



# Emerging issues and opportunities for LDCs

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# Introduction

- The Southern Voice “*First Approximations on Post-MDG International Development Goals*” identified several emerging issues
- Many of these issues are reflected in the HLP report
- My presentation will discuss two proposed goals in the HLP report
  - Goal 5: Ensure food security and good nutrition
  - Goal 8: Create jobs, sustainable livelihoods, and equitable growth

# Ensure Food security and good nutrition

- What's in?
  - 5a. End hunger and protect the right of everyone to have access to sufficient, safe, affordable, and nutritious food;
  - 5b. Reduce stunting by x%, wasting by y%, and anemia by z% for all children under five
  - 5c. Increase agricultural productivity by x%, with a focus on sustainably increasing smallholder yields and access to irrigation
  - 5d. Adopt sustainable agricultural, ocean and freshwater fishery practices and rebuild designated fish stocks to sustainable levels
  - 5e. Reduce post-harvest loss and food waste by x%

- The HLP report calls for investments in agriculture and recognizes that “Agricultural investments reduce poverty more than investments in any other sector”
- But the option for large-scale agricultural production is questionable
  - Smallholder farmers are the backbone of agriculture in LDCs and provide most of the food production in LDCs
  - Rural population in LDCs accounts for almost 70% of total population when its contribution to GDP is only about 30%. Thus low agricultural productivity is a major issue
  - Unfortunately most interventions fail to address the root causes of low agricultural productivity

- Recourse to FDI in large scale agriculture poses a threat on the livelihoods of smallholder farmers
  - land-grabbing and forced evictions have been widespread in LDCs the last few years and are making poor people landless.
  - According to the International Land Coalition, corporations and governments have grabbed around 80 million hectares, of which 64% are in Africa.
- We need to correctly address structural factors such as:
  - High dependence on food imports; underdeveloped markets; under-capitalized agriculture; poor infrastructure (roads, storage) and food distribution systems
  - LDCs have to move away from being the main suppliers of cheap natural resources to the North and the recipients of expensive finished products manufactured in the North

- One way of doing so is to:
  - Promote agricultural transformation by developing crop and livestock value chains and improving agricultural systems
  - Make farming an attractive business for smallholders and promote commercial farming among small subsistence farmers
  - Better involve women and youth in commercial farming
  - engage with corporations to facilitate public/private partnerships (PPPs) and thus connect smallholders with commercial supply chains
  - Promote agro-processing industries with value addition as a means to increase agricultural productivity

- Adopt best management practices
- Promote technologies adapted to local conditions
- Address the issue of access to basic infrastructure  
(Improved transport, storage, logistics and communications)
- Improve rural-urban linkages
- This era of technology advancement presents a unique opportunity of involving millions of smallholder farmers in **modern agriculture**, raising productivity, eradicating extreme poverty and improving the livelihoods in rural areas

# Create jobs, sustainable livelihoods, and equitable growth

- What's in?
  - 8a. Increase the number of good and decent jobs and livelihoods by  $x$
  - 8b. Decrease the number of young people not in education, employment or training by  $x\%$
  - 8c. Strengthen productive capacity by providing universal access to financial services and infrastructure such as transportation and ICT
  - 8d. Increase new start-ups by  $x$  and value added from new products by  $y$  through creating an enabling business environment and boosting entrepreneurship



- The HLP report makes a case for a transformative agenda:
  - the necessity to pursue inclusive growth; to promote economic diversification and higher value added; and to put in place a stable, enabling environment for the private sector to flourish.
  - Separate targets for jobs and livelihoods, and for jobs for young people.
  - Deliberate action to ensure businesses can count on reliable, adequate infrastructure in a stable and predictable environment.
  - Enable new businesses to start up

- However, we need to be aware of the following:
  - The past decades, most African countries conducted policies enabling business environments but resulted in jobless growth
  - In LDCs, underemployment is more pervasive than unemployment, especially in rural areas
  - Policies and strategies should take into account the dominance of agriculture and the rural sector in most LDCs
  - The need to develop regional markets (West Africa for instance) and build sustained regional value chains to overcome the constraints of tiny national markets
  - The report fails to include the issue of migration and migrants' rights

THANK YOU