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Media Release

*Households in Limpopo and Eastern Cape are Vulnerable to Climate Change Disasters*

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*For an Equitable Sharing of National Revenue*

5 February 2015

Financial and Fiscal Commission  
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**[5 February 2015]** On 3 February 2015, the Financial and Fiscal Commission (the Commission) tabled at Parliament a report on Climate Change, Household Vulnerability and Climate Smart Agriculture: The Case of Two South African Provinces. The Submission is made in terms of Section 3(1) and 3(2) (a) and (b) of the Financial and Fiscal Commission Act. The study was done in collaboration with the [Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources Policy Analysis Network \(FANRPAN\)](#), and with financial support from the [International Development Research Centre \(IDRC\)](#). The Commission hereby acknowledges research support from the Universities of Venda, Fort Hare and Cape Town.

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The impact of climate change poses significant challenges for South Africa especially for vulnerable rural households. The Commission's Report done in collaboration with FANRPAN looks at the micro level impacts of climate change on households. It uses the [Household Vulnerability Index](#), a statistical tool, for quantifying household vulnerability resulting from shocks such as climate change to identify vulnerable households. To provide the basis for strategic interventions, the Report uses the cost-benefit methodology to evaluate alternative climate change adaptation strategies to ascertain which ones are cost effective and with the greatest positive impact on people's livelihoods. The study sites were Nkonkobe Municipality in the Eastern Cape and Thulamela Municipality in the Limpopo province.

The climate change impact model results indicate that crop yields will be hit hard by climate change. Regarding the question of who are most vulnerable; the Report identifies households in the Eastern Cape as generally more vulnerable than those in the Limpopo province. The incidence of vulnerability is higher among households with less livelihood capital assets, (human, physical, financial, social and natural). In addition the elderly and female-headed households are more vulnerable to climate change impacts. Households receiving remittances, extension services or those participating in formal village savings schemes are less vulnerable. The adaptation strategies with the highest benefits in the Eastern Cape are rain fed Sorghum, Zero/Minimal Tillage Maize Farming and Sorghum irrigation; while in Limpopo the highest benefits can be derived from Sorghum under irrigation farming, maize under limited tillage and sorghum under dry land farming. Thus priority should be given to investing in climate smart agriculture technologies which could include drought resistant seed varieties, small grains, and zero tillage farming systems in the two study sites.

The Commission is of the view that South Africa can create better conditions for a more resilient rural economy by developing a household vulnerability index that will account for the differential vulnerabilities of communities to climate change and ensure that vulnerable households are well targeted with fiscal and financial resources. Furthermore, the scope of the Government's Comprehensive Agriculture Support Programme grant should be broadened to include mechanisms that will enhance the capacities of households to withstand the impacts of climate change as well as improve their abilities to recover quickly from disasters. The Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries should support the development of a sustainable and resilient multi-purpose production system in rural areas, especially mechanisms that improve the asset base of rural households such as providing support towards strengthening livestock production, especially small ruminants; training for pasture-land management, disease control and crop-livestock husbandry; support strategies that increase access to inputs, markets and financial resources; improved agricultural

extension services and access to climate and weather forecast information. In addition, there is a need to promote multi-purpose crop production and diversification to include small grains (Sorghum and millet), and drought and water stress tolerant crop varieties, improved agronomic practices (in-field water harvesting, and application of appropriate fertiliser amounts, proper timing of sowing dates, conservation agriculture, etc.). Additionally, the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries needs to strengthen the extension services and capacitate extension workers with knowledge of climate change risks and [climate smart agriculture](#).

To read the submission, please visit our website at [www.ffc.co.za](http://www.ffc.co.za) or Contact Ansuyah Maharaj-Dowra on 27 11 2072300.