

HOW DO WE OVER-COME THE URBAN/RURAL DICHOTOMY? WELCOME TO THE NEW SUBURBIA

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Prelude

- The challenge of rural development in SA is largely the result of spatial dislocations and economic inequities created by colonialism and Apartheid – the creation of the Bantustans and agricultural dualism (Makgetla, 2010)
- One interpretation of current policy is to reverse these historical processes – *'re-wind'* (eg land restitution)
- Another is to *'re-write'*, ie change the script so that we quickly re-create the reality we 'should' be having now (eg create equity in the commercial agricultural sector)

but maybe...

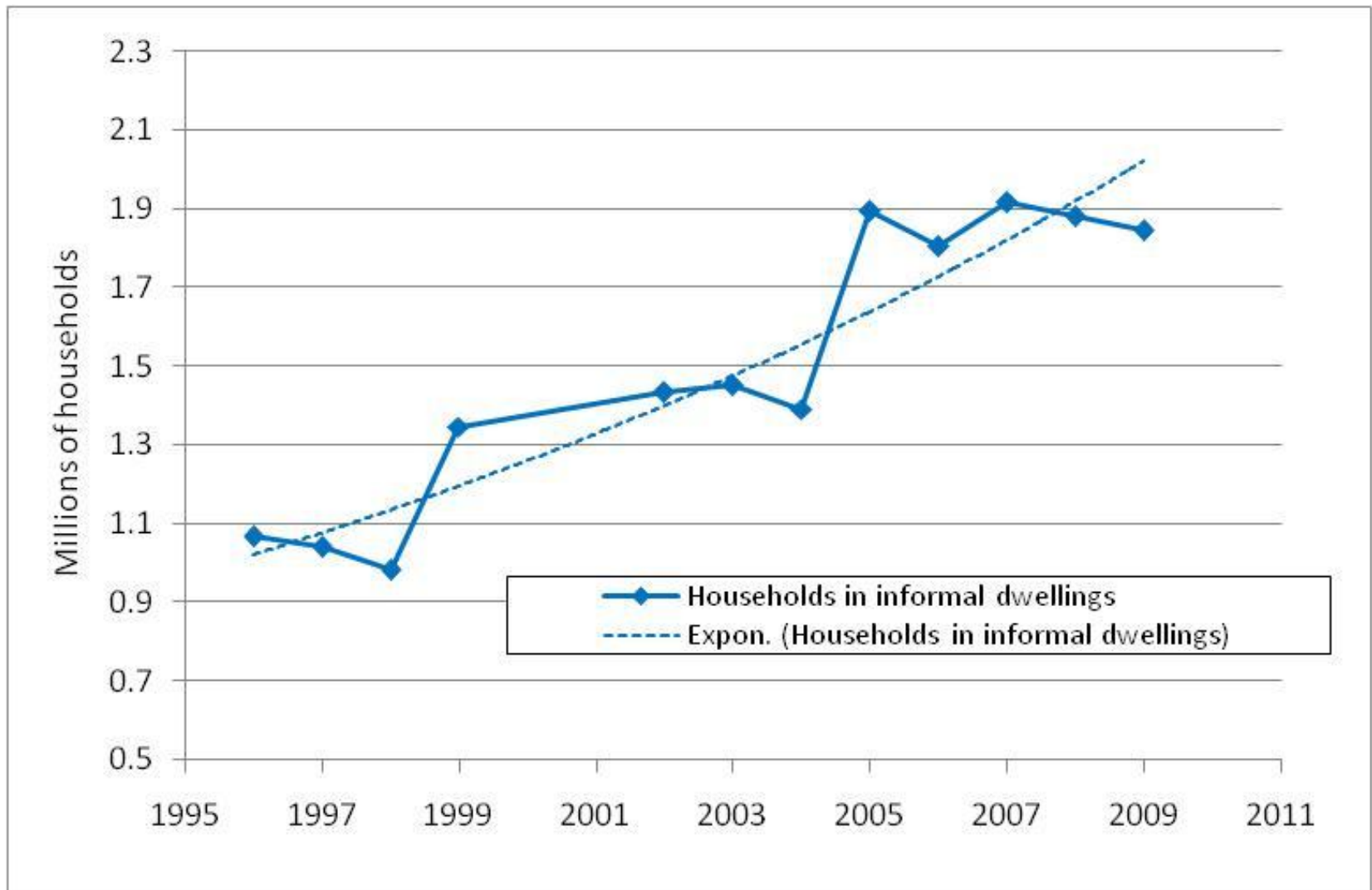
... the best options available to us don't involve restoring what was lost, or merely redistributing what we presently have

