

# Intersection of Youth Livelihoods and Agriculture in Africa



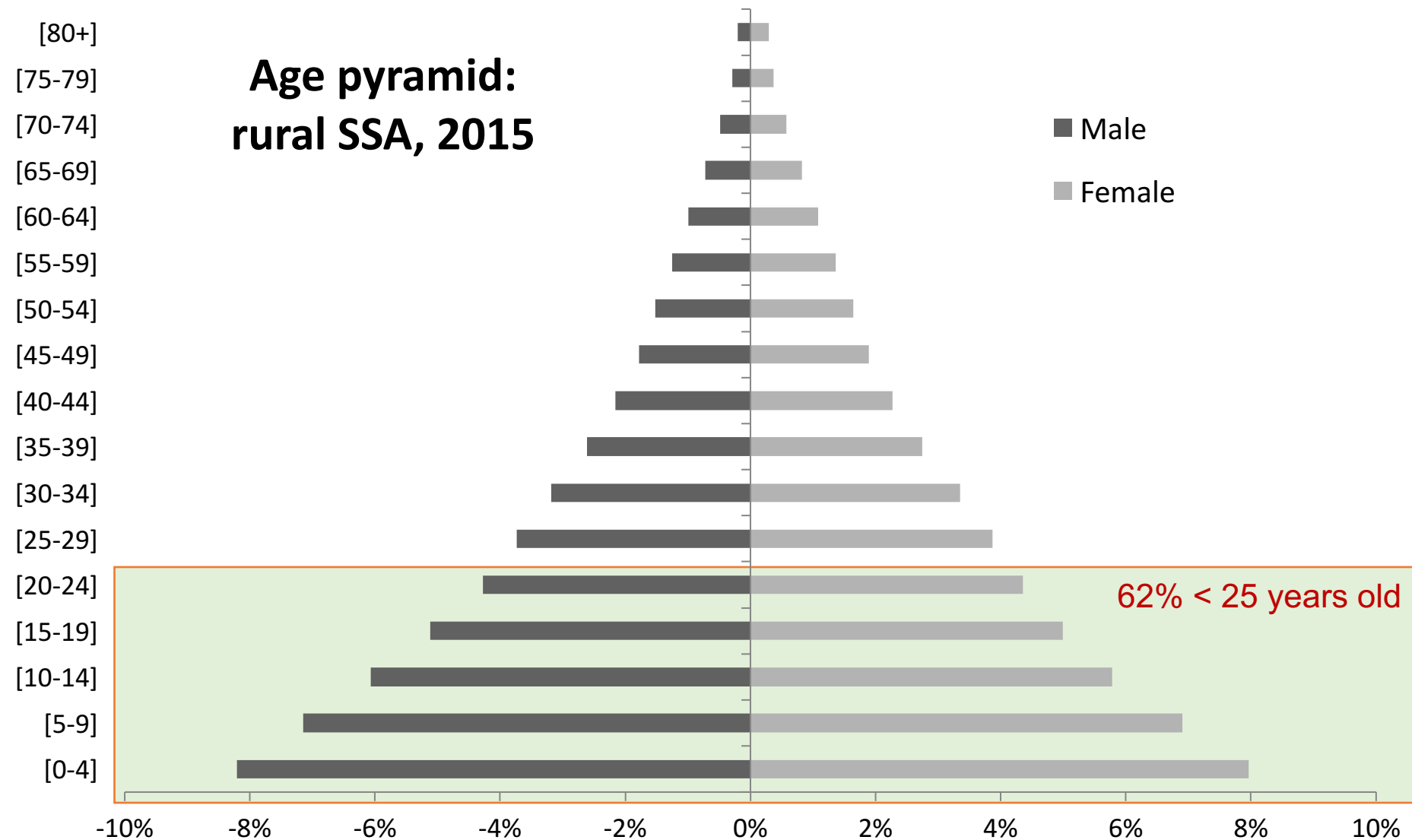
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Michigan State University

