

**PROMOTING SOCIO-ECONOMIC RIGHTS  
THROUGH SURVEY EVIDENCE:  
A CASE STUDY OF LAND REFORM IN  
SOUTH AFRICA**



Human Sciences Research Council  
Pretoria, South Africa

HSRC RESEARCH OUTPUTS

4981

PRESENTATION AT THE INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR ON  
HUMAN RIGHTS INDICATORS 15 JUNE, SAO PAULO (2007)

# Outline

- Origins of the study
- Overview of land reform in South Africa
- Study description
- Selected findings
- Reflections
- Conclusions

# **ORIGINS OF THE STUDY**

# 'METAGORA'

- An international initiative on developing survey methods to study human rights, democracy and governance
- Aim: to promote informed dialogue and evidenced-based policy-making
- One of several country-based 'pilot studies', examining different themes of local importance

# **OVERVIEW OF LAND REFORM IN SOUTH AFRICA**

# Background

- Long history of land dispossession and ‘separate development’ – colonialism, apartheid
- First fully democratic elections in 1994
- Land reform programme introduced in 1994/95 – target, reallocate 30% of commercial farmland to blacks by 2014
- New Constitution in 1996
  - Land reform specified in the Bill of Rights

# The 3 'branches' of land reform

- **Land restitution** – the restoration of land, or alternative compensation, to victims of forced removals
- **Land redistribution** – state assistance to acquire private or state land, particularly for agriculture
- **Tenure reform** – the clarification and fortification of tenure rights, esp. in former homelands and coloured reserves

**STUDY**

**DESCRIPTION**



# **Purpose:**

- To consider land reform policy in relation to people's needs, aspirations and attitudes
  - I.e. focus is not on beneficiaries, i.e. not an impact analysis or M&E

# Methodology:

- Sample survey using structured questionnaire
- Four main 'settlement types' covered: farm dwellers, communal areas, urban formal and urban informal
- Total sample = 1279
- Three provinces (budget constraint)
- Fieldwork – November 2004 to March 2005

# Sampling strategy:

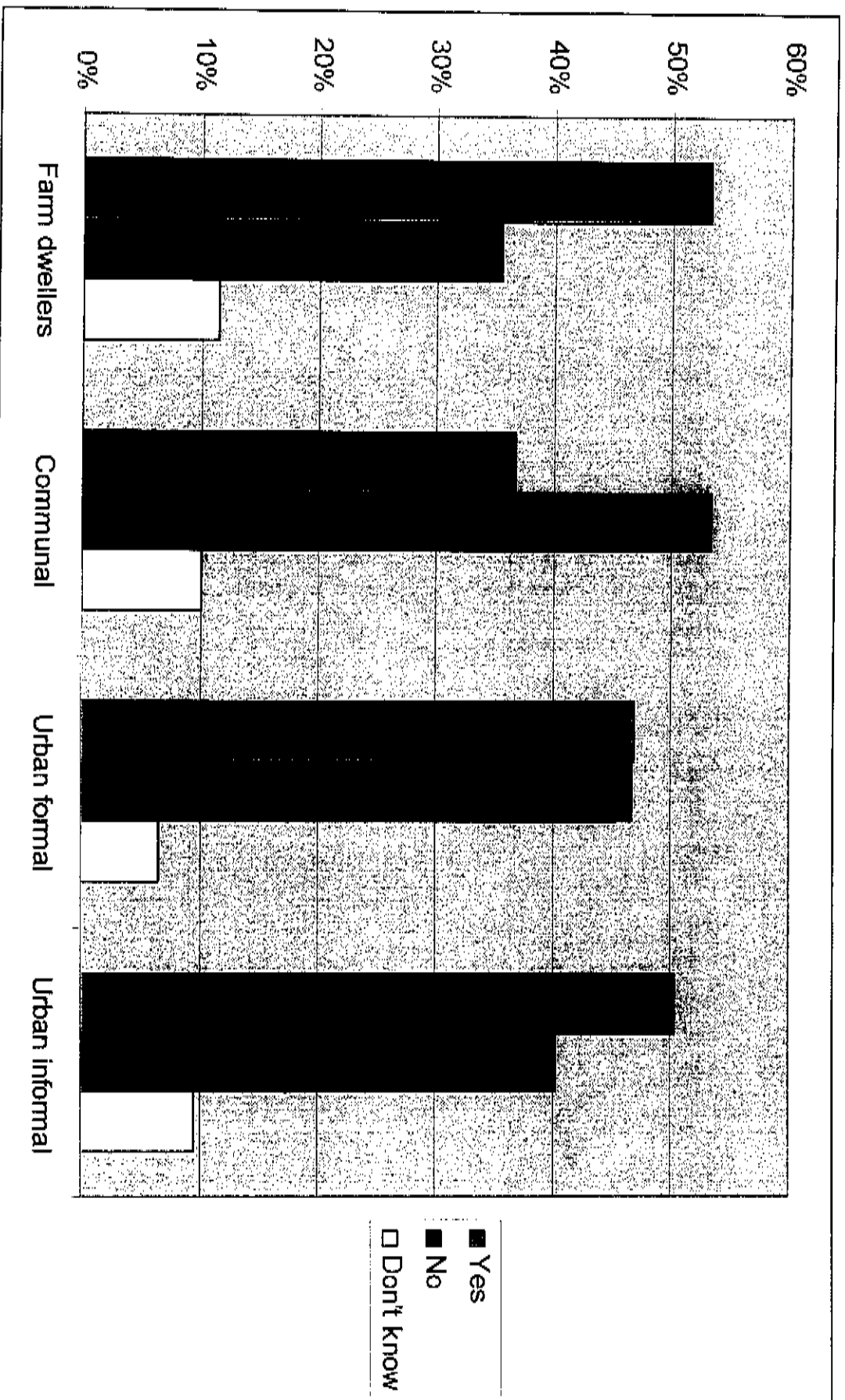
- Multi-stage stratified cluster (probability) sampling
- Strata:
  - Settlement type / ownership status
  - Province (Limpopo, Free State, Eastern Cape)
- Census-based sampling frame
- One respondent per HH, randomly selected from the present adult HH members – to ensure different HH perspectives