Problem statement

- The pre-occupations of rural development policy and urban development policy have little to do with one another
 - CRDP Framework doc (July 2009) speaks of “dealing effectively with rural poverty through the optimal use and management of natural resources”, and of improving services in rural areas (flush toilets, shopping malls)
 - Urban development – densifying urban settlements, addressing service delivery backlogs, reviving small towns

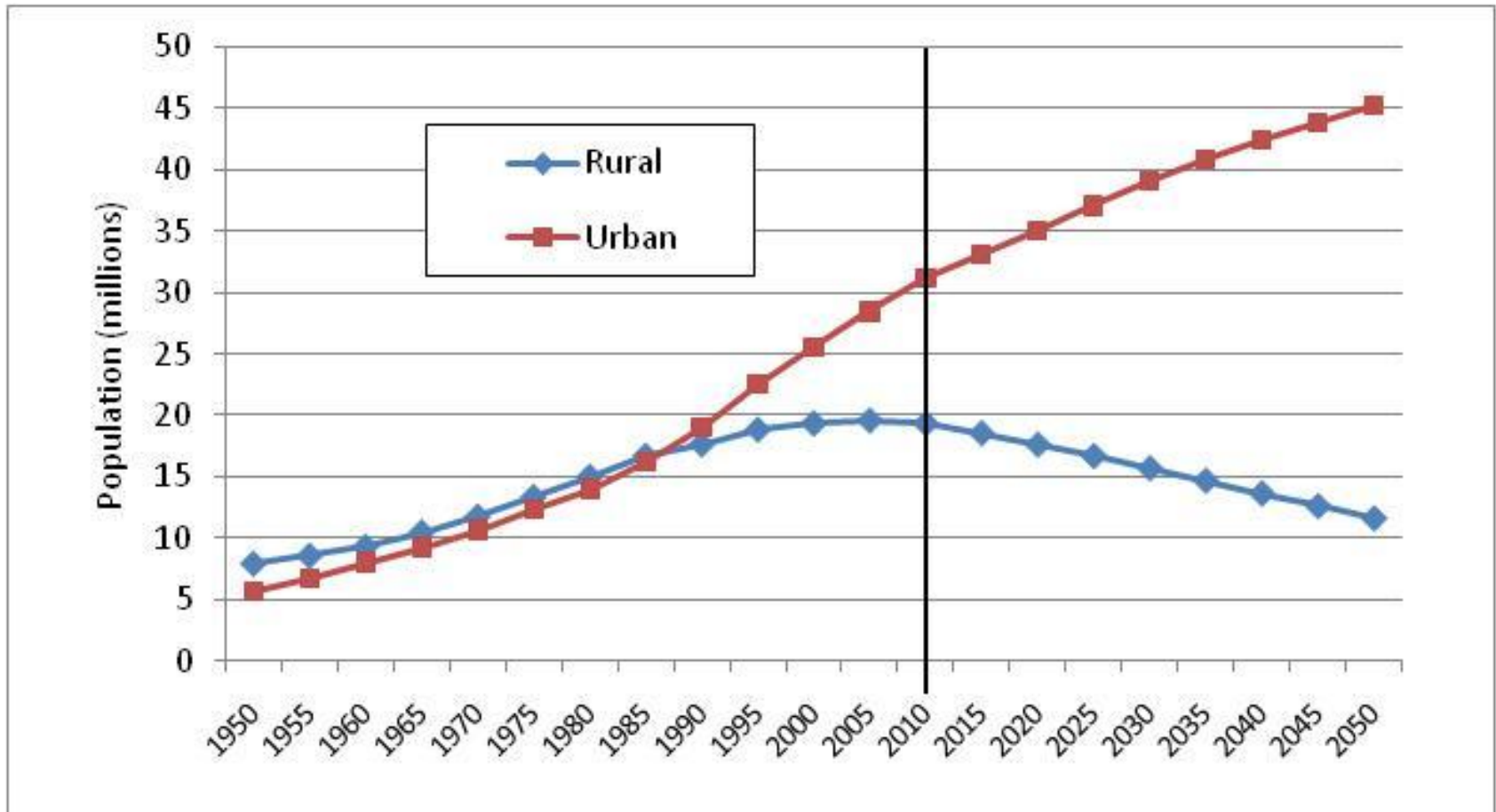
- However,
 - this vision of rural development has limited promise (it's certainly not enough to halt rural-to-urban migration)
 - while urban dev't tends to result in residential opportunities that are unaffordable, creating 'indigency' as well as unmet expectations