Keynote Presentation at the 4th Annual ReNAPRI Stakeholders Conference  
Cape Town, South Africa  
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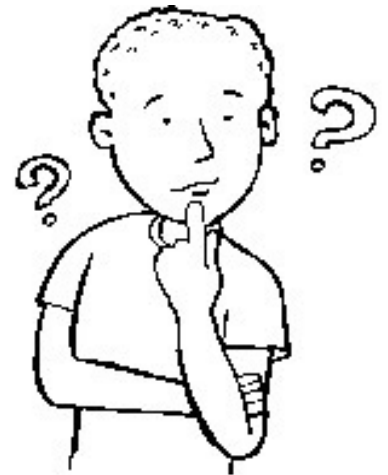
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# Youth bulge: Looming employment challenge

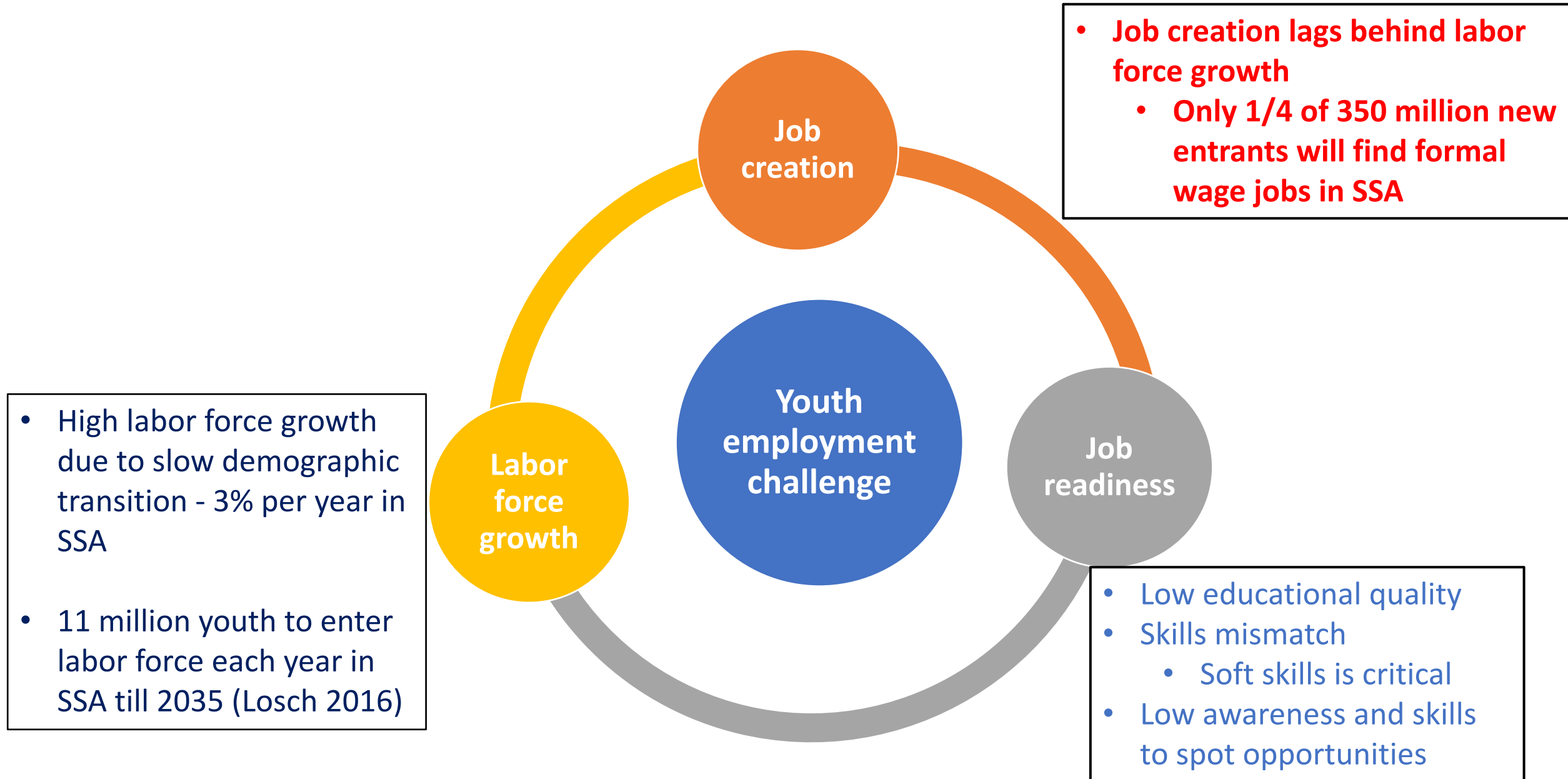