# Questionnaire structure:

- Personal and household profile
- Governance & democracy – attitudes & participation
- Current land access and land use
- Land loss and redress
- Land demand
- Knowledge/awareness of land reform
- Attitudes towards land reform policy
- Appraisal of land reform

# **SELECTED FINDINGS**

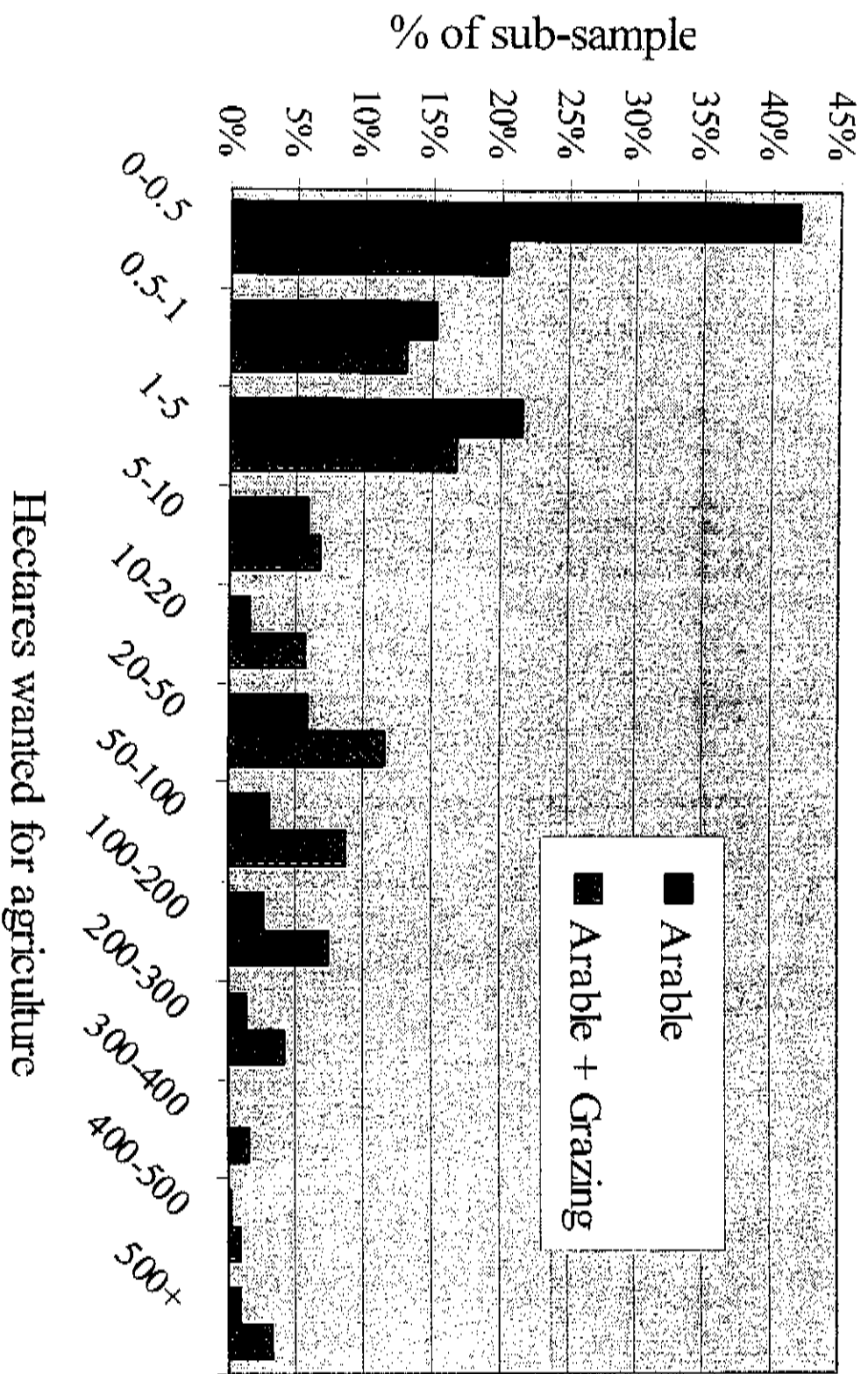
# **'Do you or your household presently need or want more land than you currently have?'**



**‘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





# Land supply through redistribution vs demand (hectares per beneficiary)

	Supply (2001-2005)	Demand (2004/05)
Median (Ha)	30 / Individual (=90-150 / HH)	4.5 / HH
Mean (Ha)	53 / Individual (=150-250 / HH)	71 / HH

