

# The Rise of Medium-Scale Farms in Africa: Causes and Consequences of Changing Farm Size Distributions

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food systems and nutrition: do we have the concepts and data to understand,  
track, and anticipate the links?”

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# FEED THE FUTURE

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# Outline

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1. Document how rapidly farm structure is changing
2. Characteristics of MS farmers
3. Causes
4. Consequences
5. Implications

# Changes in farm structure in Tanzania (2008-2012), LSMS/National Panel Surveys

Farm size	Number of farms (% of total)		% growth in number of farms between initial and latest year	% of total operated land on farms between 0-100 ha		
	2008	2012		2008	2012	
0 – 5 ha	5,454,961 (92.8)	6,151,035 (91.4)	12.8	62.4	56.3	- 6.1%
5 – 10 ha	300,511 (5.1)	406,947 (6.0)	35.4	15.9	18.0	
10 – 20 ha	77,668 (1.3)	109,960 (1.6)	41.6	7.9	9.7	+ 6.1%
20 – 100 ha	45,700 (0.7)	64,588 (0.9)	41.3	13.8	16.0	
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,878,840 (100%)</b>	<b>6,732,530 (100%)</b>	<b>14.5</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	

# Changes in farm structure in Ghana (1992-2013)

Ghana	Number of farms		% growth in number of farms	% of total cultivated area	
	1992	2013		1992	2013
0-2 ha	1,458,540	1,582,034	8.5	25.1	14.2
2-5 ha	578,890	998,651	72.5	35.6	31.3
5-10 ha	116,800	320,411	174.3	17.2	22.8
10-20 ha	38,690	117,722	204.3	11.0	16.1
20-100 ha	18,980	37,421	97.2	11.1	12.2
>100 ha	--	1,740	-	--	3.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,211,900</b>	<b>3,057,978</b>	<b>38.3</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

51.1%

Source: Ghana GLSS Surveys, 1992, 2013, Jayne et al., 2016, using data from Ghana GLSS Surveys I and IV.

# Changes in farm structure in Zambia (2001-2012)

Farm size category	Number of farms		% growth in number of farms	% of total cultivated area	
	2001	2012		2001	2012
0 – 2 ha	638,118	748,771	17.3	34.1	16.2
2 – 5 ha	159,039	418,544	163.2	45	31.7
5 – 10 ha	20,832	165,129	692.6	14.3	25.0
10 – 20 ha	2,352	53,454	2272.7	6.6	15.0
20 – 100 ha	--	13,839	na	--	12.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>820,341</b>	<b>1,399,737</b>		<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

52.1%

Source: Zambia MAL Crop Forecast Surveys, 2001 and 2012

# Changes in farm size distributions: Summary

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1. Number of small farms growing slowly
2. Share of area under small farms declining
3. Number of medium-scale farms growing rapidly
4. Share of area under medium-scale growing, and currently over 40% of farm holdings (> 25% of cultivated area)

