

Generational Dynamics of Agricultural Intensification in Malawi: Challenges for the Youth and Elderly Smallholder Farmers

By

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Background

- This presentation is based on a DFID funded SAIRLA project with focus on sustainable intensification (2016-2020).
- SAIRLA (Sustainable Agricultural Intensification Research and Learning in Africa), emphasises the social and environmental consequences of agricultural intensification.
- Intensification: it's about increasing agricultural productivity while improving environmental services. Addresses issues of equity such as gender and generation
- Strategy: efforts to link key research findings with NLA's thematic areas, especially land and extension services

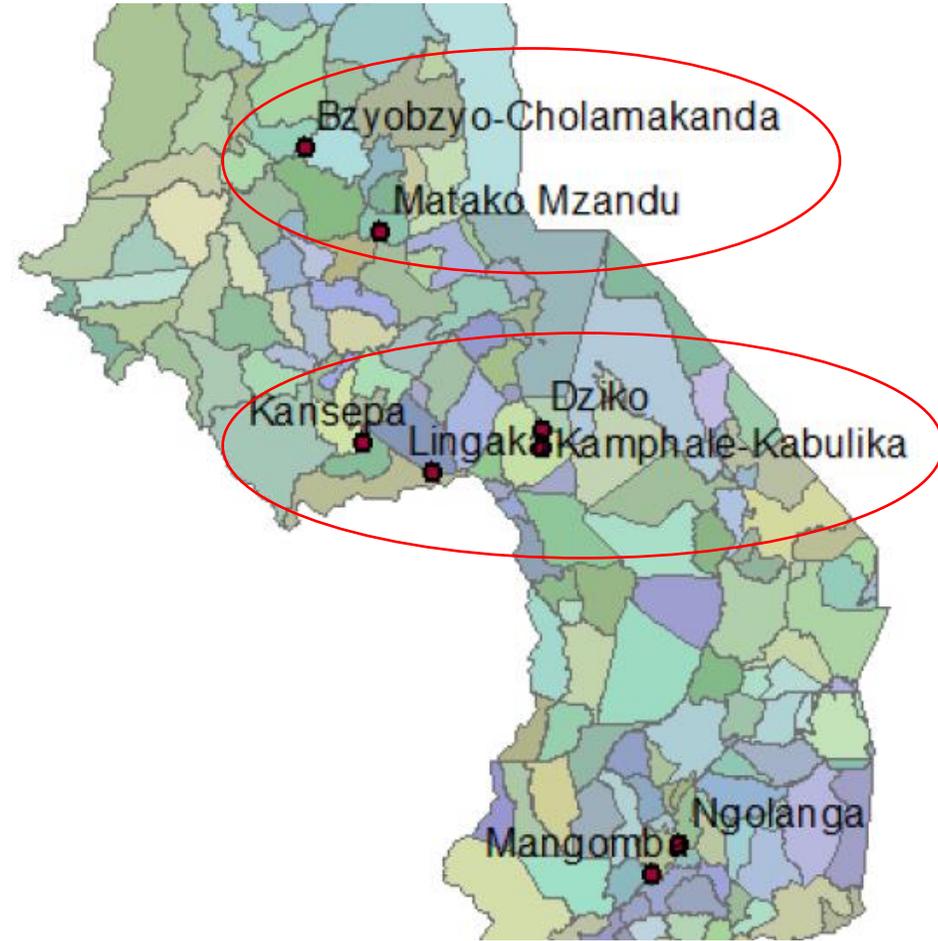
Collaborative Research Team

- Prof Agnes Andersson Djurveldt, Lund University, Sweden, Principal Investigator and lead researcher
- Dr. Karin Lindsjo, Lund University, Sweden, researcher
- Dr. Genesis Tambang-Yengoh, Lund University, Sweden, researcher
- Prof. Wapulumuka Mulwafu, University of Malawi, team leader for research in Malawi
- Dr. Miriam Joshua, University of Malawi, researcher

Malawi research sites

Ntchisi

Dedza



Research Questions

Generational Dynamics of Agricultural Intensification

- 1) To what extent are youth and elderly farmers participating in agricultural intensification?
- 2) What challenges do youth and elderly experience in relation to agricultural intensification?