# Land demand vis-à-vis income

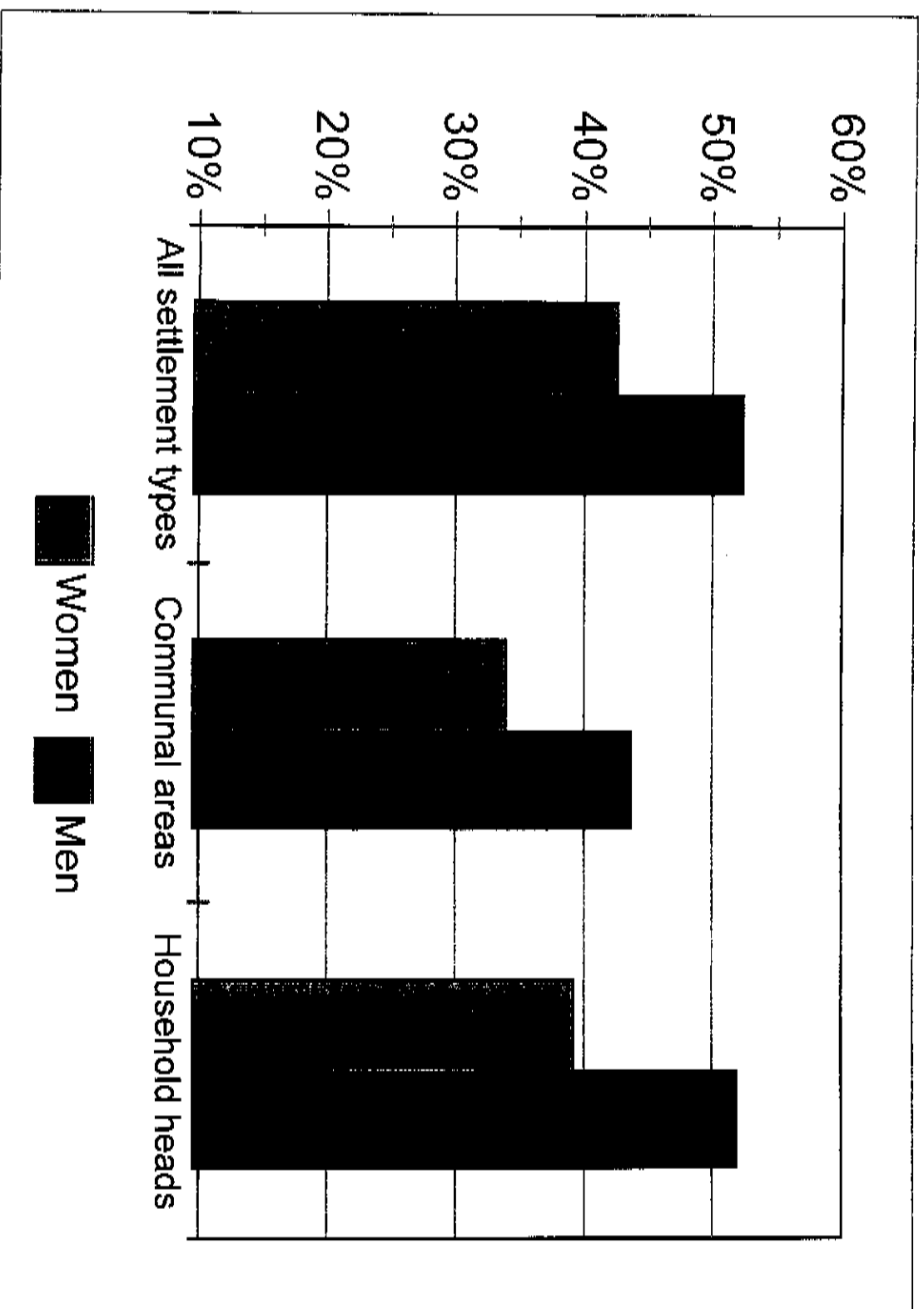
Income tercile	Median (Ha)	Mean (Ha)
Low	2.5	30
Middle	4.0	57
High	8.0	129

