

Sustainable Development and Food Security: The African Context

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Outline

- Food security
- Challenge of climate change
- Adaptation



Food Security

- Food Security Research Project (FSRP)
- Objective: *to integrate research into policy dialogue and program design to promote sustainable agricultural growth as a means to cut hunger and poverty*
- Focus on individual and collective action
- Regional, village, household, gender-level impacts
- Policy analysis
- Partnerships with African institutions



Food Security (*continued*)

Research themes:

- Improving food systems performance
- Understanding household income and livelihood dynamics
- Understanding food security and natural resource management interactions



Climate Change

- Food security already vulnerable
- Additional pressures from climate change
 - Precipitation variability, water stress
 - Lower crop yields
 - Changes in production possibilities
 - Higher food prices

→ Challenge for sustainable development,
food security



Adaptation

- Historical record of perverse economic incentives in development
- Tendency towards “wait and mitigate”
 - Donor contributions
 - International support
- Often more costly than adaptation measures
- Matter of prioritization
 - Proactive or Reactive



Adaptation (*continued*)

- Need for policy tools that respond to changes in a household's opportunity set
 - Institutions (trade policy, food aid)
 - Human capital (education, public health)
 - Technology (crop diversity, seed)
 - Bio-physical capital (productivity of land)
- No single tool can satisfy all food security targets
 - Calls for cooperation in international development



Adaptation (*continued*)

- Hybrid, drought-resistant seed varieties
- Shifts in planting, growing seasons
- Shifts to resilient crops
- Off-farm income (forest products, tourism)
- Research, education, and extension
- Regional economic integration (trade)



Summary

- Food security challenge
 - Availability, access, utilization
- Minimize vulnerability to climate change
 - Household-level adaptation
 - Research, education, and extension
 - Regional planning, integration



Thank You

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Food Security Research Project:

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