# Outline

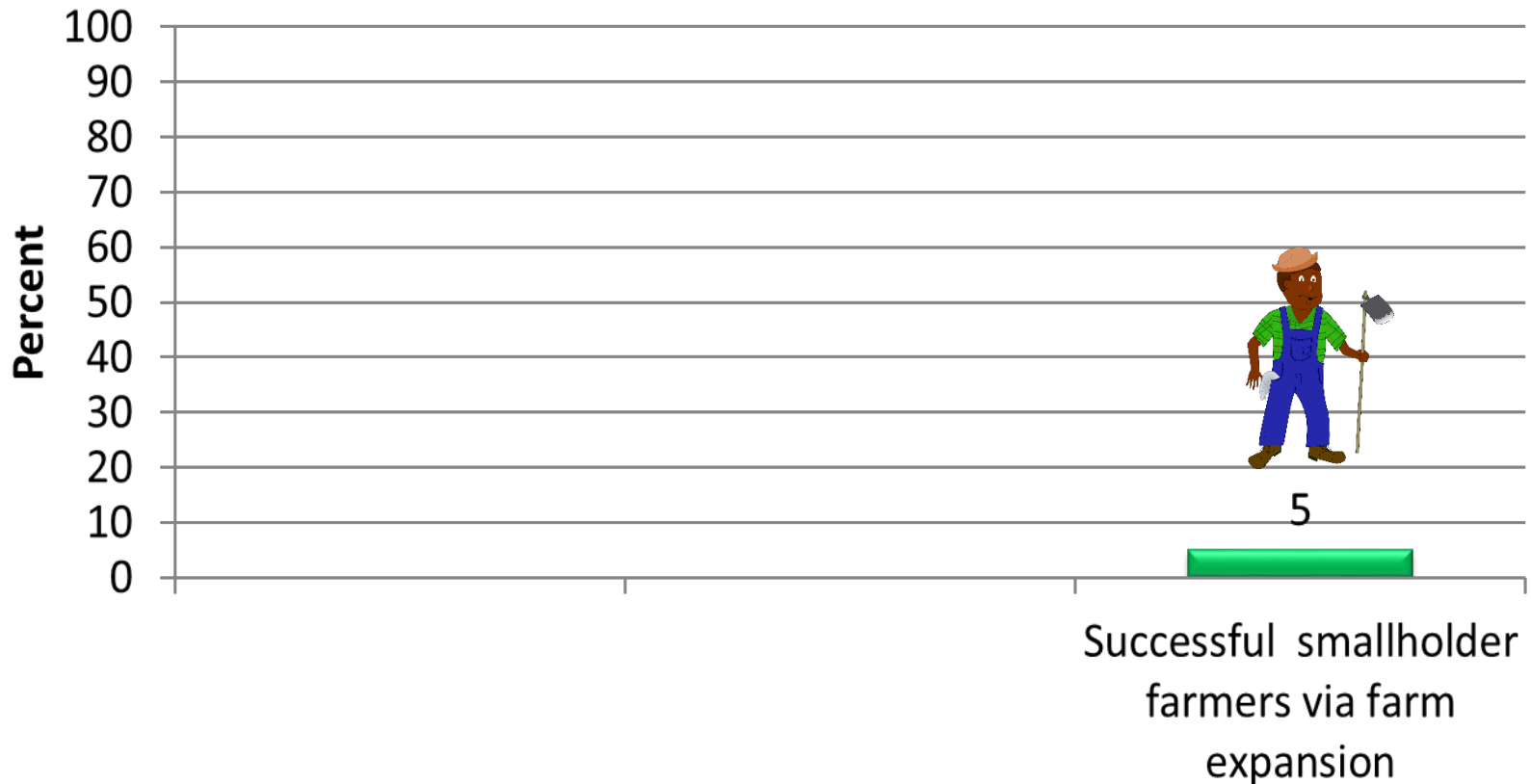
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