

Agriculture, rural livelihoods and rural poverty

Upali Wickramasinghe

Regional Adviser on Poverty Reduction and Food Security

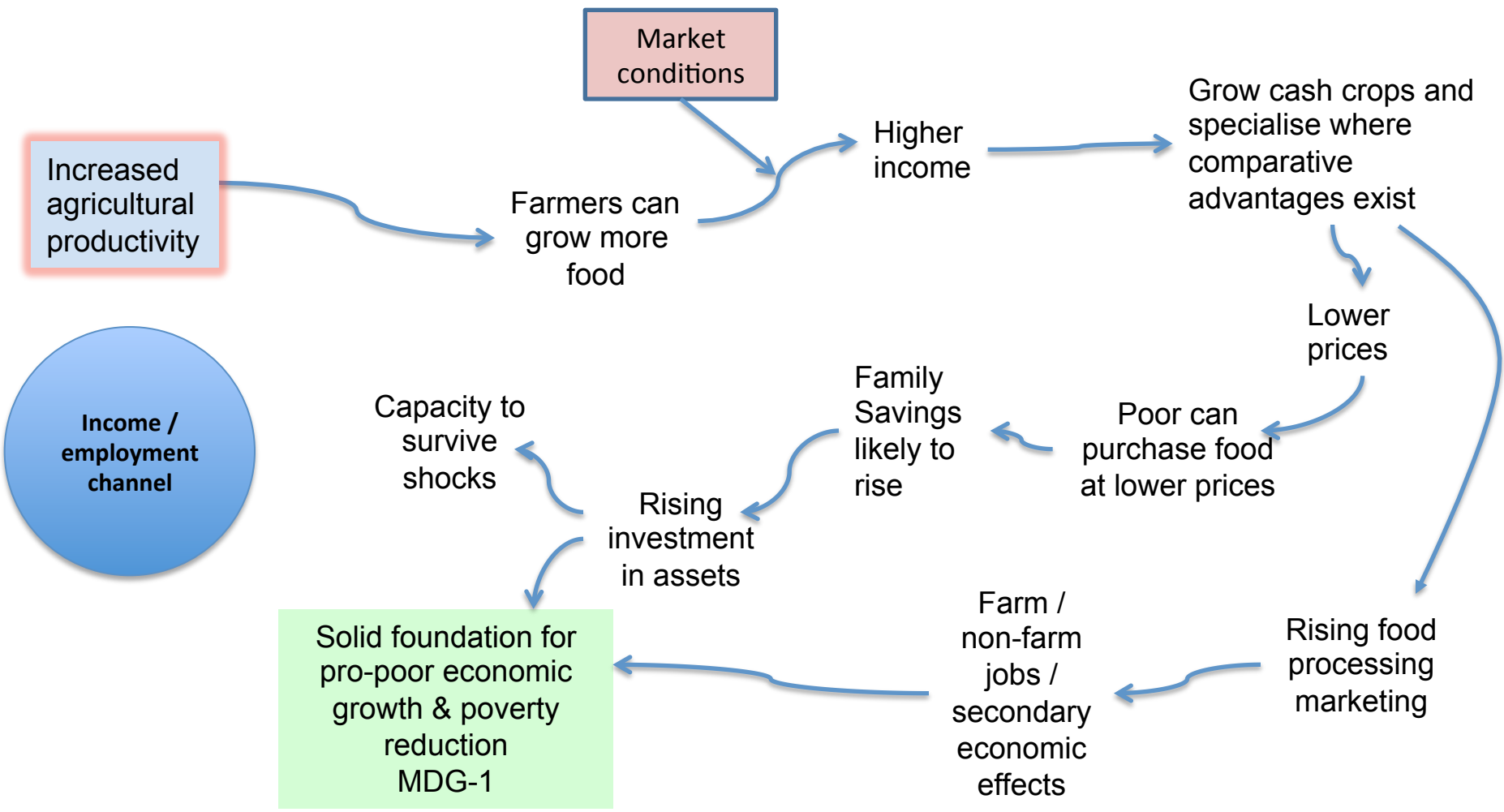
ESCAP-CAPSA

Agriculture-hunger-poverty nexus

- MGDs / SDGs aim at eradicating hunger and poverty
- Understanding the ways hunger and poverty interconnect is required for eradicating it
 - Hunger and malnutrition prevents people from escaping poverty through many channels (will discuss below)
 - Need to identify the root causes to design public policy responses
 - Evaluate possible impact of policy interventions with counterfactuals (policy analysis)

