Webinar on the role of rural organisations in social protection

25th November – Time: 15:00 (1h 30m)

***Summary of case examples***

Rural organisations are formal and informal groups of rural people acting together to attain agreed socio-economic objectives. When properly enabled and engaged, these organisations can be instrumental for a more effective delivery of national social protection systems. Through participatory mechanisms with local and national governments, member-based organisations carry out the targeting and registration of members, distribute benefits, or participate in the programme’s evaluation. This study considers traditional social protection programmes (e.g. cash transfers, labour programmes), but also initiatives in the domains of risk management, resilience and food security, which contribute to social protection objectives. Member-based rural organisations also provide a series of services to their members. In particular, the establishment of collective practices of risk management and mutual assistance is strongly linked to pursuing the objectives of social protection. In the best circumstances, these practices are scaled up through umbrella Unions or Federations at district and national level. Examples of such practices are briefly described here.

1. ***Participatory mechanisms in social protection systems***

Partnership between civil society and the Brazilian government in the implementation of “*Cisternas*” for water and food security

*Cisternas* is a national programme in Brazil that has the objective to fight water scarcity in the semi- Northeast of Brazil though the provision of technologies for water capture and storage. The programme was born directly from the request of civil society organisations and designed through a series of collaborative processes. Nationally, umbrella organisations are involved in the design, monitoring and evaluation of the programme. Local organisations, on the other hand, are responsible for the targeting of beneficiaries, the distribution of building material for water tanks and other technologies, and the training of beneficiaries. The programme has substantially improved the quantity and quality of available water, thus protecting local livelihoods and reducing people’s migration to cities. At the same time, *Cisternas* has stimulated mechanisms of social control and the independent roll out of the programme activities managed by local organisations. The participation of a broad network of local organisations has ensured the thorough execution of the programme across the whole region.

Purchase for Progress (P4P) by the World Food Programme

Purchase for Progress (P4P) is a system of direct food procurement, designed and implemented by the World Food Programme (WFP). The system aimsto improve smallholder farmers’ access to formal markets through the mediation of farmers’ organisations. In Ghana, WFP and other institutional buyers purchase staple food directly from farmers’ organisations, thus creating stable demand and fair prices for producers. In the case of WFP, the food is transferred to food insecure people through WFP’s emergency programmes. At the same time, P4P encourages local partnerships with private and public actors (buyers, schools, extension agencies) for supporting farmers in increasing and stabilising their production, accessing financial services and improving market infrastructures and transports. Farmers’ organisations play a crucial role in informing farmers and delivering market operations and other financial and training services.

Savings and Credit Banks (SCB) in the Honduran National Programme of Sustainable Rural and Urban Development

As part of the strategy of the National Programme of Sustainable Rural and Urban Development (PRONADERS, 2000) in Honduras, Savings and Credit Banks (SCB) is an instrument of inclusive finance aimed at protecting small and fragile rural economies, ultimately pursuing the reduction of rural poverty. The SCB are spontaneously constituted and run by poor smallholders and rural workers, following the guidelines of the National Programme for Rural Savings and Credit Banks. Through the SCB, the PRONADERS was successful in opening access to financial services to vulnerable groups otherwise excluded by formal financial institutions. Savings schemes were particularly useful in helping families to respond to emergencies. SCB have also prompted a large number of micro-investment in agriculture and the protection and promotion of small-scale and fragile agricultural economies at community level.

1. ***Collective practices of risk management and mutual assistance***

Community system of humanitarian assistance and disaster risk management

The Community system of humanitarian assistance and disaster risk management was established by the Union of farmers Madda BEN (grouping 69 producers’ organisations) in 2008. It responds to the inadequate assistance provided by governments to famers in the remote region of Dosso in Niger. The scheme assists farmer families in case of food crisis due to environmental shocks and violent conflicts providing cash and food. Benefits are administrated both by the Union and the local producers’ organisations, which farmers belong to. The scheme also includes various types of low or no interest loans (cash or in-kind) and storing facilities to help farmers sustain production and protect their incomes against price fluctuations.

*Caisses de Resilience*

The Food and Agriculture Organisation’s *Caisses de Resilience* is an integrated approach combining social, technical and financial support. In Uganda, the *Caisses* operate through local groups (Agropastoralist Field Schools – APF/S) to deliver agricultural training, disaster risk reduction plans and financial services. It is aimed at reducing the structural vulnerability of agro-pastoralist communities through the empowerment of men and women smallholders affected particularly by climate-related shocks and environmental risks. The approach leverages local capacities to increase and diversify assets, income and access to services, thereby improving the resilience of local livelihoods. The approach strengthens social dynamics within the community, and conditions access to rural financial services to the application of agricultural and natural resource management good practices. The combination of these elements make members of the *Caisses de Resilience* able to better anticipate, manage and recover from risks and crises that threaten their food security and nutrition, thus contributing to sustainable community development.

Tarapacá Farm: social therapy and curative pedagogy in social farming

The Tarapacá Farm was established in 2009 in Calí (Colombia) with the idea of combining care-giving services with the practice of organic farming for people with disabilities and special needs. It builds on the methods of curative pedagogy and social therapy based on the contextual observation of disabilities, and the specific needs of each individual at his/her own specific age. This practice was born from the private initiative of parents and teachers in response to the lack of public health and educational alternatives for disabled people in Colombia. Today, the families of these people are the members of this small organisation. The farm is successful in providing therapeutic and educational services, associated to the experience of organic farming, in a safe and joyful space. The entire process of working with soil, animals, productive and commercial processes, facilitates interaction among beneficiaries, creating an environment of sharing, and ultimately contributing to improve the wellbeing of highly marginalised persons and their integration in society.