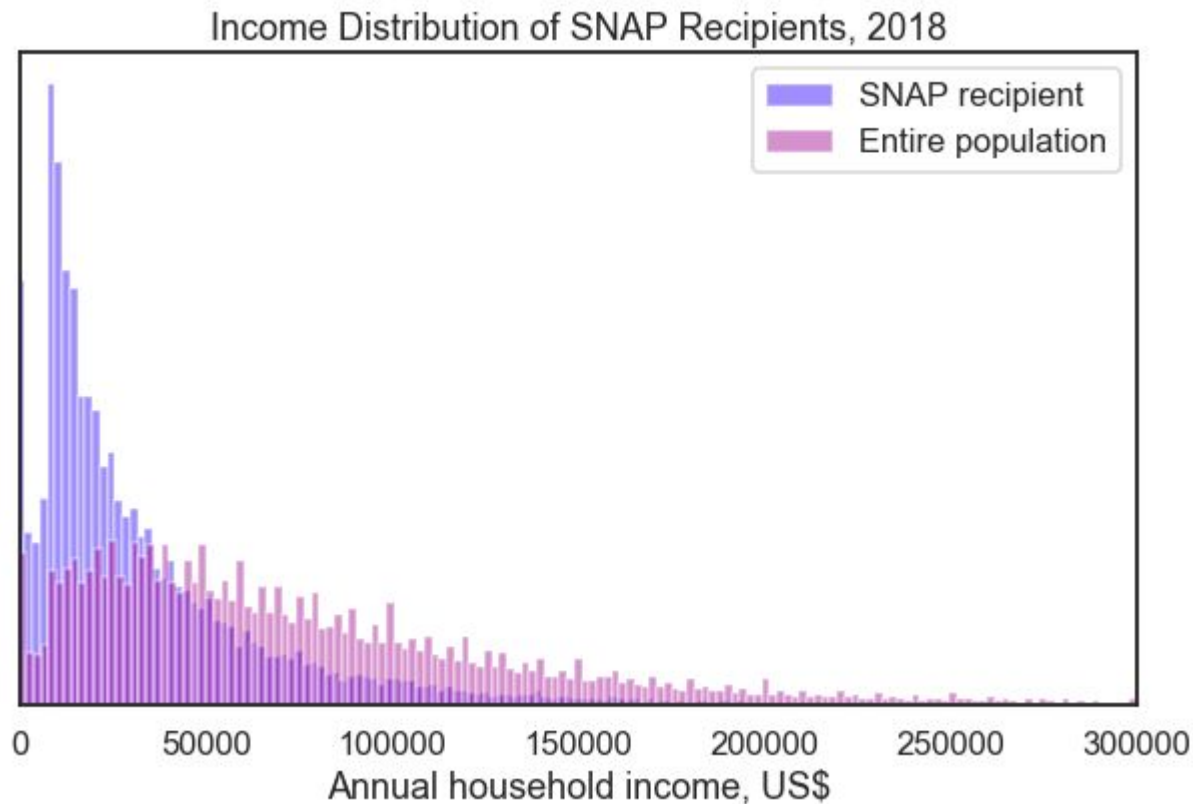
- Census Bureau's nationally representative Annual Community Survey (2018)