# Key Questions

- What is the nature of the youth employment challenge?
- What is the role of agriculture and food system in promoting youth livelihoods?
- What can governments do to enhance youth livelihoods?



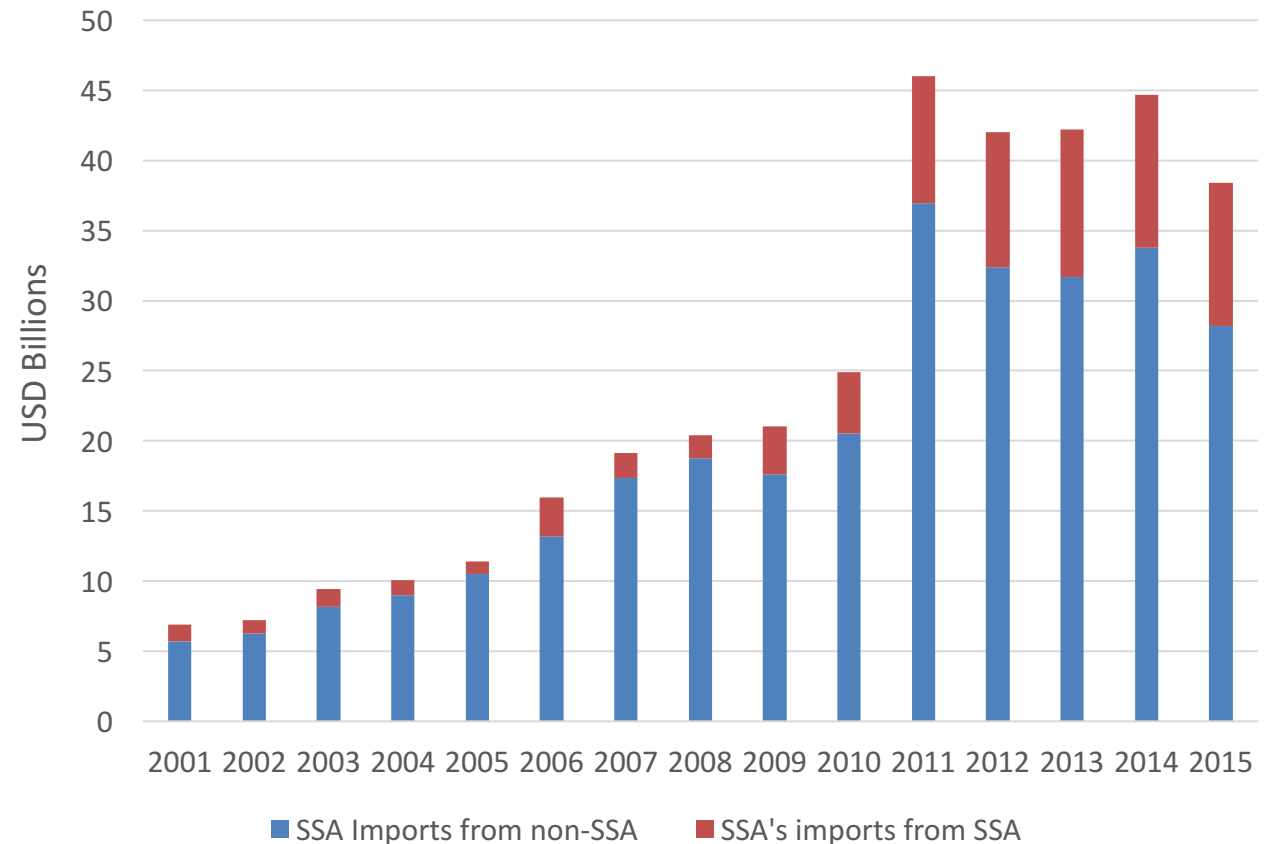
# Nature of Youth Employment Challenge in Africa