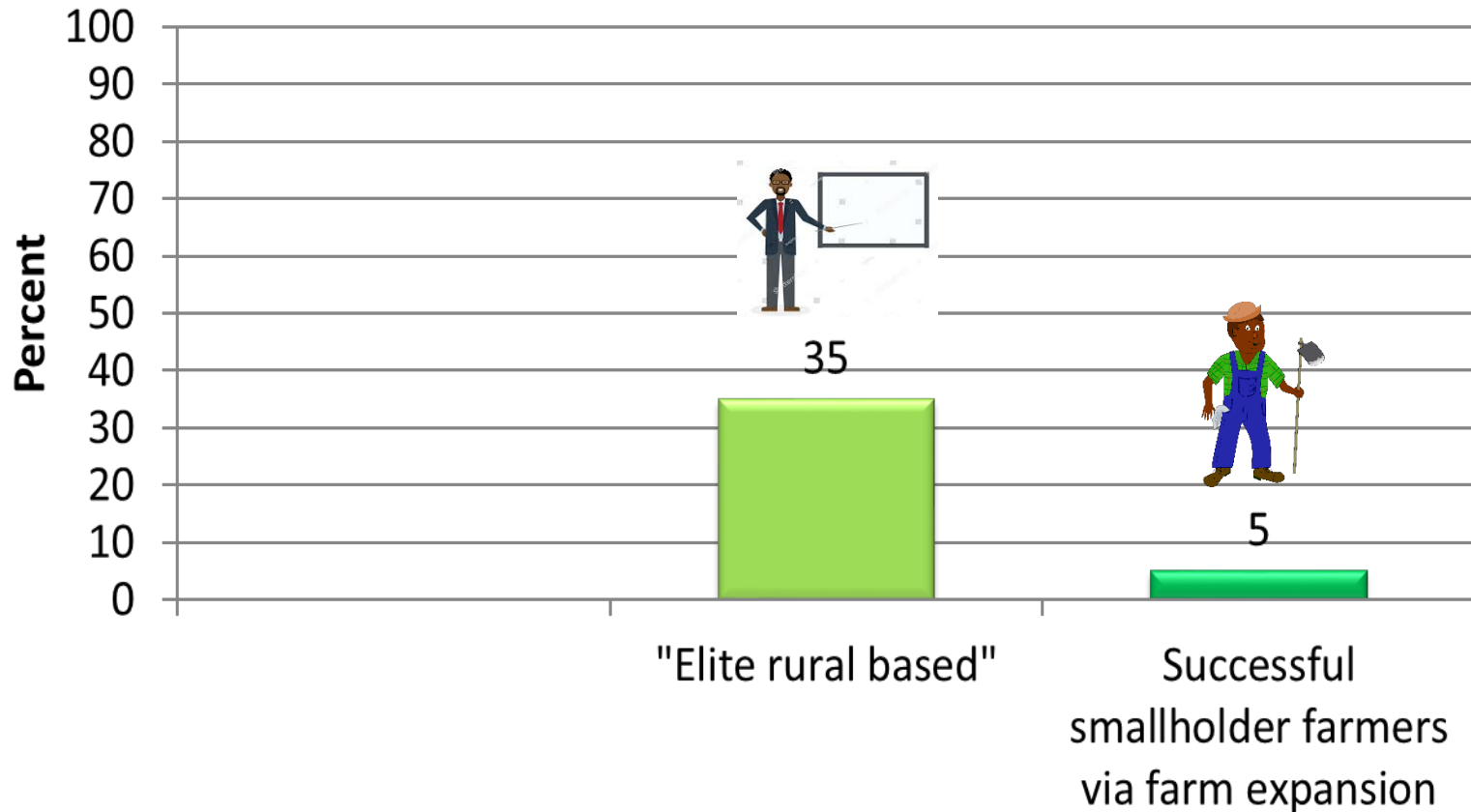
# Rise of the medium-scale farmers

