

# Agricultural Research: Regional Challenges and Opportunities

UNDESA

Capacity Development Workshop  
Improving Agricultural Productivity, Water  
Use Efficiency and Strengthening Rural  
Livelihoods

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# Agriculture and Resource Management Challenges

- The important eight (Tariq Banuri)
- What do we want from agriculture?
- Diverse and multiple roles
- Move away from commodity specific policy

# Evolving roles

- Productivity
- Poverty reduction
- Environmental services
- Social well being
- Public health and more

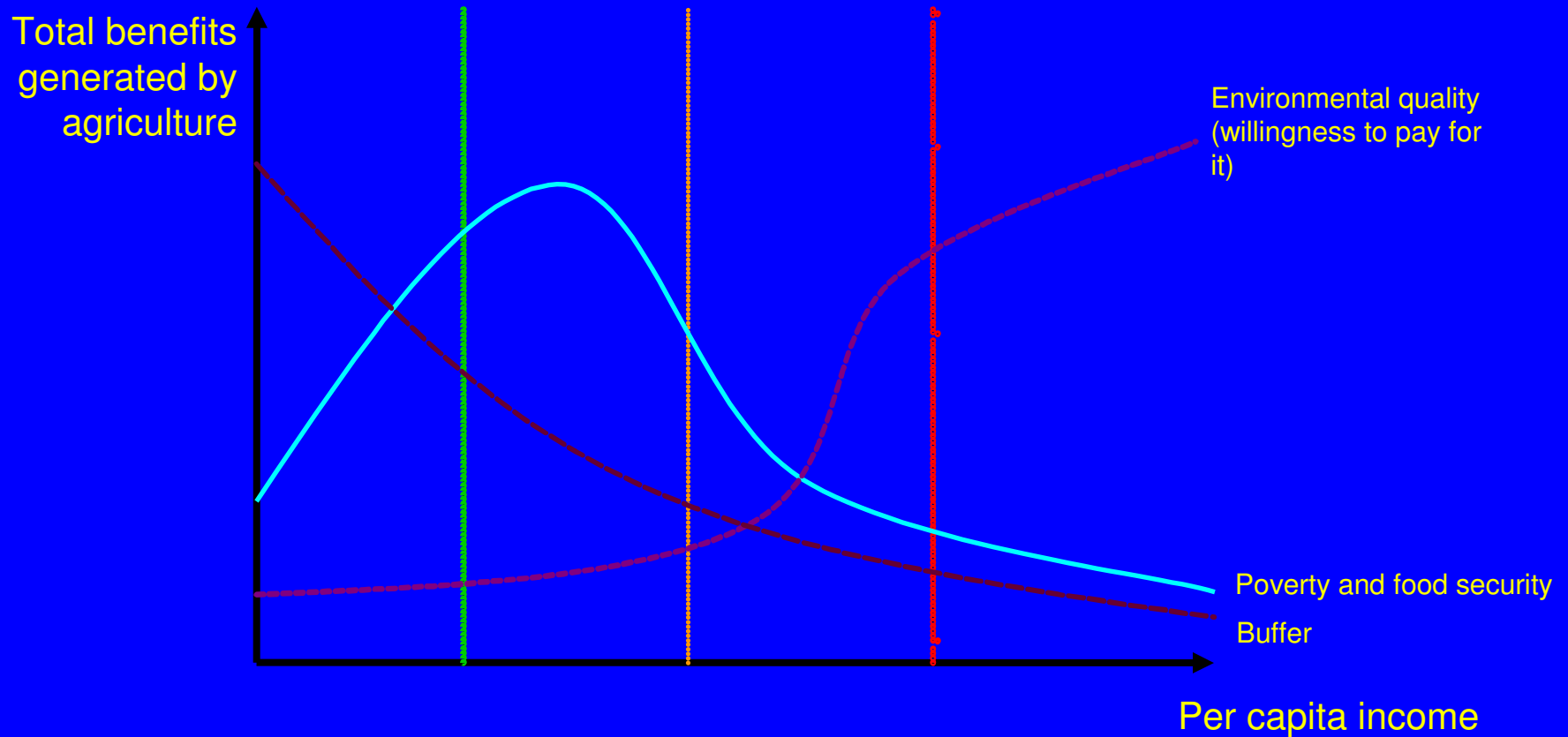
# Agriculture's Evolving Roles in the Development Process

Getting agriculture moving

Agriculture as an engine of growth

Industrializing agriculture

Agriculture in industrial economies



# Common Driving Forces Shaping the Research Agenda

- Income Growth & Urbanization
- Global lifestyles & diet convergence
- Women in the urban wage workforce
- Climate and a carbon constrained economy
- Food, fuel and financial crisis
- Diet, health and where we buy food
- Technologies: biotech (orphan crops) and IT

# Attention to

- Agriculture's contribution to poverty
  - What is the channel?
- Growing emphasis on health, diet, nutrition
- Massive changes in food retail

(SOFT DRINK INDUSTRY ADVERTISING EXPENDITURES)



UNDERSTAND THE ECONOMY,  
UNDERSTAND THE WORLD.



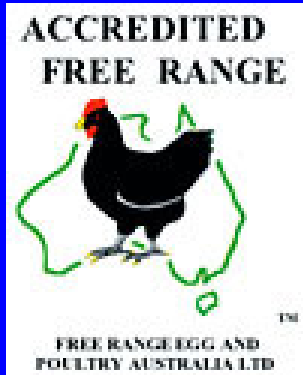
Guilt free shopping....







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# The Challenges

We want research to support our evolving vision: agriculture as a positive economic, social and environmental force

Let's be careful about generalizations, but

South Asia has 40% of world's poor

Safety nets still an issue

Small scale, stagnant productivity

# The Challenges

## South East Asia and China

small scale, growing food importer, stagnant productivity, large and expanding middle class

## Africa

low productivity, high population growth, more rural, growing number of producers, mixed scales, less infrastructure, production inputs and rural services

## Challenges for low income, small scale producers

- Shortage of capital and lack collateral
- Location and environmental degradation, especially soils and water
- High pest/disease pressure
- Inputs often not available, or late
- Energy relatively expensive
- Market power and relationship power
- Lack of know-how and know-who for value adding markets

## Opportunities for low income, small scale producers

- Vocation for agriculture
- High value labour with training
- Strong motivation, and in many places, a tradition of working cooperatively
- Nearness to growth market for food products, which in developing countries in general, and urban markets in particular

# The opportunities

- Africa's new growth and development initiatives (AU, NEPAD and CAADP)
- Yields increases based on more appropriate innovations, sustainable agriculture
- Heterogeneity and variability are recognized and treated over space and time.
- Enhancement of productivity by
  - increasing yield
  - improving quality
  - adding value
  - reducing cost

# Opportunities

Research to support our evolving vision:  
agriculture as a positive economic, social and  
environmental force

- Agriculture is back
- Much greater propensity for researchers to collaborate
- More focus on strategic positioning
- IT technologies, especially phones
- Up scaling from lessons (MF, PDA, FFS)
- Organizing research includes producers
- More emphasis on how to use research