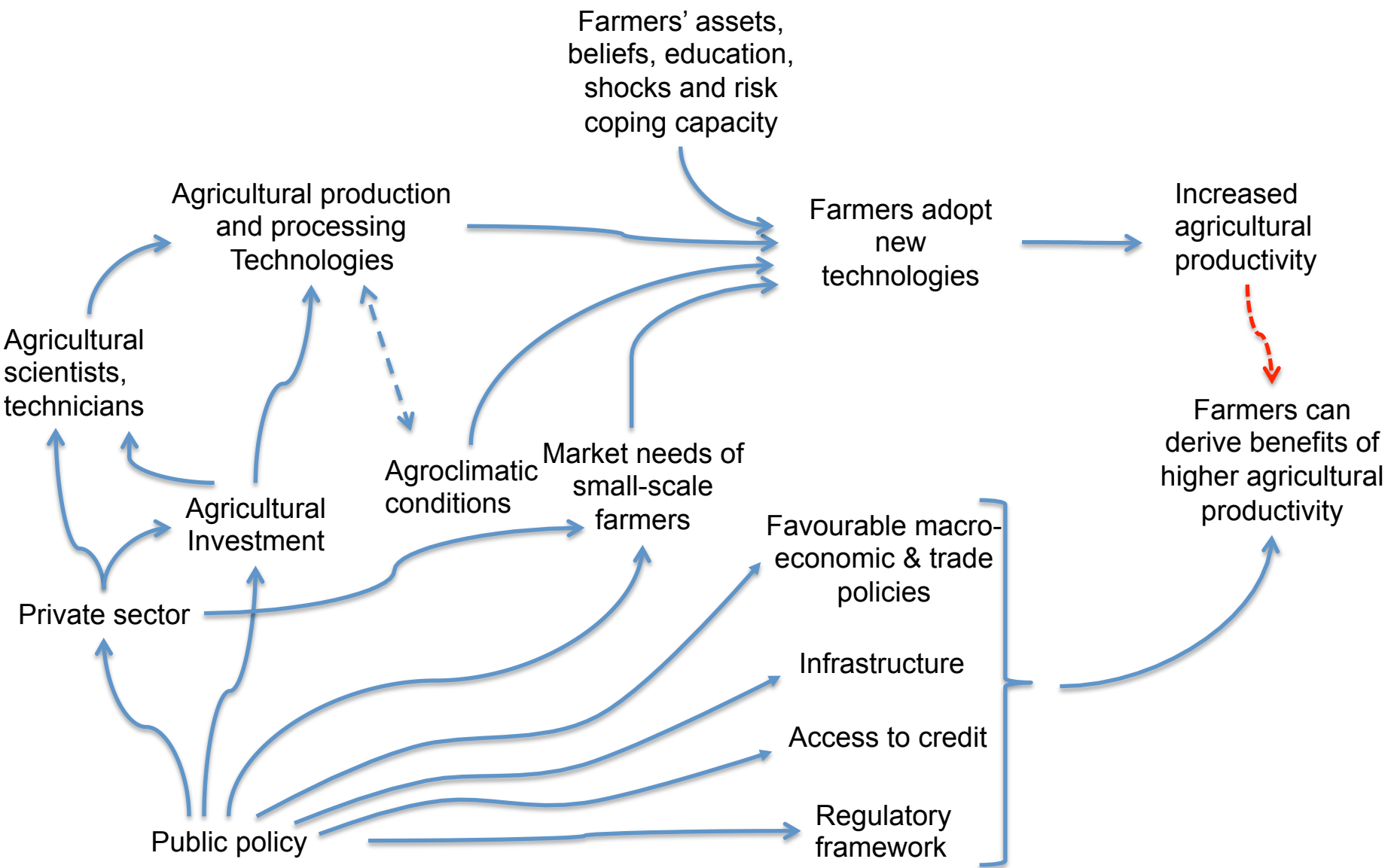
Facts

- Three quarters of the world's poor live in rural areas
- Hunger and child malnutrition are greater in rural areas
- The greater majority of them live on agriculture
- Rural population with high subsistence farming tend to have high malnutrition
- Improvements in agricultural productivity of small-scale farmers is likely to benefit the rural poor first
- **What are the possible channels?**



10% growth in agricultural productivity is estimated reduce poverty by:
 4% in India
 7.2% in Africa

Increasing agricultural productivity / benefit to farmers



Increased agricultural productivity

Opportunities for specialization

Produce high-value agri. Products (e.g., milk)