## Three sub-categories of medium scale farmers (Kenya, Zambia, Ghana)



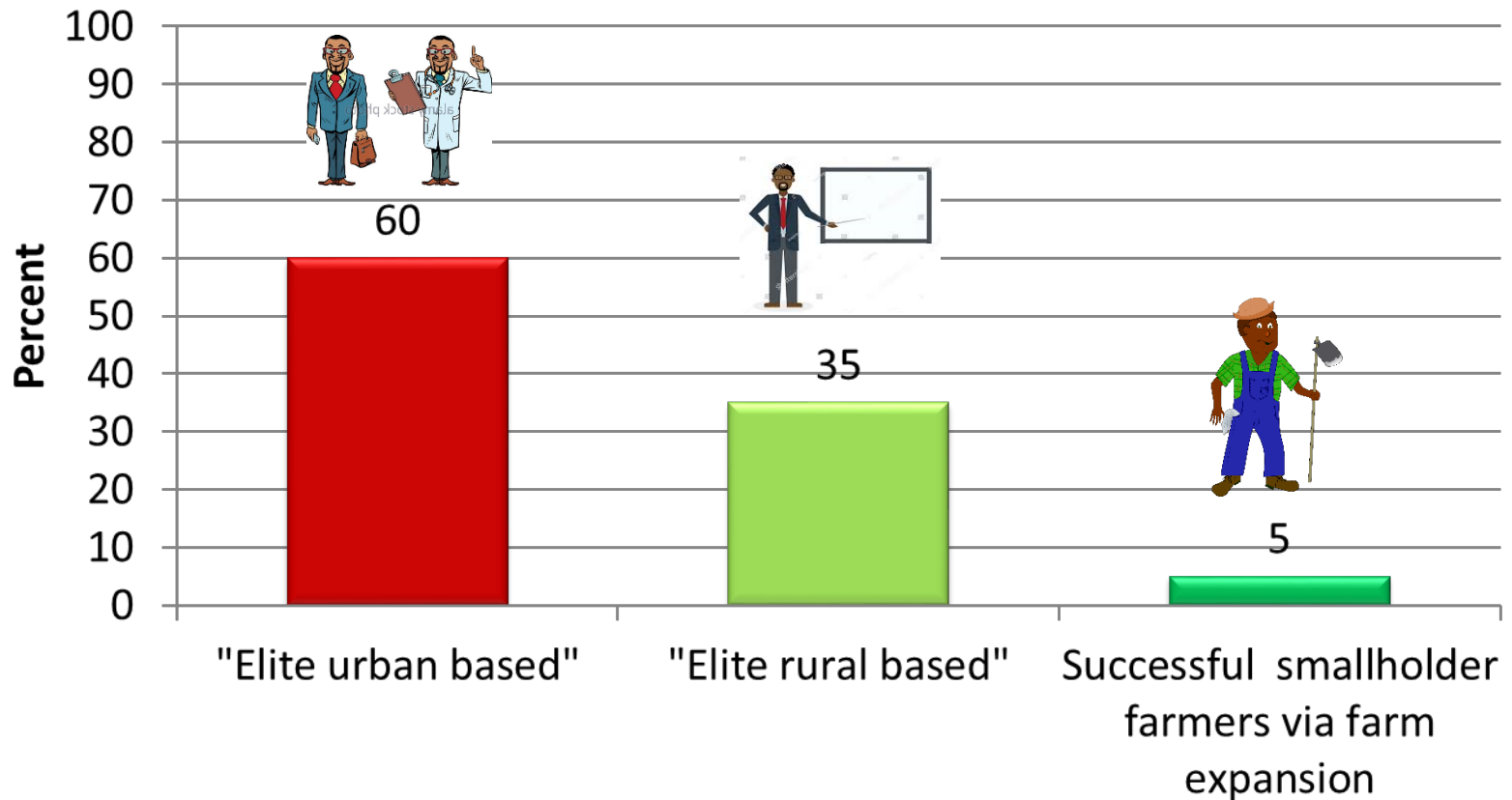
# Rise of the medium-scale farmers

## Three sub-categories of medium scale farmers: Kenya, Zambia, Ghana

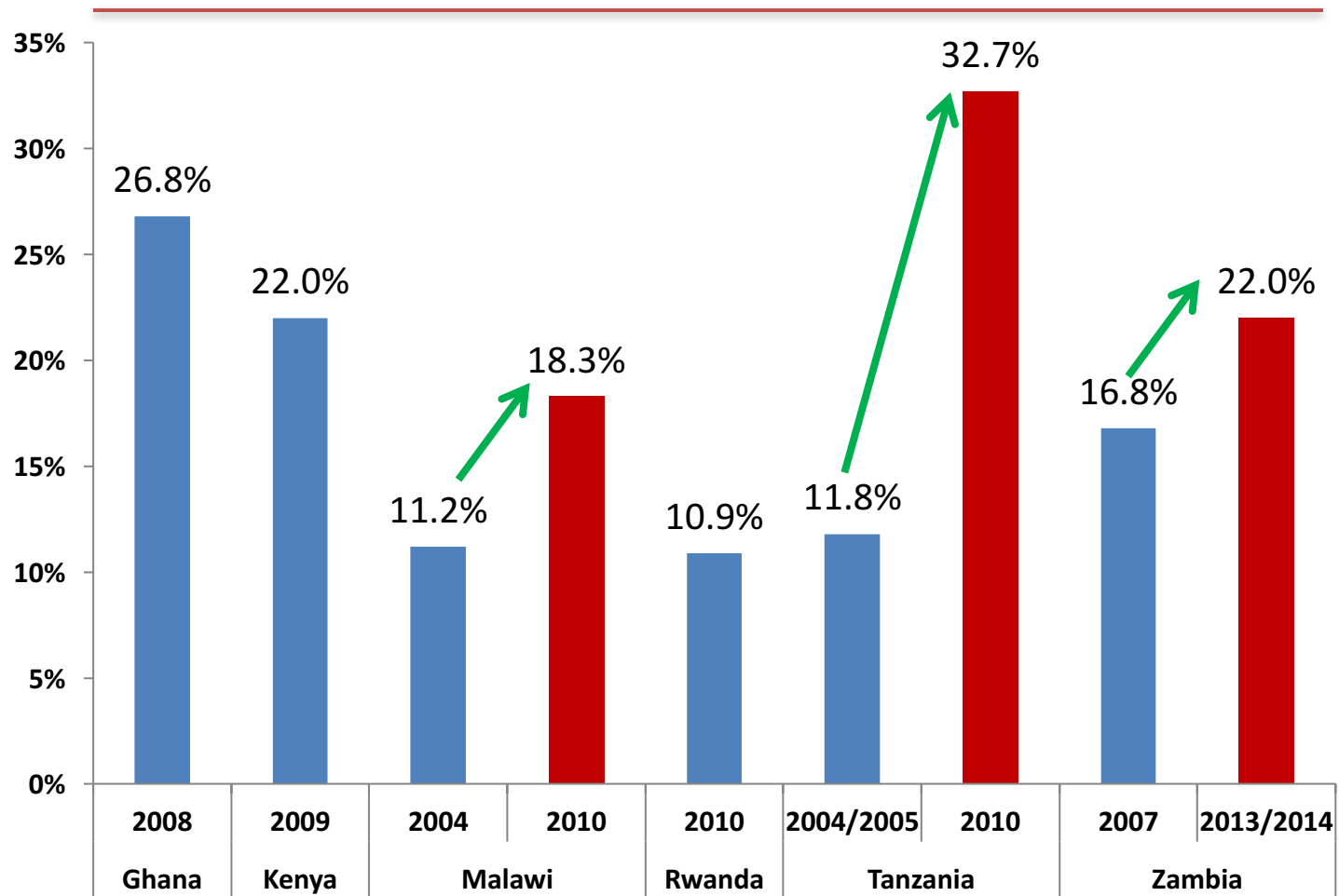


# Rise of the medium-scale farmers

## Three sub-categories of medium scale farmers: Kenya, Zambia, Ghana



# % of National Landholdings held by Urban Households



Source: Demographic and Health Surveys, various years between 2004-2014.

# Type 1: Urban-based investor farmer

	Mode of entry to medium-scale farming status: acquire farm using non-farm income	
	Zambia	Kenya
	(n=164)	(n=180)
% of cases	58	60
% men	91.4	80
Year of birth	1960	1947
Years of education of head	11	12.7
Have held a job other than farmer (%)	100	83.3
Formerly /currently employed by the public sector (%)	59.6	56.7
Current landholding size (ha)	74.9	50.1
% of land currently under cultivation	24.7	46.6
Decade when land was acquired		
1969 or earlier	1.1	6
1970-79	5.1	18
1980-89	7.4	20
1990-99	23.8	32
2000 or later	63.4	25