Agrifood system: A sector of opportunity for job creation and economic transformation

# 1. Growing demand for food and agricultural products

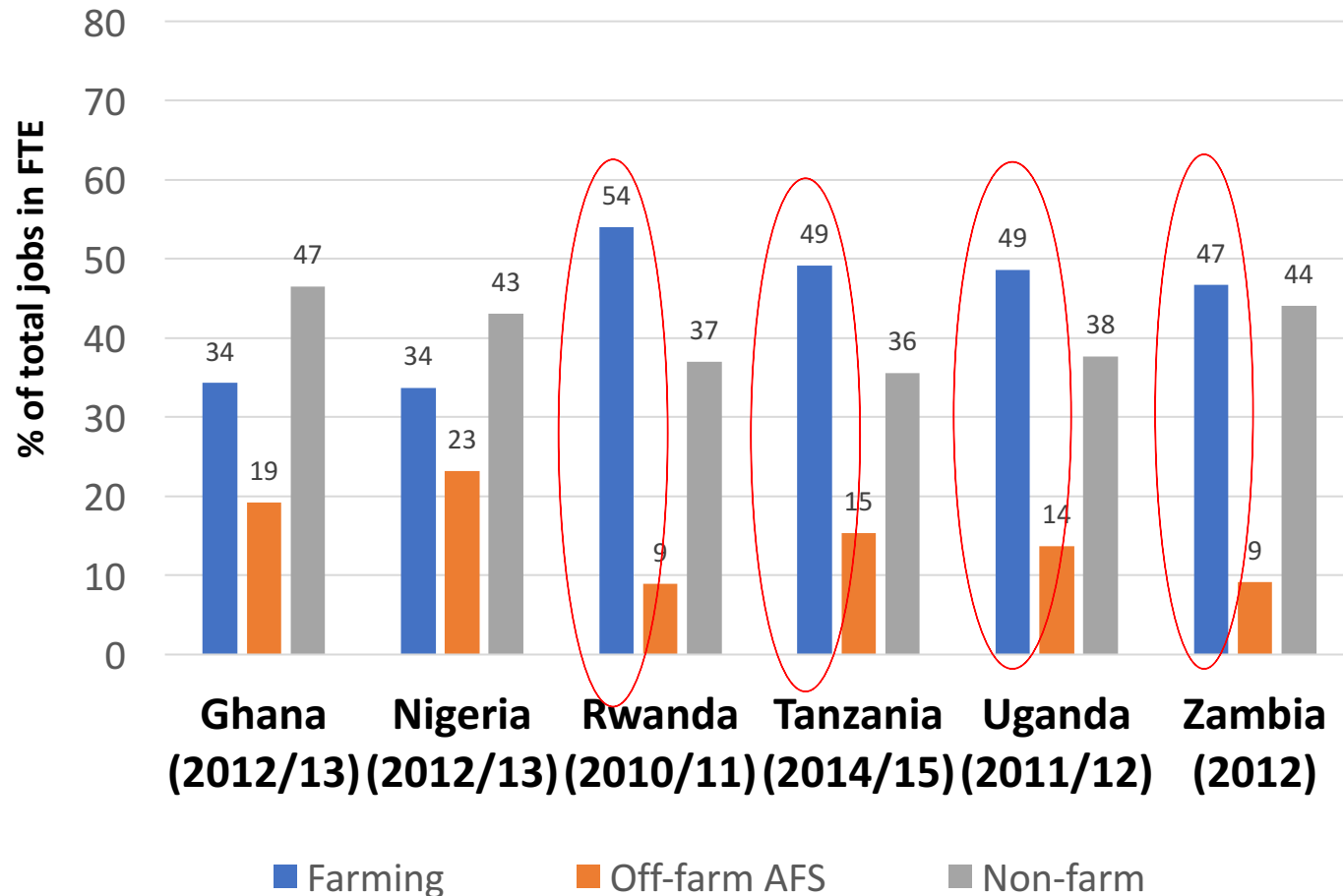
- Food demand to expand by 55% in SSA  
(World Bank, 2015)
- Rising reliance on imported foods
  - SSA food import rose from US\$6 billion to US\$ 45 billion between 2001 and 2014
- Opportunity to accelerate economic growth and job creation in import-substituting local production and marketing.



