

2024 AARES Distinguished Fellow

Renato Andrin (Rene) Villano



Dr. Renato Andrin (Rene) Villano is a Professor of Economics at the UNE Business School, University of New England (UNE), Australia. He currently serves as Interim Head of School and Chair of the Research and Research Training Committee. He holds a Bachelor of Agricultural Economics (Honours, 1994) and a PhD in Economics (2004), both from UNE. Before his UNE studies, he completed three years of the Bachelor of Science in Agriculture 4-year program at the Central Bicol State University of Agriculture in the Philippines.

Rene specialises in agricultural economics and development, applied econometrics, and data analytics. He teaches undergraduate and postgraduate units in business statistics, data analytics, econometrics, microeconomics, agricultural economics, efficiency and productivity analysis, survey design and sampling, and development economics. He is a recipient of the Australian Learning and Teaching Council (ALTC) Outstanding Contribution to Teaching and Learning award and is recognised as a Senior Fellow of the Higher Education Academy (UK). A dedicated educator, he has successfully supervised over 30 PhD and 50 Master's and Honours students to completion, building a legacy of impactful teaching and mentorship.

Rene's primary research interests include the analysis of farmer behaviour, efficiency and productivity, gender, poverty and food security, and agribusiness. His research journey began in 1995 when he joined the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) in Los Baños, Philippines. It continued at UNE, where he contributed to over 15 major projects with over \$10 million in funding, including 10 projects from the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR). These projects focus on crops in South and Southeast Asia, sweet potatoes in Papua New Guinea, and livestock in Indonesia and South Africa. His publication record includes 108 refereed journal articles, eight edited book chapters, nine refereed conference proceedings, five books and monographs, and numerous conference papers and reports.

Rene's contribution to the Australasian Agricultural and Resource Economics Society (AARES) has been significant. He has served as an Associate Editor for the Australasian Journal of Agricultural and Resource Economics (AJARE) and Treasurer of the New England Branch of AARES for many years. He has undertaken various editorial board roles, reviewed for more than 50 journals, and acted as an external examiner for over a dozen higher degree research students.