SAMPLE

Household survey:

406 households from 8 villages

youth, middle, elderly

2008, 2013, 2017

The qualitative dataset, 2018:

From 3 villages

59 interviews

1) Youth headed households

2) Youth who live in households headed by others

3) Elderly headed households

9 FDGs (gender and youth organizations)

Study Limitations

- The study used a very small sample and therefore need to be cautious about making generalisations
- Research was conducted in Malawi, Tanzania and Zambia (using same instruments) in order to allow for comparative analysis

Mean cultivated area (ha) per age group

Ha

1,4

1,2

1

0,8

0,6

0,4

0,2

0

2008

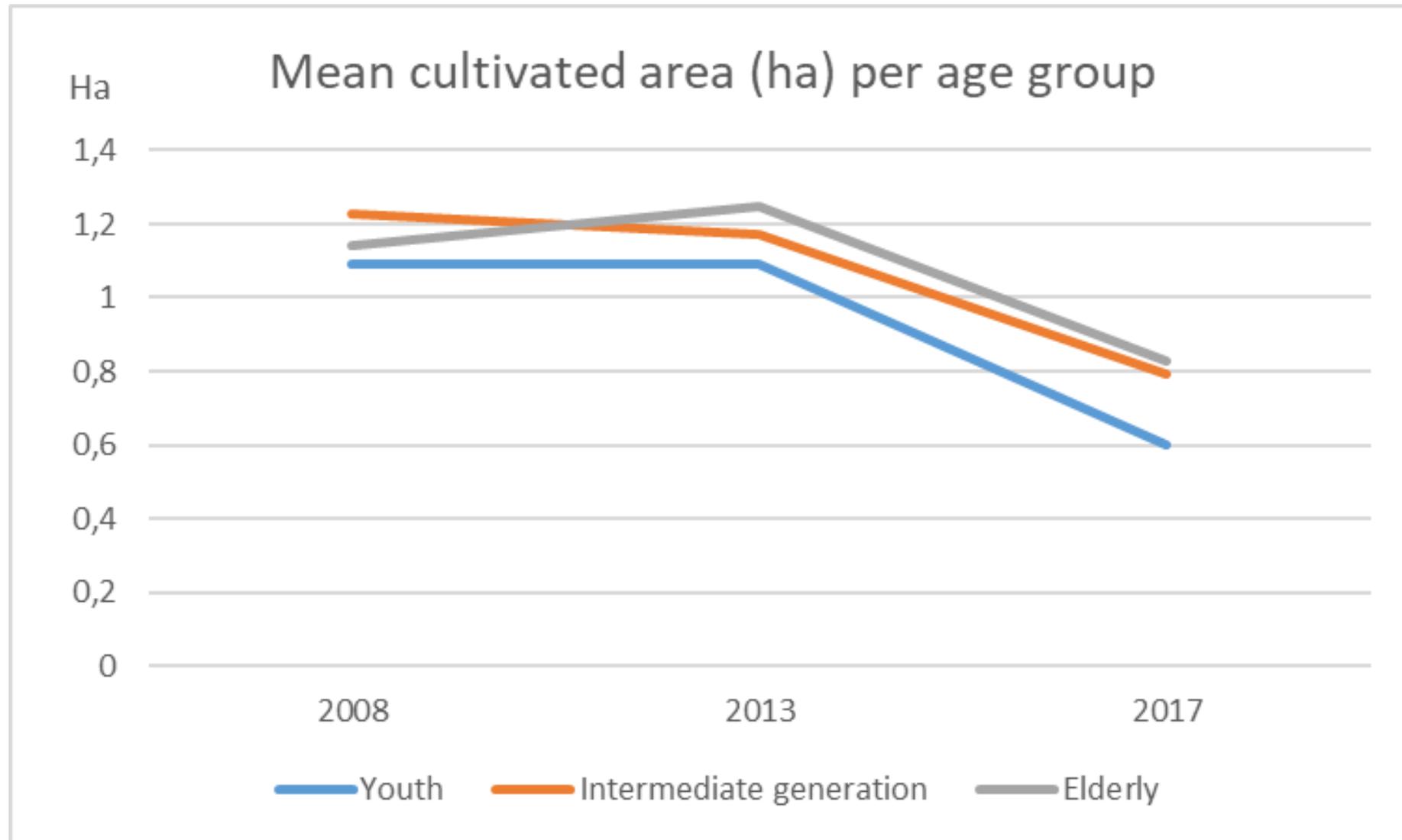