Source: ReNAPRI (2017)

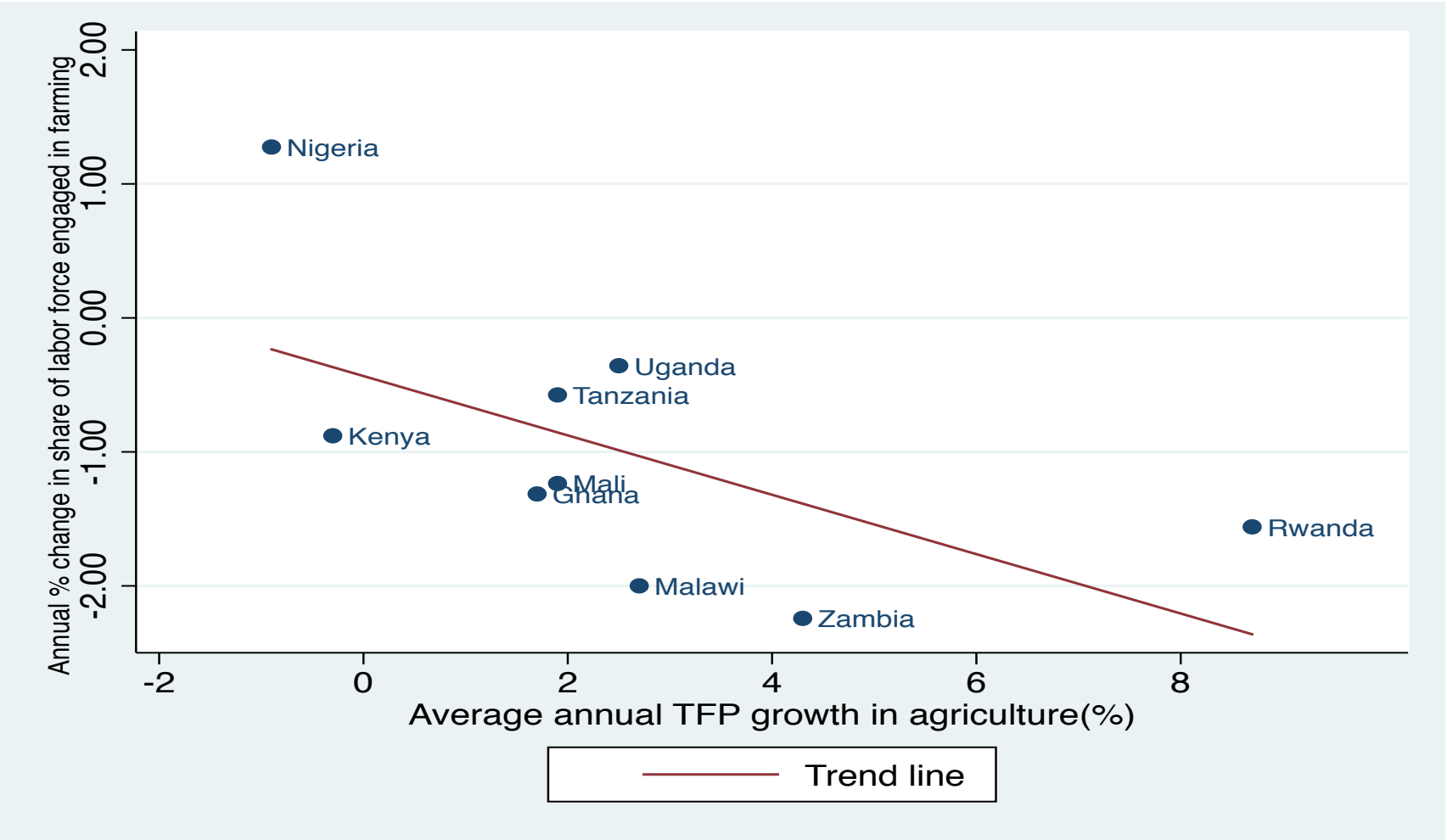
## 2. Farming is single largest employer of young people