# Outline

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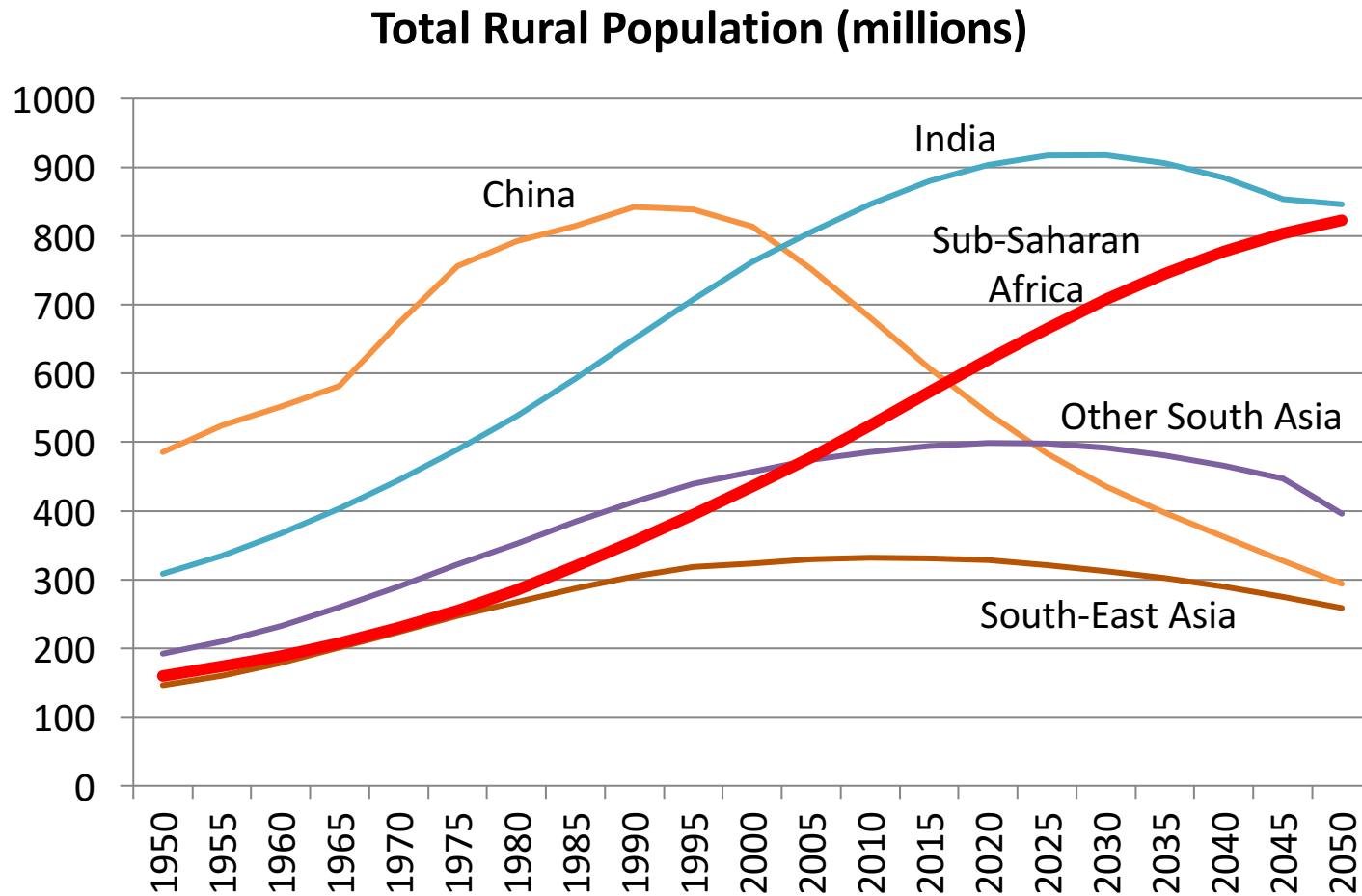
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# Causes of changing farm size distributions

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1. Rise in world food prices – heightened investor interest in farmland
2. Urban farmer capture of land policy / farm lobbies
3. Scramble for land due to rapid population growth
  - Fragmentation/subdivision in areas of favorable mkt access
  - Land inheritance declining
  - Rising challenges of youth access to land → migration

# Sub-Saharan Africa: only region of world where rural population continues to rise past 2050



Source: UN 2013



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# Consequences of changing farm size distributions (++++)

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1. Rising use of **mechanization**
2. More **capital** using/labor-saving forms of agricultural production
3. **Vent-for-surplus**
  - Raise agricultural output and create growth multipliers to agro-food industries
  - Medium-scale farm contributing a large share of **marketed surplus**
  - Selling to large grain traders, higher prices, reduced transaction costs
4. **Productivity** differences between small and medium-scale farms – limited evidence
  - But reasons to believe that capitalized and educated MS farms will be more productive