'Informal settlement' – here to stay



Source: Stats SA, OHS (1995-1999) and GHS (re-based) (2002-2009)

...not least because of prevailing (accelerating?)
migration trends



Source: UN, 2009, *World Population Prospects 2008*

- Major question/challenge: if we can't keep up by providing well-planned RDP settlements, how do we prefer to accommodate this process?
 - Dense extra-legal squatter settlements on fringes of cities and towns?
 - Peri-urban settlements which allow for tenure security, multiple-livelihoods, and self-provisioning of decent housing?

Possible clues to a different approach?

1 Munzhedzi

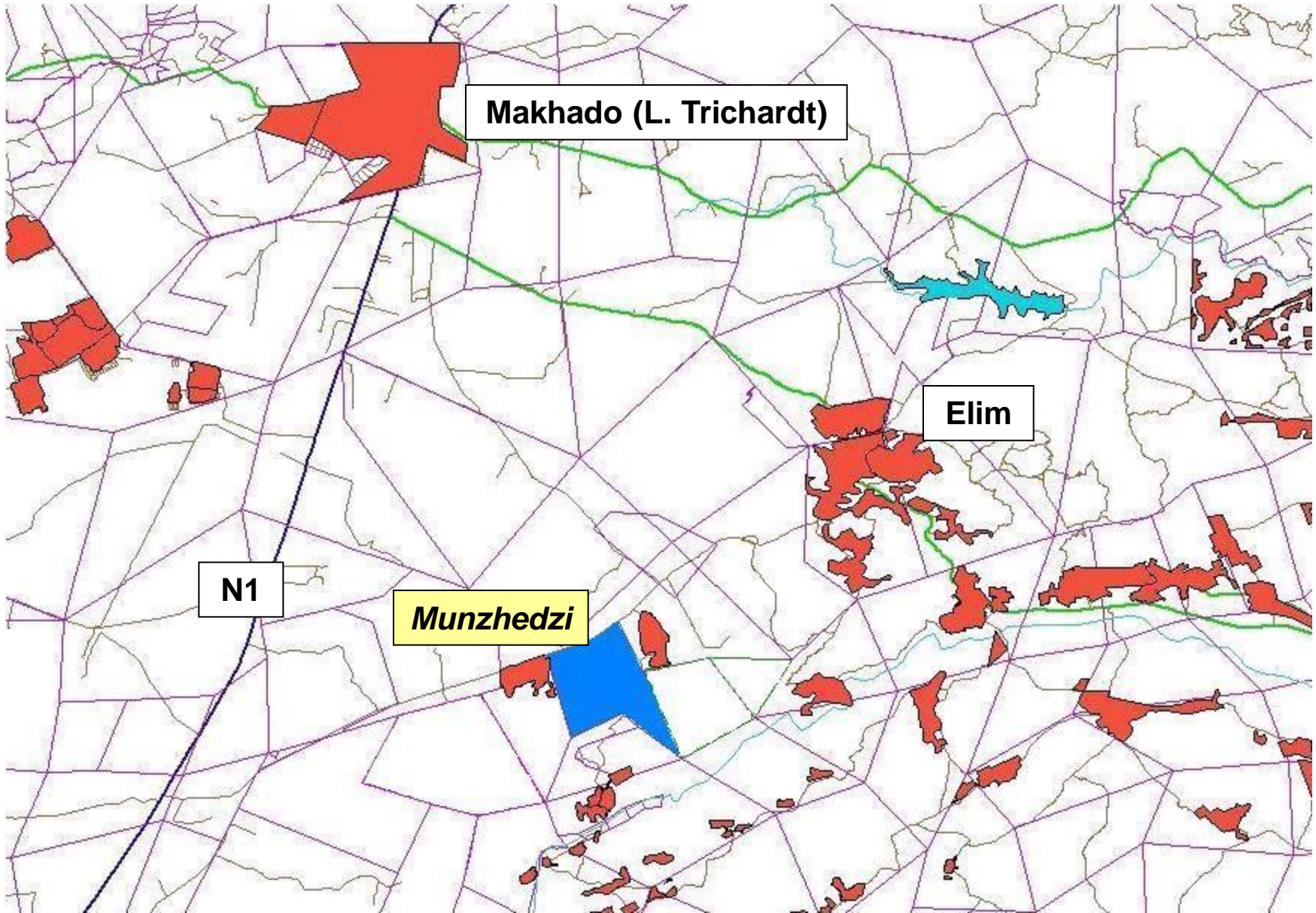
- Restitution project in Limpopo 'gone wrong'
- 1600 HA of land claimed by group of 600 HHs
- But invasion began around 2000, and now 1000 mostly non-claimant households have settled there, mainly from nearby villages but also from further afield