Sectoral employment shares of total jobs in FTE



- Share of total FTE jobs
  - Labor force (15-64 years): **34%-54%**
  - Youth (15-24 years): **40%-63%**
  - Young adults (25-34 years): **25%-49%**
- Investment to improve productivity and profitability of farming will affect the greatest number of people and assure broad-based and inclusive economic growth

# 3. Performance of agriculture will influence rate of job growth in the overall economy

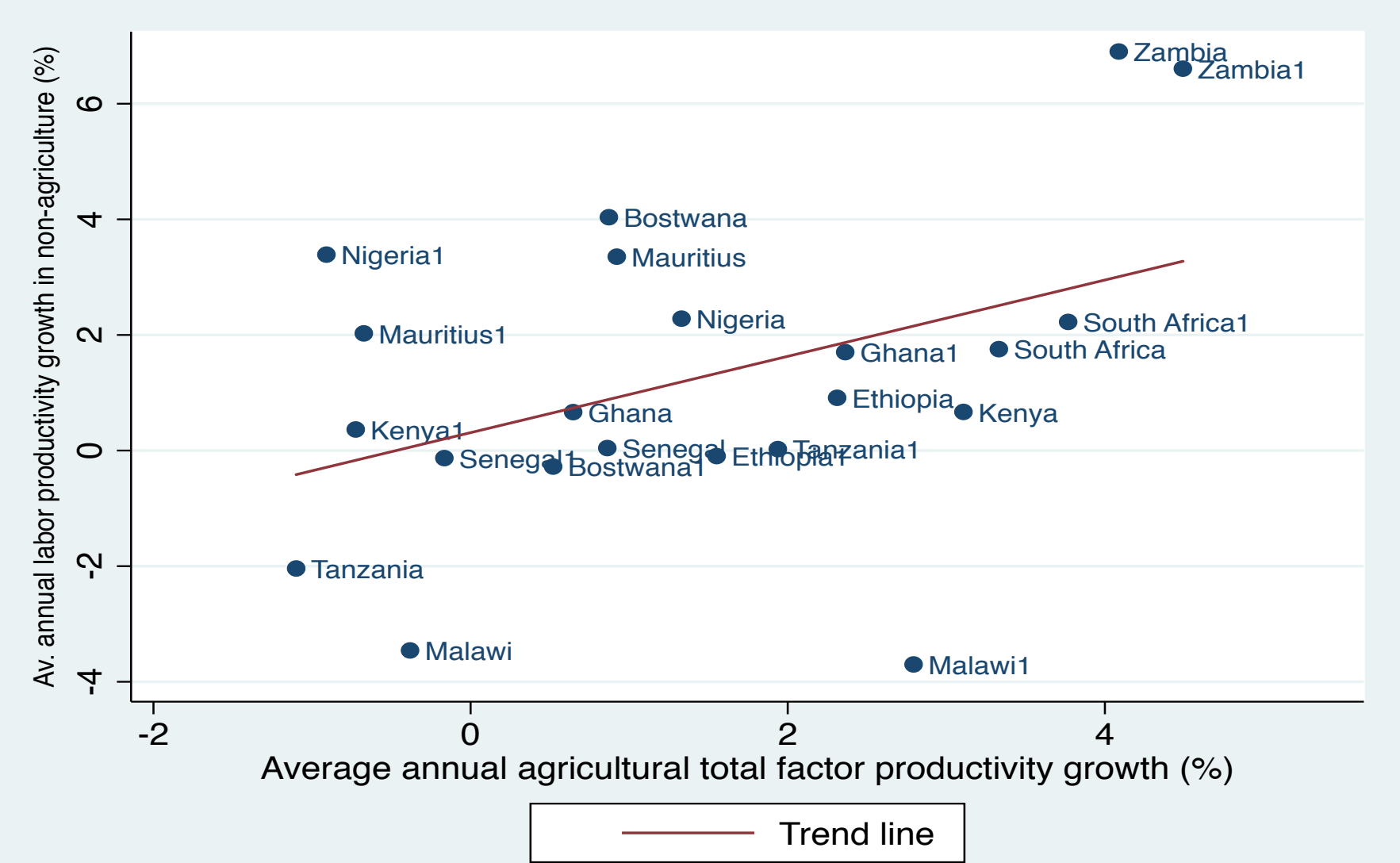


Farming's employment share declining most rapidly among countries enjoying highest agricultural productivity growth

Source: Yeboah and Jayne, (2017)



# Non-farm labor productivity growth highest among countries with high agricultural productivity growth



Source: Yeboah and Jayne, 2008

	Fixed effect model	
	(i)	(ii)
Log lag labor productivity in agriculture	-0.133*	-0.284**
	(-2.15)	(-2.77)
Log lag labor productivity in non-agriculture	-0.0121	-0.176
	(-0.23)	(-1.89)
<b>Other covariates</b>		
Index of governance (lagged)	-0.0205	0.0698
	(-0.45)	(1.06)
Time trend	-0.00961***	-0.00458
	(-4.62)	(-0.96)
Population density	-0.00181	-0.00475
	(-1.51)	(-1.89)
Road density	-	-0.000260
	-	(-0.21)
Constant	-0.519**	0.0690
	(-3.07)	(0.20)
	-	
Number of observations	161	78
Number of Countries	11	10
Adjusted/Overall R-square	0.71	0.87
Time period	1995-2011	1995-2011

Lagged labor productivity in agriculture is a key driver of observed decline in agriculture employment share

Source: Yeboah and Jayne, 2017

