



## Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

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

#### Summary of discussions

In his welcome speech, the FAO Representative stressed that in Zambia, because poverty and food insecurity are concentrated among small family farmers, efforts aimed at combatting poverty and hunger should be focused on increasing productivity among small family farmers. He drew attention to an innovative approach to achieving these objectives. This involves bringing together agricultural and social protection interventions since these can play complementary and mutually reinforcing roles. On the one hand, agricultural interventions targeted towards small family farmers can help address structural constraints that limit access to land and water resources, inputs, finance and insurance, extension services and markets by small family farmers. On the other hand, social protection interventions provide certainty and relieve liquidity constraints, thereby allowing small family farmers to exploit opportunities for engaging in more productive agricultural activities.

In the first session, presentations and discussions focused on assessing what is being done in Zambia to support small family farmers. This included a first presentation on the main programmes of the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock intended to support small family farmers. This was followed by a presentation on the extent to which subsidy programmes in the agricultural sector are benefiting small family farmers and on the (unexpected) agricultural impacts of the national social cash transfer programme.

The second session provided concrete examples – from Zambia and beyond – of how agricultural and social protection interventions can support each other. Evidence from Malawi (input subsidy + social cash transfer) and Lesotho (kitchen gardening + social cash transfer) showed the benefits of combining agricultural and social protection interventions. The case of the Home Grown School Feeding programme in Zambia, through an agricultural intervention supports production among small family farmers and the school feeding provides a market for their produce was presented. In addition, a proposal was made for extending social insurance to small family farmers on the premise that by increasing risk management capacities this can support increased productivity among small family farmers.

In the third session participants split into three groups – each with a different thematic focus - to start identifying how to move forward in bringing together agriculture and social protection in Zambia. The suggested actions are summarized below:

Group A: Options for making existing agricultural interventions more supportive of poor small family farmers

- Clarify target groups of different interventions (e.g. Farmer Input Subsidy Programme)
- Use the targeting mechanisms of the Ministry of Community Development and Social Welfare to target pro-poor agricultural interventions
- Identify a strategy and mechanism to allow beneficiaries of the Social Cash Transfer programme and the Farm Support Pack to also benefit from the Farmer Input Subsidy Programme
- Strengthen the capacities of extension services to better support small family farmers

Group B: Opportunities for complementing agricultural interventions with social protection interventions

- Combine agricultural programs such as the Conservation Agriculture Scaling Up (CASU) or Farm Input Subsidy Program (FISP) with social protection programs such as the SCT (Social Cash Transfer) or the HGSF (Home Grown School Feeding). In the cases of CASU and FISP the SCCT would allow small family farmers to take-on the risks associated with adopting new technologies and investing in inputs. In the case of HGSF, the SCT would allow small family farmers to incur the costs of market participation.
- Institutionalize a coordination mechanism through the National Agricultural Policy and the National Social Protection Policy to facilitate coordination and collaboration between different sectors, including agriculture and social protection.
- Establish a dedicated budget line for joint interventions.

Group C: Steps for extending social insurance to small family farmers

- Assess the insurance needs of small family farmers and complementary services they require
- Assess the technical, financial and institutional feasibility of different options for extending insurance to small family farmers

Together with the Government of Zambia and development partners, FAO will look into following-up on these recommendations.