

Harnessing Digital Technologies and Experiences to Accelerate Agricultural and Rural Development in Asia and the Pacific

IFAD-ADB JOINT SYMPOSIUM IN COLLABORATION WITH MAFRA

23-24 November 2022
Seoul, Republic of Korea



Concept Note

The agricultural sector remains a pillar of Asian economies in view of its significant weight in aggregate income and total workforce. Asia's major sub-regions (South, Southeast and East Asia) house approximately 55% of the world's population and 73% of the world's agricultural population. The sector accounts for 7.8% of GDP in East Asia and 16.7% in South Asia¹. Asia is also home to the majority of the world's estimated 500 million smallholder farmer households. In view of the above, ensuring the sector's continued growth and competitiveness will be critical to reverse the declining trends towards achieving SDGs. ***The estimated year of SDG achievement in APR is currently 2075, according to UN ESCAP, as the gap in achieving the goals is widening. There is hence immense opportunity for, and expectation from, digital interventions to change this picture for the better.***

The region faces major challenges pertinent to production, storage, and distribution of food. Farm workforces are aging and decreasing, post-harvest losses are significant, and climate change has already become a formidable challenge. In future, fewer and older farmers will have to produce more food to feed the growing regional and global populations, underscoring the importance of agricultural value and distribution chains. Farming must be more profitable, and farmers have to become "agripreneurs" to continue producing food while withstanding the emerging challenges. At national levels, these factors imply that countries need modern agri-logistics and technology-driven and knowledge-intensive production as well as post-production investments.

Over the past two decades, mobile and smartphone ownership and mobile coverage in rural Asia have increased steadily. As a result, farmers and agribusinesses are increasingly able to use digital technologies to address the challenges that they face, including limited access to markets.

Digital innovations are already contributing to solve several challenges facing agriculture and rural economy. The future potential for such technologies to promote sustainable economic growth in agriculture has also been noted by numerous development agencies and researchers. For example, the Pathways for Prosperity Commission has noted that "[t]echnological advancements (such as in data analytics, biotechnology, communications and logistics) can improve yields on farm and, importantly, boost the efficiency of agricultural supply chains, helping farmers to access markets."

However, in a region as diverse as the Asia-Pacific, it is acknowledged that there is no single path to agricultural digital innovation. While some solutions have the potential to scale across countries and sub-regions, others are driven by local actors ranging from start-ups to large agribusinesses. Given the fact that some countries in the region are more advanced in the

¹ <https://data.adb.org/dataset/agriculture-value-added-gdp-asia-and-pacific>

development of their digital agriculture ecosystems, there is a significant opportunity for stakeholders across the Asia-Pacific region to learn from what is being done outside of their own borders in terms of policy, technology solutions, and deployment approaches.

Countries in Asia and the Pacific differ significantly in terms of level of development of the agriculture sector. This difference provides an opportunity for the relatively lagging countries to learn from the experience of relatively advanced countries not only to promote technology-driven and knowledge-intensive agricultural activities but also to promote overall rural development. The relatively lagging countries can benefit by studying the approaches to agriculture and rural development applied by the Republic of Korea, which are acclaimed globally. The country is one of the very few Asian countries, which has successfully modernized its agriculture sector by the application of better technology and policy. There is hence immense opportunity to promote agricultural and rural development in Asia by leveraging the digital solutions and experiences of other countries within the region.

Asian Development Bank has been working with MAFRA in selected Asian countries to help them to overcome the constraints to agricultural value chains development, identify the main investment areas, and formulate country-specific recommendations for agricultural and rural development based on the experiences of the Republic of Korea. Likewise, IFAD has been working under the aegis of MAFRA as part of the SEEDS project to jumpstart digital agriculture in developing Asian countries such as Philippines, Cambodia, and Viet Nam.

Recognizing the digital technologies as an enabler of agricultural development, IFAD has been increasingly supporting the use of ICTs and digital tools among smallholders in rural and remote areas. In December 2019, IFAD's Executive Board approved its first [Information and Communication Technology for Development \(ICT4D\) Strategy 2020-2030](#). Within that context, the Asia and the Pacific Division (APR) created a regionally specific strategy and action plan that align with IFAD's corporate efforts and meet the more precise needs of countries in the region. The overall goal is for APR to become a digital agriculture leader within IFAD by 2024, with demonstrable models of impactful ICT4D solutions for smallholder agriculture and allied sectors, making IFAD the go-to institution for ICT4D solutions in agriculture and rural development.