## Methodology:

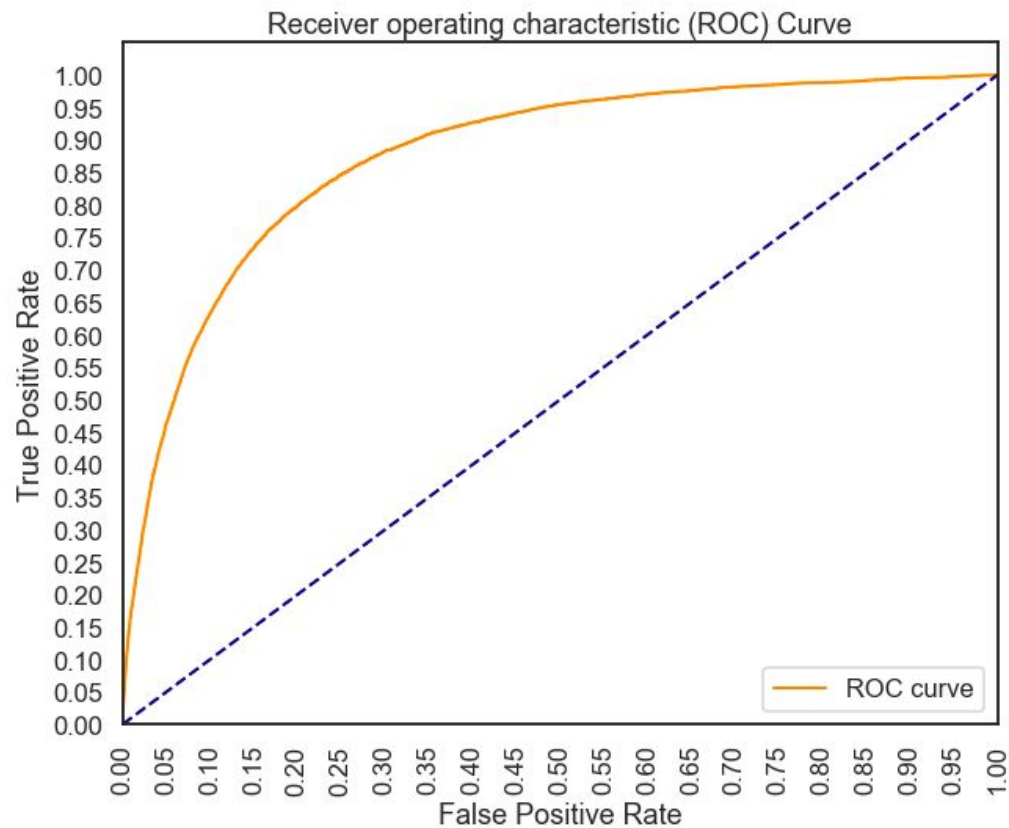
- Predict SNAP enrollment using income, assets, and spending
- Find five characteristics that identify SNAP enrollment

10% of US population participated in SNAP.

Median income: US\$22K vs. US\$69K.

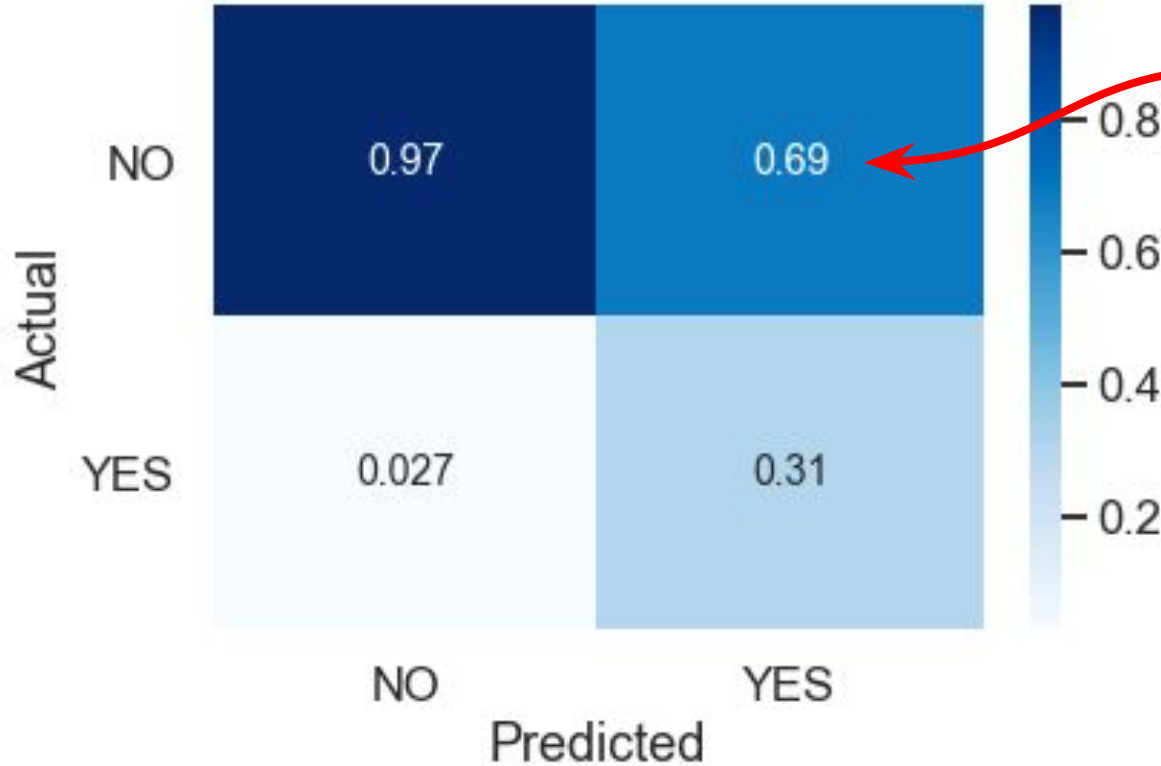


# How well did we do?



- Blue is a “worthless” discriminator, while orange is our model
- Above blue means a better model
- Below blue means a worse model
- Effectively, our model does a pretty good job.