Specialised Production, processing, marketing requirements

Hire labour or Invest in labour-saving agri. technologies

Higher family income

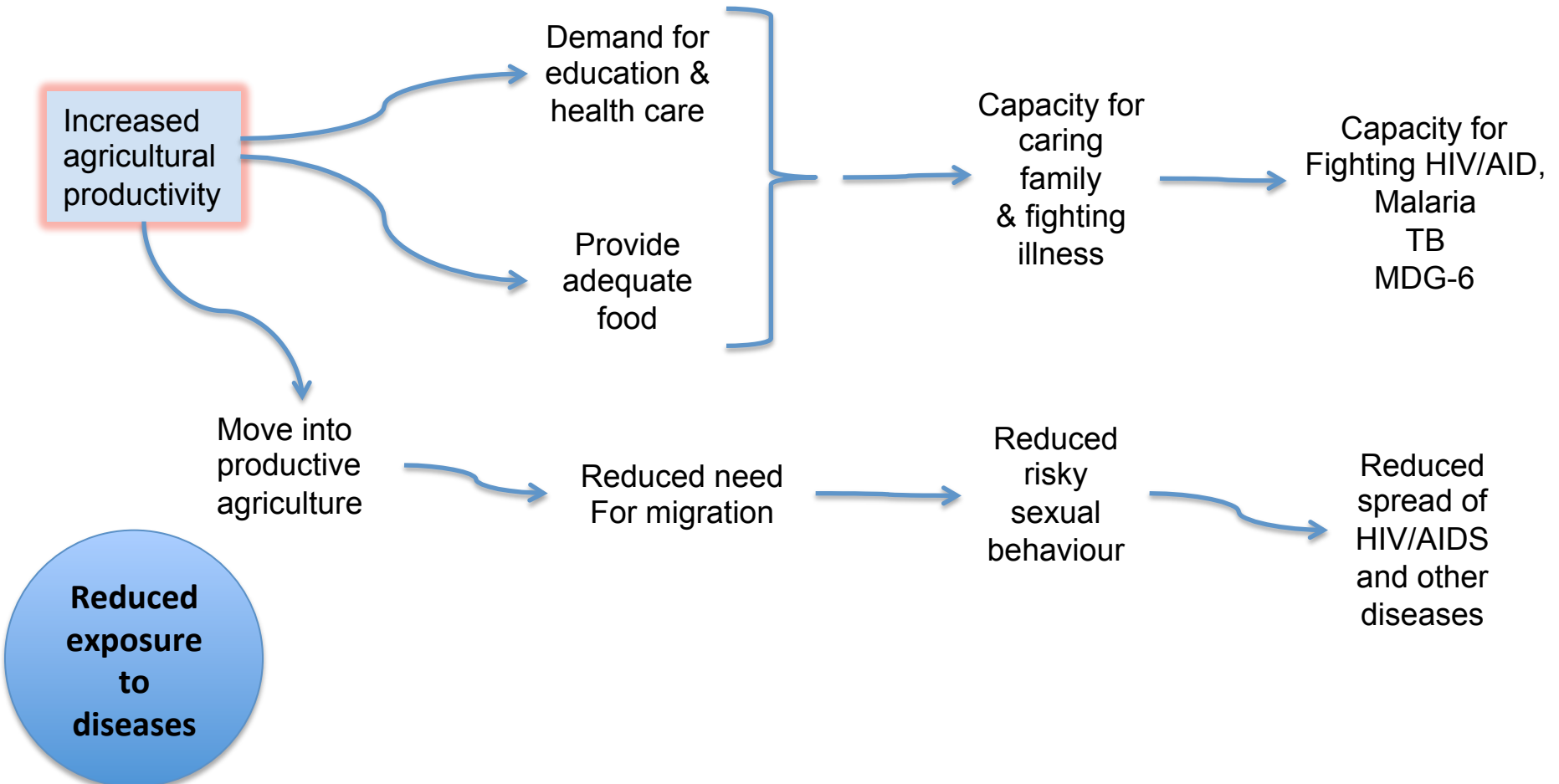
Decline in opportunity Cost of Educating children

