**Calm Before the Storm**

How might climate change affect rural subsistence farmers in Bolivia?

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Did you know that Bolivia has one of the highest poverty rates in Latin America? Rural poverty has forced families to settle more precarious locations, and rely solely on the harvest of their crops and livestock. How might climate change affect rural subsistence farmers in Bolivia?

Imagine a rural peasant and his two sons. All three hard at work cultivating a one hectare plot beside their family farm. This job is hard, labor intensive, and tiring. It is also rewarding. The family are subsistence farmers. They cultivate and plant in hopes of growing enough to feed their families. The work is hard, but the crop is precarious. Imagine a sudden wind travelling up from the lowlands. Everyone stops the work. The cold wind can only mean heavy rain. Perhaps a flood. Maybe a storm. Their wives and children come out to feel the wind. Everyone rushes back into the house, before the rain hits. Clouds turn off gray, everyone takes shelter, and the pelts down on the dry soil. The rain starts to pour. Harder and harder. The grown washes out over their freshly sown potatoes. The washout is devastating, destroying a field planted to provide for the upcoming season. For rural producers, the unstable weather means their access to food is circumscribed.

Many rural peasants in the Andes, and in many parts of the Global South, rely on subsistence production and small-scale land holdings. Climate change is making it harder and harder for people to grow crops, which make rural livelihoods more precarious and reduce family savings which are already dangerously low. Climate change is already bringing crop failures, which will increase malnutrition as it makes life harder for rural families in Bolivia and other places.