Munzhedzi



- Why?
 - Good soil and rain
 - *Location location location!* – easy access to Elim and Makhado town
- Note: significant investment in own-built homes
- Meanwhile, Elim is a growing economic and service hub
 - Booming food trade
 - Booming informal sector
 - Rapid population growth facilitated by (mainly) ‘customary’ tenure system
- What happened at Munzhedzi complements what’s happening to Elim, and vice versa: the ‘Greater Elim Non-Metropolitan Area’!



Makhado (L. Trichardt)

Elim

N1

Munzhedzi

2 The Elim food economy

- Pre-2007: subsistence farming; a few hundred small-scale fruit & veg vendors mainly supplied by white commercial farmers (residual); and shopping trips to supermarkets in Makhado town
- 2007: mall built in Elim (why? because there's a market!); anchor tenant = Spar
- 2008: Spar's fruit & veg manager reduces orders from 'Spar central', and starts buying from local small-scale black farmers. Why? Freshness, appropriate scale and lower transport costs.

- 2009: 75% of Spar's fruit & veg bought locally, > R5 million income to local black farmers; Elim now has a 'local food economy'
- Is the same thing happening in other 'boom towns' such as Nongoma, Engcobo, etc? If not, why not?

3 Study of women's tenure rights in Amajuba, KZN (Walker, Aliber, Nkosi, 2008)

- Range of opportunities to acquire 'own place'
- Range of tenure options
- Range of service levels & affordability