# Extrapolating land demand

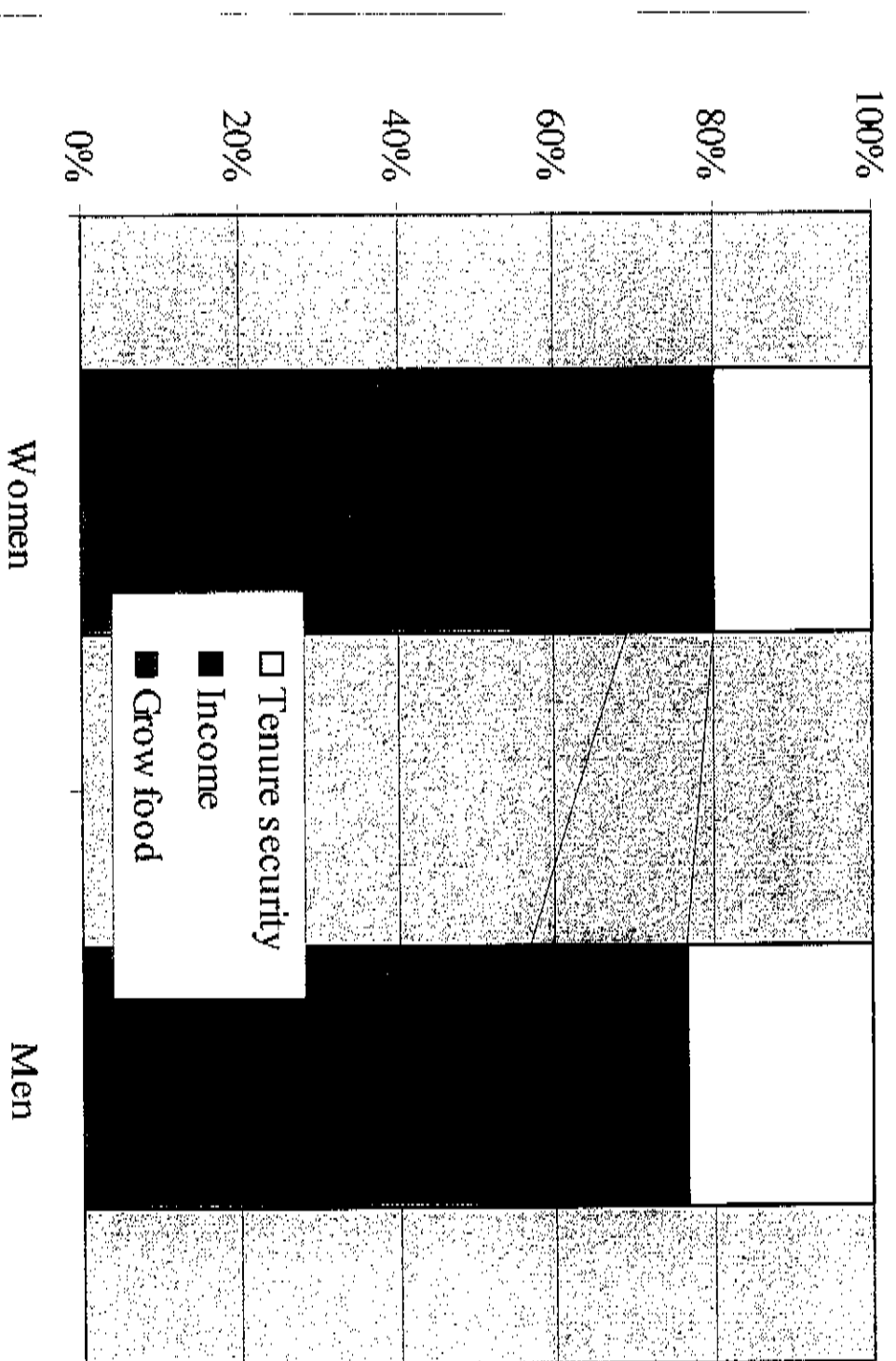
% who want land	42%
Extrap. total HHs in 3 provinces	1 212 131
...of whom want for 'agriculture'	740 187
Avg. amount of land wanted/HH	71 Ha
Extrap. land demanded	53 mn Ha*
Median amount of land wanted/HH	4.5 Ha
Extrap. land demanded if $\leq 2 \times$ median/HH	13 mn HA

\*Versus 27 mn hectares of commercial farmland in the three provinces

# Land demand by gender



# Reason for wanting land, by gender



## **Knowledge of land reform in relation to average monthly HH income and education**

	HH income	% finished school
Have heard about it & know well what it is about	2 964	39%
Have heard about it & know a little bit what it is about	2 359	25%
Have heard about the programme but do not know what it is about	1 672	9%
Have not heard about it but know about land reform	1 945	21%
Have not heard about the programme	1 709	12%

**‘Are you an active member of the landless people’s movement?’**

	Farm dwellers	Communal	Urban formal	Urban informal
Yes	0.9%	1.5%	3.3%	2.8%
No	99.1%	98.5%	96.7%	97.2%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

# REFLECTIONS



# **Why is policy not more pro-poor?**

- Conflicting notions as to who are 'the poor'?
- Anxiety re whether 'the poorest' can benefit?
- Influence of white/black commercial farmer lobbies?
- Lack of concrete information at formative stage of policy development?

## **How is a study like this is useful?**

- A means of understanding 'what people want' without relying on interest groups
- Something to discuss/debate among stakeholders – enhance cooperation at national level
- Quant estimates and analytical insights

## **What has the study's impact been?**

- **Difficult to pinpoint, however:**
  - **Some change in thinking within commercial farmer lobby (Agri-SA)**
  - **Contributing to groundswell of feeling that policy must become more pro-poor**

# CONCLUSIONS

- Lack of good info has meant:
  - policy has been operating in a vacuum
  - debates are stymied
- Better appreciation of land need would imply:
  - a more pro-poor approach to redistribution
  - a greater chance of realising socio-economic rights as stipulated in the Constitution