Agriculture and climate change

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You can’t see vulnerability from space...

- In Africa, 95% of all food consumed is grown on the continent.

- Variability in growing conditions results in widespread reduction in crop production.

- Vulnerability to food insecurity results from:
  - Economic context in which reductions in production occur.
  - Livelihood strategy and income level of farmers.
  - Political and governmental effectiveness in providing market and economic stability.

- Access to food is the primary cause of food security crises today, not food availability.
Agriculture and Climate Change

- Population expansion is likely to peak in 2050
- ‘Business as usual’ CO2 emissions is likely to result in a 4°degree warming
- Global agriculture is likely to experience declining yields, even with technological advances
- Warming will result in large local production declines in tropical African arid and semi-arid agricultural regions (1 of every 2 yrs harvest failure in Southern Africa (Thornton et al 2011))

Drought stress on rice paddy
Markets may not deliver...

- Market solutions to redistribute excess food will not be reliable if yields decline globally – leading to greater access problems than exist today.

- Adaptive capacity of food systems in Africa is low –
  - Food aid as a long term strategy is not effective
  - Response of national governments to protect markets can backfire
  - ‘Farmers will not grow crops or raise livestock that they do know, are not able to sell and are not used to eating’
Social Sources of Vulnerability

- Transforming global food system to respond to increasing demand
- Simultaneous climate change - reductions in yields and global population expansion
- Increases in commodity prices reduces the ability of the world’s poorest to access food from the global market
- Local food production will remain central to food security in Africa for decades – thus the local government’s ability to foster security, access to markets, and political effectiveness is critical