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NATURE & CHARACTERISTICS OF AGRICULTURE IN SIDS



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- Large proportion of population engaged in agriculture, with high multiplier effect
- Major economic activity in rural areas, making rural development synonymous to rural development
- Generally, low levels of productivity hence relatively small contribution to GDP despite large labour force

EMERGING CHALLENGES



- Low productivity, vulnerability to



OPPORTUNITIES

- Prevailing high food prices should provide stimulus for production.
- Agriculture provides the best option for recovery in the current recession because of its quick response to stimulus.
- Investment in agriculture provides the best option for social stabilization because of the multiplier effect, and its critical link to rural development.
- Development of agriculture arrests and reverses rural-urban migration and hence urban decay.



POLICY OPTIONS

- The predominance of small farmers with limited access to education and technology necessitates strong support from the State in terms of extension services and research.
- Sustainable agriculture in SIDS is not possible without appropriate crop insurance, as one disaster can wipe out the entire sector particularly given mono-cropping in many countries.
- Research and extension must focus on adaptation, in terms of cropping systems etc.

POLICY OPTIONS





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- Laws must be reviewed and enacted where necessary or deliberate attempts made to increase land tenure and release economic potential of land assets held by the myriad of small farmers
