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MEDIA ADVISORY

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Pro-poor agricultural development: exploring new options for achieving it

What: Seminar on “Pro-poor agricultural development: agricultural interventions and the complementary role of social protection”

Who: As part of the Social Protection week (16-20 May), organized by the Government of Zambia and partners, the Ministry of Community Development and Social Welfare with the support of the office of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations in Zambia has organized a one-day seminar on “Pro-poor agricultural development: agricultural interventions and the complementary role of social protection” on May 19th.

Where: Government Complex on 19th May 2016.

Why: While there has been undeniable momentum for social protection in Zambia, this momentum has not received the broad attention it deserves. Social protection concerns all segments of society and the timeliness of bringing a broad range of stakeholders for a discussion on how social protection and other development sectors, such as agriculture, can benefit the Zambian society is now commonly acknowledged.

Zambia’s agricultural sector is a major contributor to the country’s gross domestic product and is the main source of employment in the country. However, despite substantive investment and spending on supporting agricultural development, levels of poverty and food insecurity among small family farmers are still high.

It is well recognized that agricultural interventions designed to support small family farmers can play an important role in developing their farming activities and rural growth. Emerging findings point to an innovative approach: agricultural programmes to support small family farmers can be more successful if complemented with social protection measures.

The evidence shows that the two sectors play complementary roles in supporting agricultural transformation. On the one hand, agricultural interventions can improve small family farmers’ access to natural resources, inputs, advisory services and markets as well as increasing employment opportunities. On the other, social protection can provide liquidity and certainty for poor small family farmers, allowing them to invest in more productive activities as well as enhance local economy by increasing demand for food and other goods and services.

Participants will include: Government agencies and in particular the ministries of Agriculture, Fisheries and Livestock and Community Development and Social Welfare, civil society organizations, research institutions and development partners involved in supporting the development of small family farmers in Zambia.

Why they are coming together in this event? To deepen their understanding of the status of agriculture and small family farmers in Zambia and explore what they can do to bring together agriculture and social protection in Zambia to support agricultural transformation and combat poverty and hunger among small family farmers.

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