Capacity to hire care givers

Send children to school

Higher school attendance MDG-2

Education channel



Increased agricultural productivity

Demand for education & health care

Provide adequate food

Move into productive agriculture

Reduced need For migration

Capacity for caring family & fighting illness

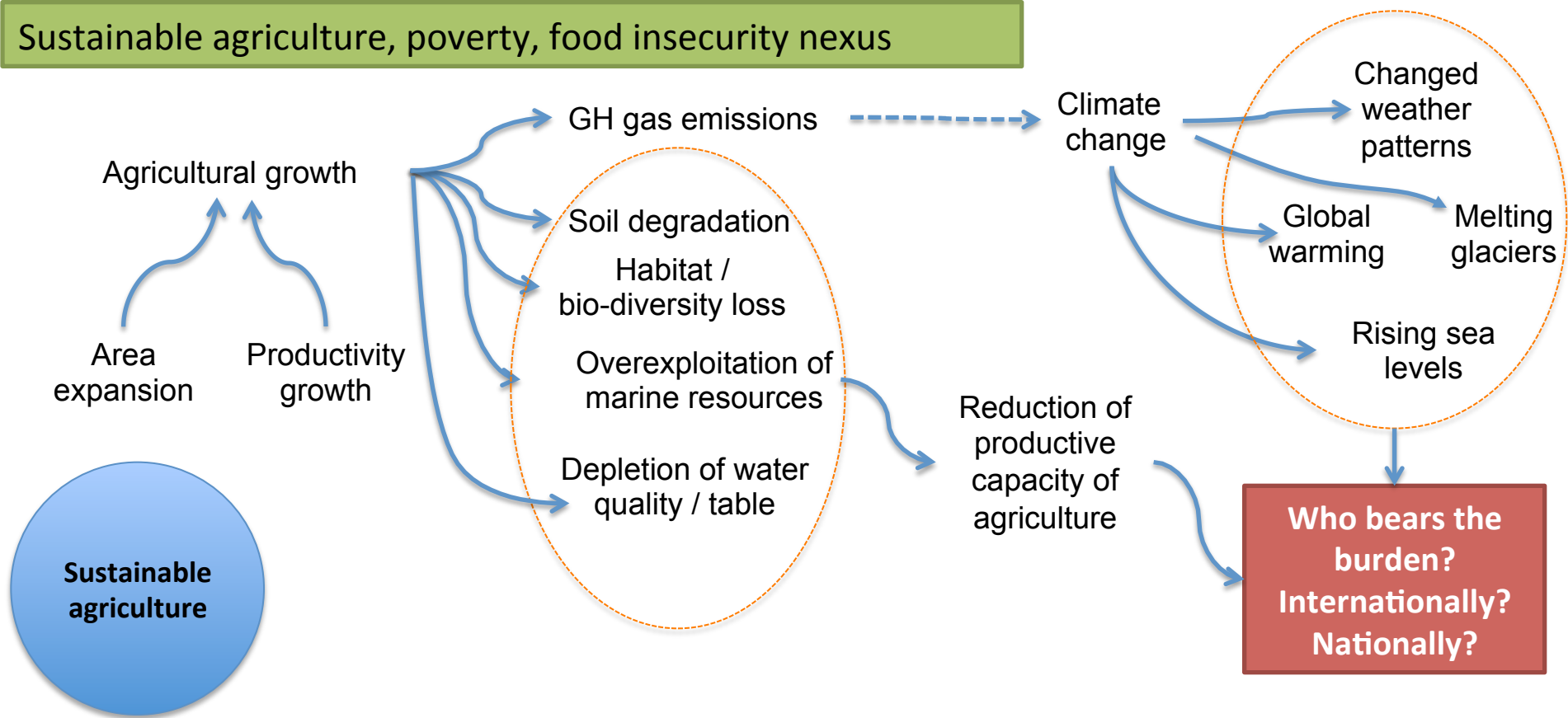
Capacity for Fighting HIV/AIDS, Malaria TB MDG-6

Reduced risky sexual behaviour

Reduced spread of HIV/AIDS and other diseases

Reduced exposure to diseases

Sustainable agriculture, poverty, food insecurity nexus



I'm not sure if we have precise answers yet

We do know is that the rich (countries / people within countries) can take care of themselves because they have resources, but the poor cannot

“a strategy for the integrated management of land, water and living resources that promotes conservation and sustainable use in an equitable way”

Rio Earth Summit (1992)

“We reaffirm the necessity to promote, enhance and support more sustainable agriculture, including crops, livestock, forestry, fisheries and aquaculture, that improves food security, eradicates hunger and is economically viable, while conserving land, water, plant and animal genetic resources, biodiversity and ecosystems and enhancing resilience to climate change and natural disasters. We also recognize the need to maintain natural ecological processes that support food production systems”

Rio+20 Summit (2012)