( see: [http://foodsecuritypolicy.msu.edu/uploads/files/CrossCountry/Yeboah\\_and\\_Jayne\\_2017-\\_AGA\\_article.pdf](http://foodsecuritypolicy.msu.edu/uploads/files/CrossCountry/Yeboah_and_Jayne_2017-_AGA_article.pdf))

# What should governments do?

- Central plank of a comprehensive youth employment strategy: interventions to raise agricultural productivity growth
  - Create new opportunities in farming
  - Multiplier effects: performance of farming will influence the pace of growth in non-farm and AFS jobs
- Strategic policies include
  - Invest in R&D and institutional capacity building to generate new knowledge
  - Develop robust and effective extension systems to facilitate access to productivity enhancing technologies
  - Improve coverage and quality of physical infrastructure (energy, road, communication)
  - Develop youth-centered programs to make farming profitable for young people
    - Facilitate access to productivity enhancing inputs (e.g. fertilizer), market, and resources (e.g. land, finance, labor-saving technologies)
    - Promote mentoring by successful farmers (youth mentors)

# What should governments do?

- Invest in education and skill development to upgrade skills of the labor force
  - Prepare youth to “spot” and take advantage of new job opportunities
  - Regular update of educational curriculum and approaches
- Invest in actionable research to address the data gaps on labor market issues and impact evaluation
  - What works well and how?
- Strengthen youth voice on decisions concerning them

We cannot always build the future for our youth, but we can build our youth for the future – Franklin D. Roosevelt

Thank you



Questions?