# Consequences of changing farm size distributions (---)

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## 5. Enclosure

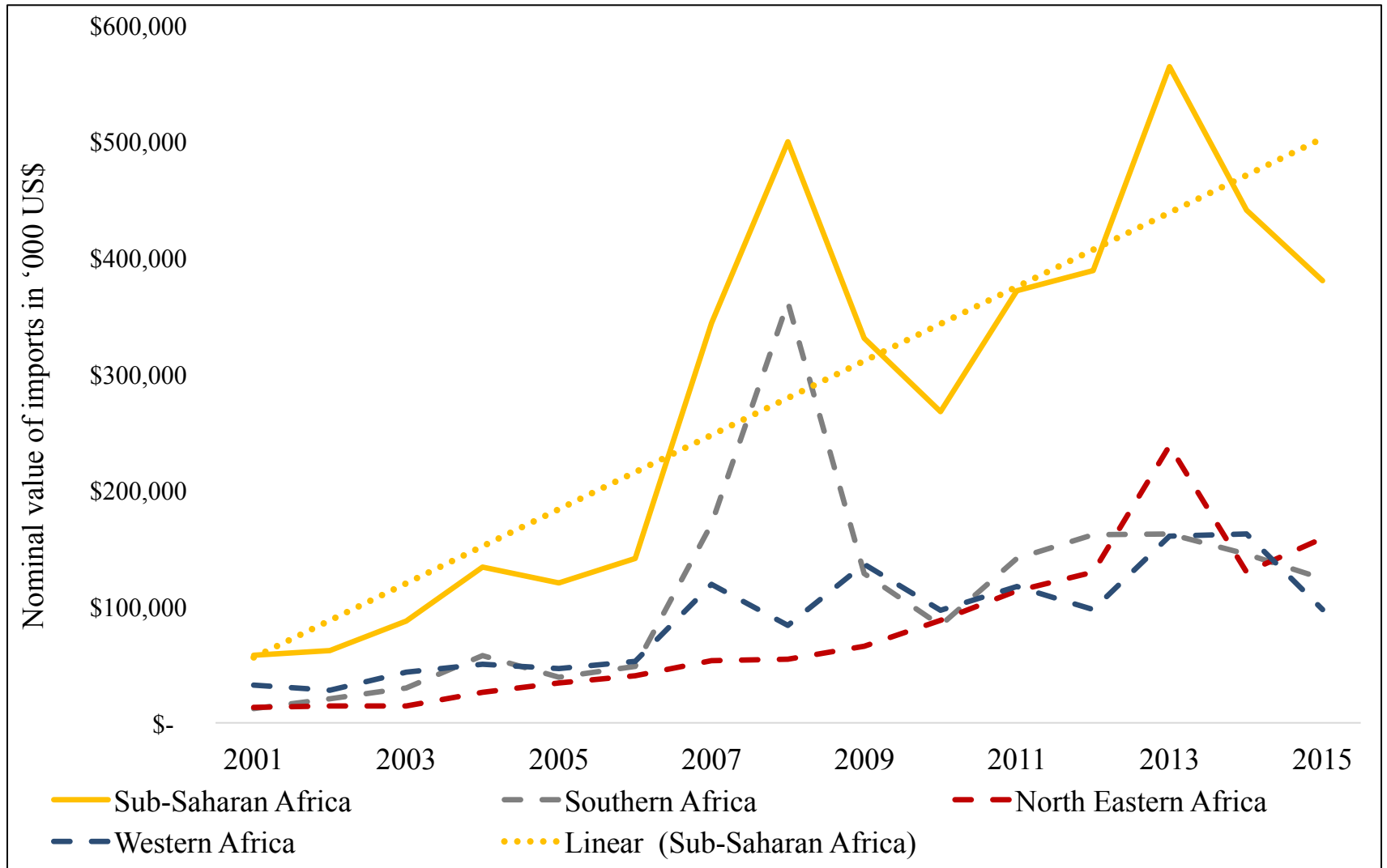
- Elite use **control of state processes** to appropriate public lands for private benefit
- Growing **land scarcity** driven by middle/high income urban people seeking to acquire land

## 6. Rising **inequality** of farmland distribution

- Have medium & large farms expanded onto new land or displaced farms on existing land?
- Rising land prices → straining youth access to land

## 7. Is mechanization **displacing** agricultural employment?

# Nominal value of tractor imports to Sub-Saharan Africa (excluding South Africa), 2001-2015



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# Implications for policy

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1. Agricultural productivity growth will be the cornerstone of any inclusive and comprehensive youth livelihoods strategy:  
Influences-
  - Pace of labor force exit out of farming
  - Labor productivity in broader economy
2. Agricultural sector policies must anticipate and respond to:
  - Rising land prices, decline of inheritance, market as increasingly important mode of acquiring land
  - Resources needed for youth to succeed in farming (access to land, finance, etc.)
  - Distinguish between “trying to keep youth in agriculture” vs. “giving youth viable choices”

Tomorrow belongs to people who prepare  
for it today

--African Proverb--

**Thank You**