The implications of the Sustainable Development Goals for the rural areas of developing countries

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This presentation

1. The importance of rural areas and agriculture

2. Agricultural productivity

3. The gender dimension

4. Implications of the SDGs
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Almost half of the population of developing countries lives in rural areas

**Share of rural population**

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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Developed countries</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>45</td>
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<tr>
<td>Developing countries</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing America</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>76</td>
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<tr>
<td>Developing Asia</td>
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<td>Developing Oceania</td>
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<td>LDCs</td>
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<td>62</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Rural populations will keep growing, and remain predominant in 2030
Agriculture generates almost 1 billion jobs worldwide → appr. 1/3 of total employment …

**Employment in agriculture**

- **Developed countries**:
  - 1991-1993: 17
  - 2011-2013: 17

- **Developing countries**:
  - 1991-1993: 886
  - 2011-2013: 886

- **Developing Africa**:
  - 2011-2013: 210

- **Developing America**:
  - 1991-1993: 43
  - 2011-2013: 43

- **Developing Asia**:
  - 1991-1993: 605
  - 2011-2013: 605

- **Developing Oceania**:
  - 1991-1993: 2
  - 2011-2013: 2

- **LDCs**:
  - 2011-2013: 217

**Source:** UNCTAD
... and is especially critical for Sub Saharan Africa and South Asia

Share of agriculture in total employment, 2013 (%)

- Sub Saharan Africa: 60%
- Middle East and North Africa: 21%
- Developing America: 15%
- South Asia: 47%
- South East Asia and the Pacific: 38%
- East Asia: 25%
- Developed countries: 4%
However, agriculture contributes a lower share of GDP

→ Therefore, agricultural productivity is a concern
Agriculture plays a role in generating exports...

Share of agriculture in total exports (%)

- Developed countries: 10% (2012-2014), 8% (1995-1997)
... and imports

Share of agriculture in total imports (%)

- Developed countries: 9%
- Developing countries: 9%
- Developing Africa: 16%
- Developing America: 9%
- Developing Asia: 8%
- Developing Oceania: 17%
- LDCs: 19%

2012-2014: Red bars
1995-1997: Blue bars
The food trade balance varies strongly among regions...

... which has implications for food security
Low levels of agricultural labour productivity in developing countries...

Agricultural labour productivity

- Developed countries
- Developing countries
... has major implications

- It is a crucial determinant of poverty
- It is a major factor in international income inequalities
Poverty is much higher in LDCs....
Poverty Headcount Ratio, 1990 and 2011 (%)

- **Poverty Halved by 2015**
- **Poverty Increased Since 1990**

...and falling most slowly (if at all)
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Wide international agricultural labour productivity gap

Agricultural labour productivity

- Developing countries
- Developing Africa
- Developing America
- Developing Asia
- Developing Oceania
- LDCs

Year indicators:
- 1980-1982
- 1990-1992
- 2000-2002
- 2011-2013
Determinants of agricultural productivity

- Quantity of conventional inputs, irrigation
  - Low in African and island LDCs; higher in Asian LDCs
- Technology - R&D; agricultural extension services
  - Greater agroecological diversity makes this more problematic in Africa than in Asia
- Human Capital - education, health, nutrition
  - Evidence suggests minimum 4 years' education needed
- Public investment and policies - knowledge-building, infrastructure
- Agroecological conditions - climate change
Agricultural R&D spending has fallen in poor countries, whilst growing elsewhere.
Climate change impacts vary widely, but are very high for some countries.

Estimated Climate-Related Agricultural Losses by 2080s (% of 2003 output)

- Green: ≤ 5%
- Light green: 10-15%
- Dark green: 20-30%
- Darker green: 45-55%
Agricultural labour productivity is the result of:

- Yield
- Land / labour ratio
There has been some catch-up in yields...

Yield (output per hectare)

- Developed countries
- Developing countries
- Developing Africa
- Developing America
- Developing Asia
- Developing Oceania
- LDCs

1980-1982
1990-1992
2000-2002
2011-2013

Constant int $ / hectare
... but there is also demographic pressure on land...
... especially in some developing regions

![Land / Labour ratio chart]

- Developing countries
- Developing Africa
- Developing America
- Developing Asia
- Developing Oceania
- Least Developed Countries

- 1980-1982
- 1990-1992
- 2000-2002
- 2011-2013
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Gender constraints

• Women are around half the rural and agricultural workforce

• But they face major additional constraints
  – Double burden of care and productive work
  – Disproportionate share of (unpaid) family labour
  – Limited control over commercial proceeds from agriculture and non-farm activities
  – Limited access to finance, markets

• Relieving these constraints can make an important contribution to transformation
Women's access to land is limited by customary law and practice.

Agricultural Landholders by Gender (%)

- **West Africa**
- **Other Africa & Haiti**
- **Asia**
- **Island**

The chart shows the percentage of agricultural landholders by gender for various regions and countries. The bars are divided into two sections: light blue for female and dark blue for male. The line at 50% indicates the equal distribution of landholders by gender.
...they are more likely to be in vulnerable employment...

![Graph showing vulnerable employment by LDC Regional Groups](image)

- **Contributing family workers**
- **Own-account working**
- **Employers**
- **Wage and salaried employment**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Male (African LDCs &amp; Haiti)</th>
<th>Female (African LDCs &amp; Haiti)</th>
<th>Male (Asian LDCs)</th>
<th>Female (Asian LDCs)</th>
<th>Male (Island LDCs)</th>
<th>Female (Island LDCs)</th>
</tr>
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</table>
...and there are large gender gaps in wages

Gender Wage Gaps in Selected LDCs (%)

- Ethiopia
- Madagascar
- Tanzania
- Nepal
- Yemen
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The Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals

Have major implications for rural areas in developing countries ⇒ there is where human development shortfalls are widest
Poverty rates are twice as high in rural areas as in towns and cities...
...and infrastructure gaps are much wider
Structural transformation

Achieving the SDGs will require

• The structural transformation of rural areas

• The diversification of rural economies
Thank you