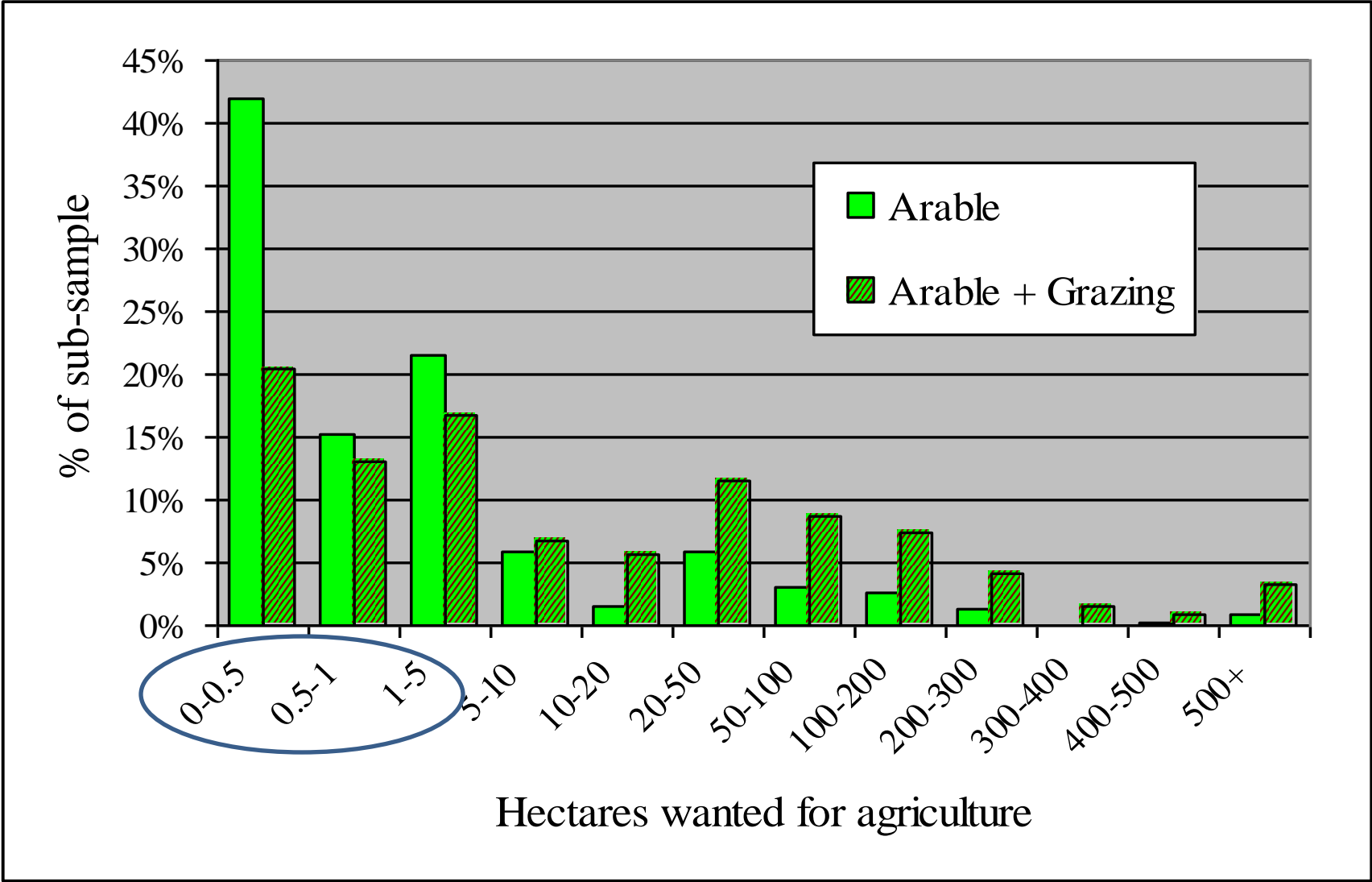
Where's the 'centre'?

4 The under-recognised nature of land demand (hh survey conducted in Limpopo, FS, and EC; HSRC 2006)

‘What would you say is the most important reason for your household to have more land?’

	Farm dwellers	Comm.	Urban formal	Urban informal
To grow food	58%	69%	51%	54%
To generate income	17%	12%	14%	13%
To have a secure place to stay	14%	12%	32%	32%
To use as collateral	0%	1%	0%	0%
To get back what was taken	1%	4%	1%	0%
Other	11%	2%	2%	1%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%

Distribution of demand for agricultural land



Source: HSRC, 2006

- So?
 - Predominant demand for land is consistent with what we see at Munzhedzi (and Blaubosch) – small plots for food and tenure security
 - Complements idea of densifying settlement around cities and dynamic towns

Tentative conclusions

- Maybe we can't stop 'rural-to-urban' migration, but perhaps we can re-define it and 'distribute' it better:
 - using land reform to re-configure space
 - building competence to support appropriate peri-urban development, including appropriate tenure
 - Including a focus on dynamic small towns in ex-Bantustans

Research/policy questions

- What is the nature of the existing livelihood strategies pursued by poor and marginalized rural and peri-urban people?
- How are these strategies spatially configured in relation to economic opportunities, governance frameworks, transport networks and commodity networks?
- To what extent do existing development visions, local economic plans and planning processes, and forms of governance support these pathways out of poverty?
- What are the concrete changes or adaptations that can be made to policy in order to support viable pathways out of poverty in marginal economies in South Africa's peri-urban and rural settlements?

Thank you