Against this backdrop, the proposed symposium is organized to share the findings and recommendations to promote agricultural and rural development through the application of digital solutions, improving value chains, and applying the lessons learnt from Korean experiences.

The goals of the symposium are:

- Showcase Korean leadership in the domain of ICT4D and innovations that can benefit smallholder producers
- Driving conversation towards the importance of investing in digital agriculture and its important role in building resilience and building back better
- Harnessing the best practices from successful digital agriculture implementations in Asian countries (and other regions) and replicating in vulnerable countries in the region
- Facilitate the sharing of lessons learned from projects across the Asia-Pacific region, but also between regions.
- Catalyse potential partnerships and investments for increased impact

The format will include plenary discussions, interactive panels and thematic networking sessions.

The event will host approximately 100 participants including IFAD and ADB staff, as well as representatives from development and research organizations, the academia, and the private sector.

Agenda

23 November 2022		
Session 1: Digital Agriculture and its Role in Fostering Inclusive and Resilient Rural Transformation		
Time	Topic	Speakers
09:00 -09:30	Joint Opening Ceremony Welcome remarks by MAFRA, IFAD & ADB.	<p>Kim Choul, Director of the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (MAFRA)</p> <p>Ronald Hartman, Director of Global Engagement, Partnership and Resource Mobilization Division, IFAD</p> <p>Mio Oka, Director, Environment, Natural Resources, and Agriculture Division, South Asia Regional Department, ADB</p>
09:35 -10:45	Panel discussion: Role of Digital Agriculture and ICT4D in achieving the SDGs globally, and in APR	<p><i>Session Moderator:</i> Abdelkarim Sma, Asia and the Pacific Lead Regional Economist, IFAD</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Fiona Lynn, Director of the Agricultural Development and Food Security Section, DFAT, Australia – Sung-soo OH, Senior Director General, KOICA – Michelle Winthrop, Ambassador of Ireland to the Republic of Korea and IFAD EB Representative – Kunduz Masykanova, Senior Agriculture and Food Security Specialist, Green Climate Fund – Navin Twarakavi, Senior Digital Agriculture Specialist, ADB – Panos Loukos, Agritech Insights Director, GSMA
10:45 –11:15	Coffee break & Networking	
11:15 –12:30	Leveraging Korean Experiences for Agriculture and Rural Development in Indonesia, Pakistan, and Philippines	<p><i>Session Moderator:</i> Mr Abul Basher, Senior Agriculture and Natural Resource Specialist, ADB</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Presentation by Dr. Jang Heo, Research Director Emeritus Center for International Agricultural Partnership (CIAP) Korea Rural Economic Institute (KREI) – Prof. Dr. Eriyatno, MSAE President Director,

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Center of System, Indonesia – Dr. Abdul Ghafoor, Associate Professor, Institute of Business Management Sciences, University of Agriculture, Faisalabad, Pakistan – Yolando C.Arban, Acting Country Programme Officer and Special Adviser, Philippines Country Office, IFAD – Glenn N. Baticados Program Head, Emerging Innovation for Growth Department (EIGD), Southeast Asian Regional Center for Graduate Study and Research in Agriculture (SEARCA), Philippines – Closing Remarks by ADB
12: 30 -13:30	Lunch break	
Parallel Sessions		
ADB Session 2: Horticulture Value Chains Development in Indonesia, Pakistan and Philippines		IFAD Session 2: Impact driven solutions
14:00-14:45	<p><i>Moderator: MAFRA (TBC)</i></p> <p>Presentation on Horticulture Value Chains Development in Indonesia</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Prof. Dr. Eriyatno, MSAE President Director, Center of System, Indonesia <p>Presentation on Horticulture Value Chains Development in Pakistan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Dr. Abdul Ghafoor, Associate Professor, Institute of Business Management Sciences, University of Agriculture, Faisalabad, Pakistan <p>Presentation on Horticulture Value Chains Development in Philippines</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Glenn N. Baticados Program Head, Emerging Innovation for Growth Department (EIGD), Southeast Asian Regional Center for 	<p>13:40 – 14:40</p> <p>Part 1: Evidence and Experiences from IFAD projects funded through Korean Supplementary Funds</p> <p><i>Moderator: Liam Chicca, Lead Portfolio Advisor, Asia and the Pacific Region, IFAD</i></p> <p>Setting the scene: Importance of innovation and partnerships for Impact driven solutions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Wei-Li Woo, Innovation Lead, Grow Asia <p>Enhancing Agricultural Productivity and Improving Agricultural Markets in the Asia and Pacific Region through use of ICT - Phase 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Kith Visal, Director of Bronx Technology, Cambodia – Yolando C.Arban, Acting Country Programme Officer and Special Adviser, Philippines Country Office, IFAD – Mr. My Thanh Nguyen, Rynan Group, Vietnam