2013

2017

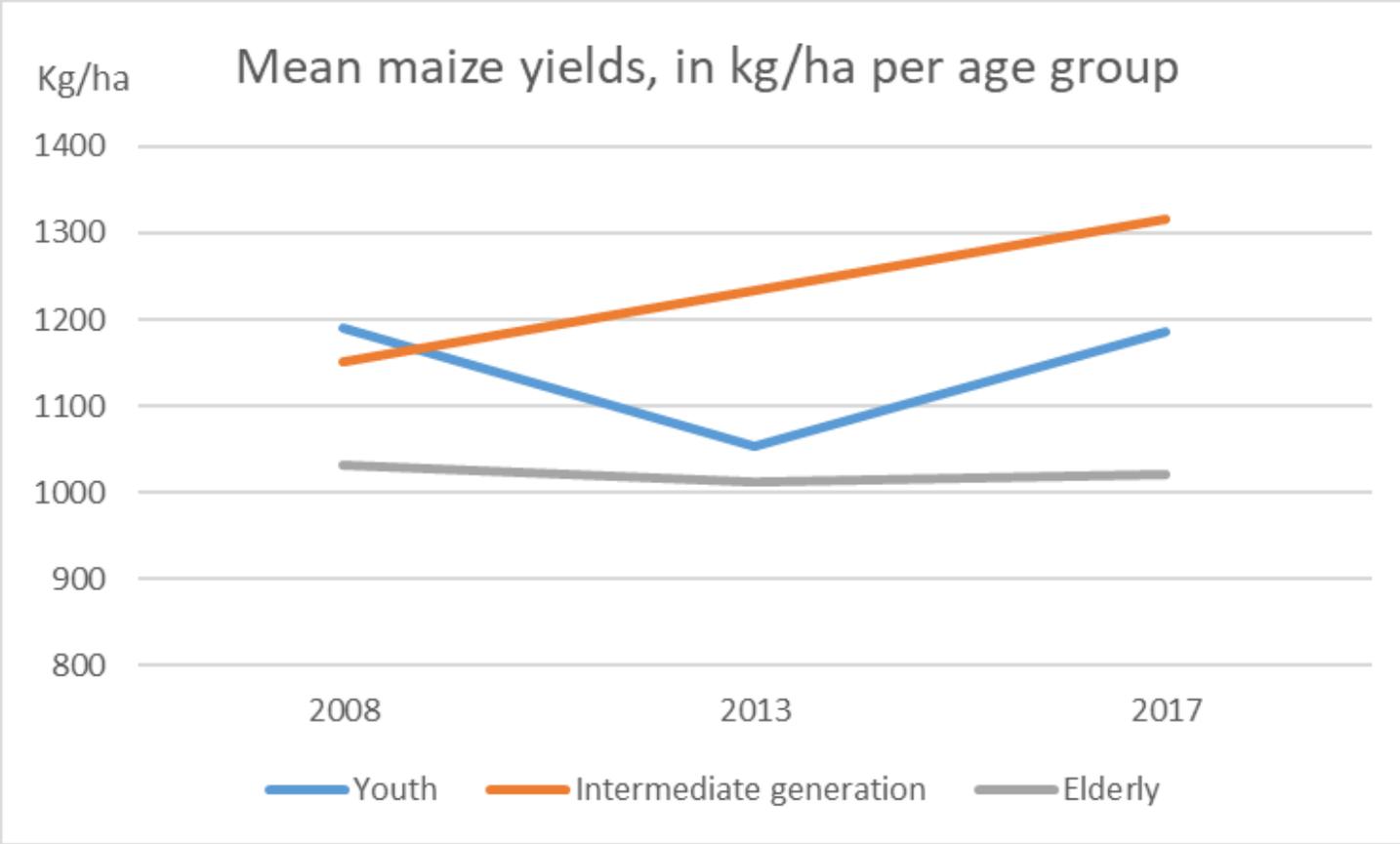
— Youth

— Intermediate generation

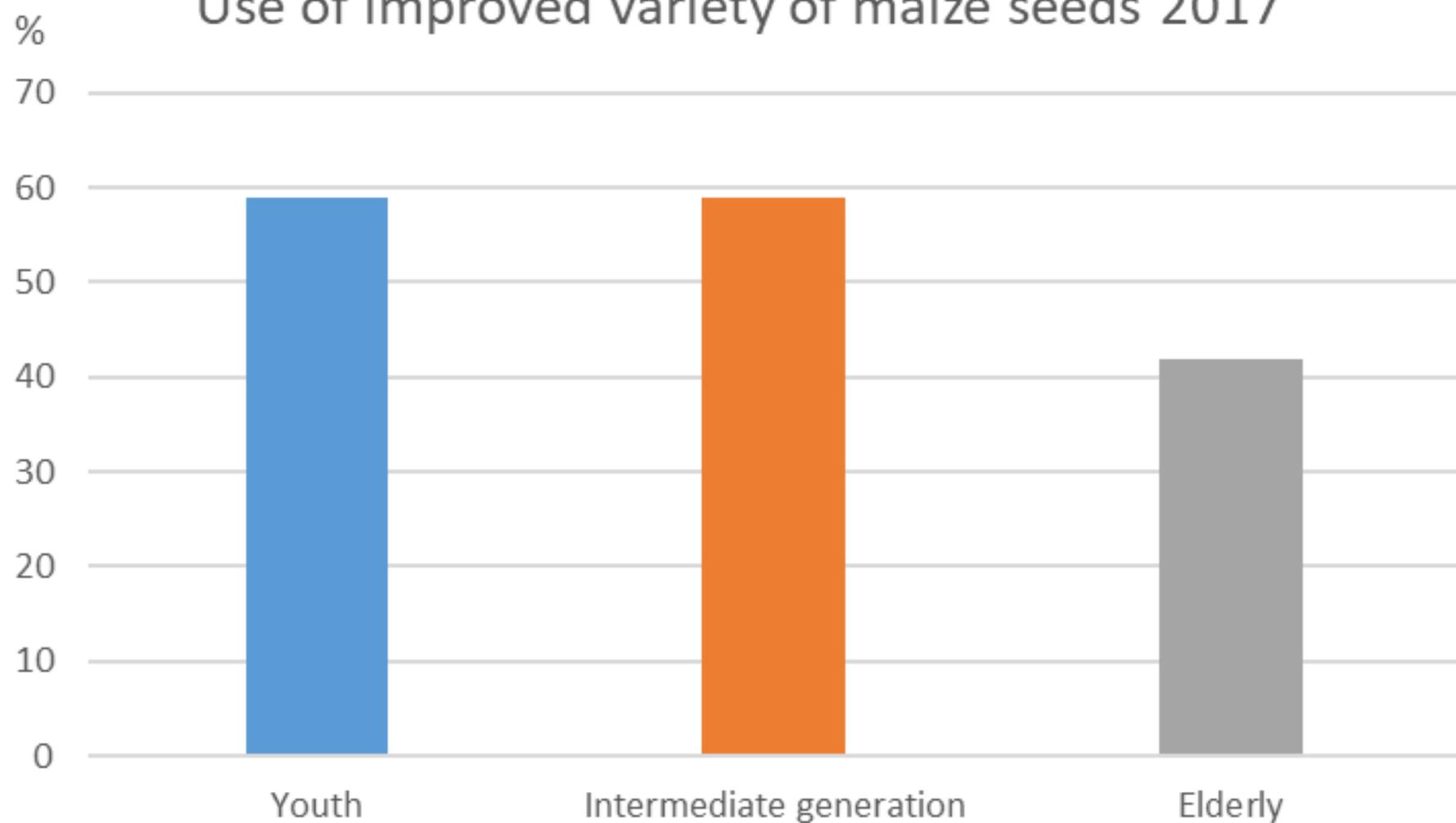
— Elderly



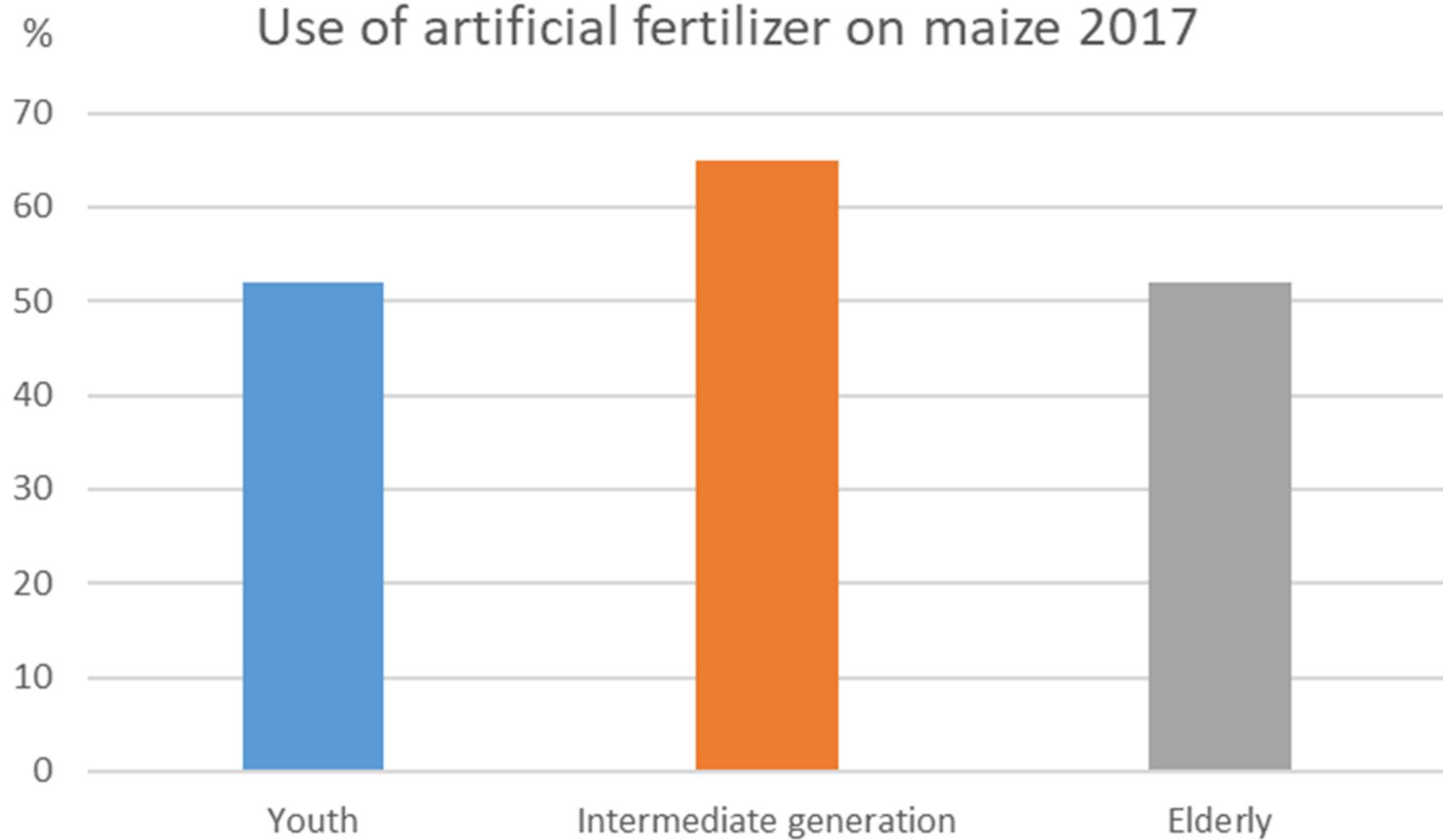
MAIZE