## SNAP Enrollment Predictions



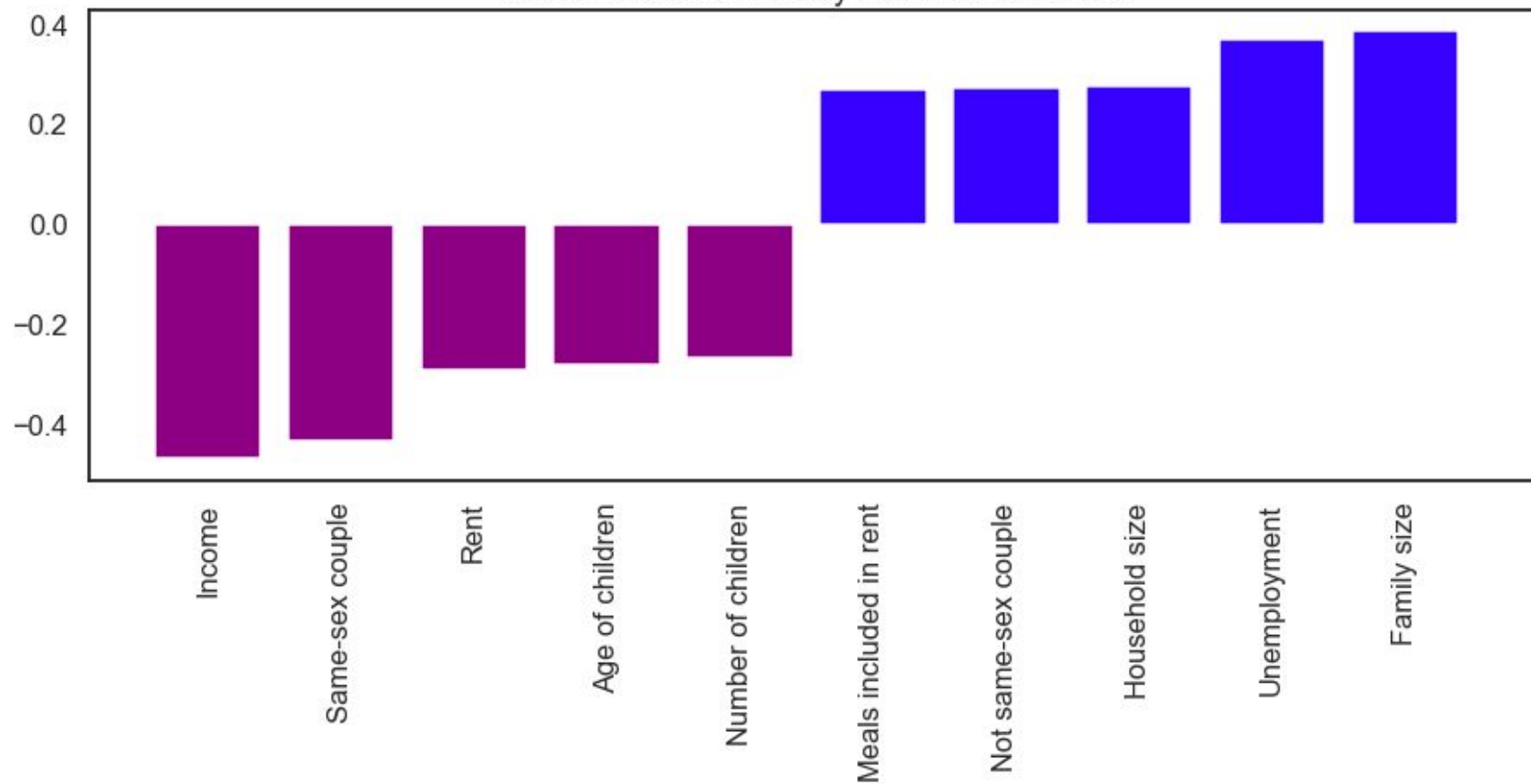
*69% of those who the model identifies as being on food stamps are actually not.*

Main takeaway:

**There are areas that can be targeted more effectively to ensure that people who are needy have the opportunity to enroll.**



Characteristics to Identify SNAP Beneficiaries



## To sum up:

### 1. Is SNAP reaching enough people?

Likely no - false positives are very high

### 2. How can the targeting of SNAP be improved?

Income, family size and type, other expenditures

## Next steps:

1. Increasing sample size
2. Are we using too many variables?

Thank you!