	Graduate Study and Research in Agriculture (SEARCA), Philippines		
14:45-15:05	Discussion by country representatives (Indonesia, Pakistan, and Philippines)	14:45-15:45	<p>Part 2: Evidence and Experiences from IFAD projects across APR</p> <p><i>Moderator:</i> Brenda Gunde, Global Senior Technical ICT4D Specialist, East and Southern Africa Division (ESA), IFAD</p> <p>Setting the scene</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dr. Taek-ryoun Kwon, Director General of Technology Cooperation Bureau, Rural Development Administration, Republic of Korea <p>Experiences from Cambodia</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sakphouseth Meng, Country Programme Officer, IFAD - Mr Vutha Kuong, Digital Technology Coordinator, Techno Start-up Centre, Cambodia <p>Experiences from the Pacific</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Candra Samekto, Country Director Pacific Islands, IFAD <p>Examples funded through IFAD's Rural Poor Stimulus Facility</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Adeel Shafquat, Country Director Pakistan, PxD - Beena Sharma, Head of Planning Department, Agricultural Development Bank Limited and Project Director, VITA, Nepal
15:05-15:50	Open discussions and Q&A	15:50– 16:50	<p>Part 3: Evidence and Experiences from different regions: achieving impact at scale</p> <p><i>Moderator:</i> Tamara Nicodeme, Regional Coordinator, Pacific Islands, PIRAS, IFAD</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hardi Vieria, Country Programme Officer, Latin America and the Caribbean Division (LAC), IFAD - Isaac Mensah, Regional Analyst, West and Central Africa Division (WCA), IFAD - Brenda Gunde, Global Senior Technical ICT4D Specialist,
15:50-16:10	Next Steps Md Abul Basher, Senior Agriculture and Natural Resource Specialist, ADB		

			East and Southern Africa Division (ESA), IFAD – Mr Dominic MacSorley, CEO Concern Worldwide
16:10-16:25	Closing Remarks by ADB (5min)	16:55 –17:15	Way Forward and Closing Remarks – Anne Lochoff, Programme Director, Singapore Agri-Food Innovation Lab, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore – Reehana Raza, Asia and the Pacific Regional Director, IFAD (recorded message)
16:25-16:55	Networking		

24 November 2022 High-Level Networking

Time	Topic	Speakers
09:00 - 09:30	Finding common ground & catalysing partnerships	<i>Session Moderators:</i> – Brenda Gunde, Global Senior Technical ICT4D Specialist, IFAD – Hanisha Jagtiani, ICT4D Specialist, APR
09:30 -11:00	Workshop on user-centricity	– Dushyantsinh Anopish Jadeja, Product Manager, Google Research
11:00 – 11:15	Coffee break	
11:20 –13:00	Mini dealroom Session: Track 1: Engaging with private sector funders Track 2: Using patient capital	– Mahesh Murthy, Managing Partner Exseed Fund Managing Director, Exseed Space – Xinyi Lim, Executive Director, Sustainability and Agricultural Impact, Pinduoduo (tbc) – Marc Dumas-Johansesn, Agriculture and Food Security Specialist, Green Climate Fund