Use of improved variety of maize seeds 2017

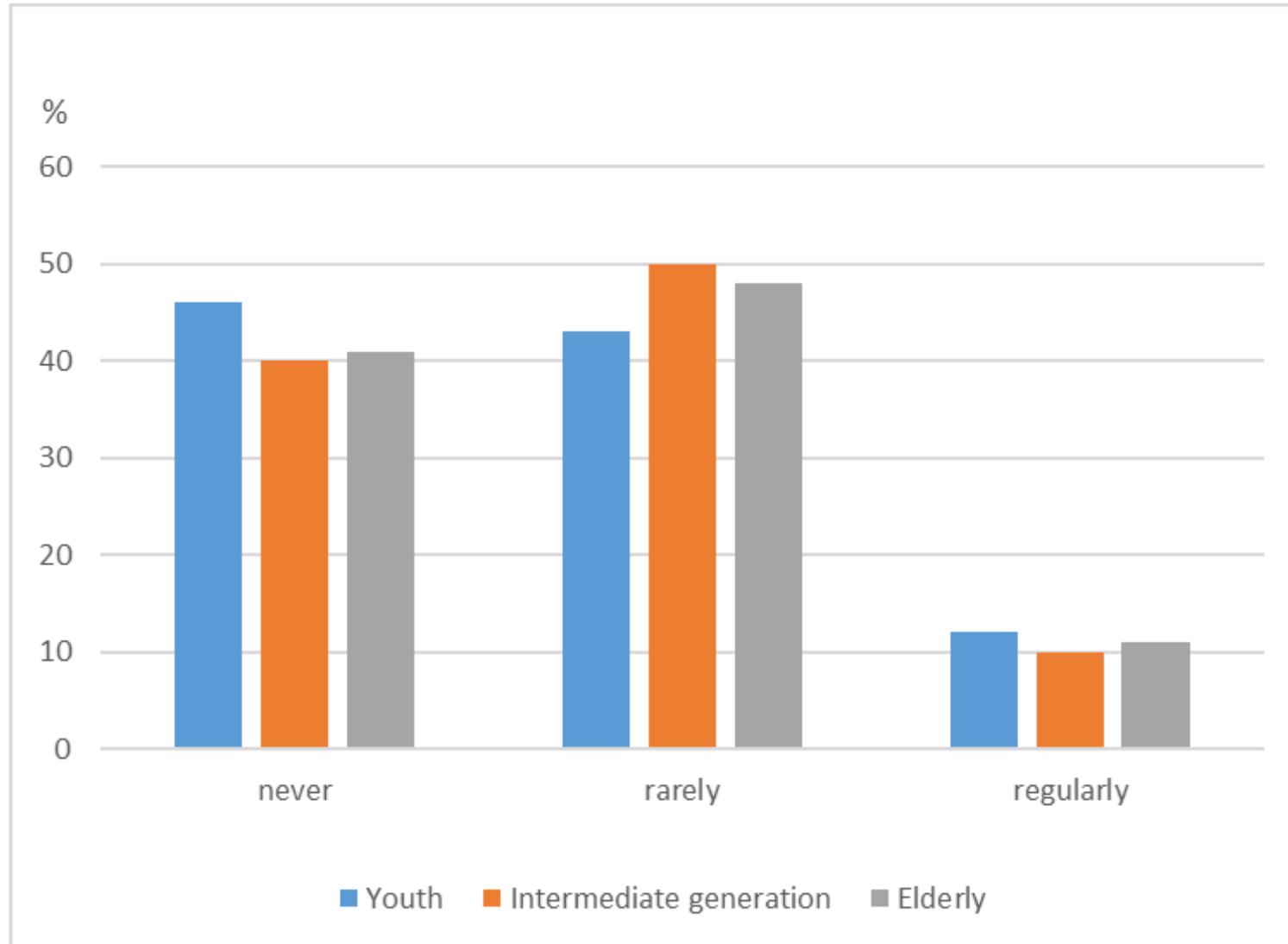


Use of artificial fertilizer on maize 2017



Extension service

Have you received advice from extension staff (governmental) during the last year?



YOUTH



Demographic challenges:

Young population – 83.8% under 40

Annual population growth 2.9%

Population will double in 24 years

Perceptions on youth

Full of energy
and
hardworking

Lazy, untrustworthy
and unproductive

CHALLENGES FOR YOUTH

Main challenge: Access to land

Parents prefer to rent out land rather than give it to their children when they are still young

Rent

Farm family land for which they have limited control

Hard to establish a livelihood on their own, difficult to become independent young adults

Other challenges: access to farm inputs, access to credit

ELDERLY

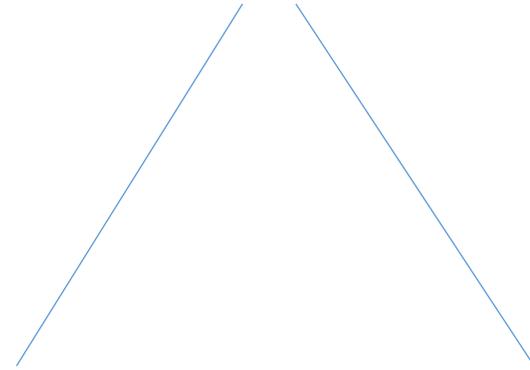
Life expectancy rate:

1980: 44 years

2016: 63 years

Perceptions on elderly

Lacking energy, weaker, less productive



Full of wisdom, someone to turn to for advice, respected

Someone who practice witchcraft, any misfortune in the village is to be blamed on the elderly

CHALLENGES FOR ELDERLY

- Not able to work as hard as in previous years
- Not able to follow new methods of farming such as crop rotation, use of improved varieties and zero tillage
- Reduced variety of crops



Productivity has decreased

Increased problems of food security

INTENSIFYING FARMING?

Four obstacles:

- 1) Access to land
- 2) Lack of farming inputs such as fertilizer and improved seeds
- 3) Access to credit/markets
- 4) Lack of extension services

Conclusion

Youth and elderly are not participating in agricultural intensification.

Access to land is decreasing

Yields remain low

Low use of agricultural inputs

Access to extension service is low

For further information

- Since 2002, AFRINT team has researched agricultural intensification in nine countries in sub-Saharan Africa on the basis of household-level data for 4,000 smallholder farms. Afrint III was launched in 2010 and covered the original sample in six countries – Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, Tanzania and Zambia. Afrint IV focused on Malawi, Tanzania and Zambia.
- Research reports, publications and two waves of data (2002-2008 and 2008-2013) are available for all participating countries at the Lund University website:
<https://www.lunduniversity.lu.se/lup/publication/d26784d7-9c68-471a-96e9-7e5c99777c5e>. e.g.
 - P. Mvula and W. Mulwafu, “Intensification, Crop Diversification and Gender Relations in Malawi” in A. Andersson Djurfeldt, et.al, (eds.) *Gender, Agriculture and Diversification in Rural Africa: Longitudinal Perspectives from Six Countries* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018):158-175.
 - A. Andersson-Djurfeldt, E. Hillbom, W.O. Mulwafu, P. Mvula, and G. Djurfeldt, “The family farms together, the decisions, however, are made by the man” - Matrilineal, land tenure systems, welfare and decision making in rural Malawi” *Land Use Policy* Vol. 70 (2018):601-610.
 - A. Andersson-Djurfeldt, G. Djurfeldt, E. Hillbom, A. Isinika, M. Joshua, W. Kaaleng’a, A. Kalindi, E. Msuya, W.O. Mulwafu, and M. Wamulume, "Is there such a thing as sustainable agricultural intensification in smallholder-based farming in sub-Saharan Africa? Understanding yield differences in relation to gender in Malawi, Tanzania and Zambia" *Development Studies Research* Vol.6, No.1 (2019):62-75.

End of presentation

- Thank you!
- Questions and comments