



Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the  
United Nations

17-21 October 2022

# FAO SCIENCE AND INNOVATION FORUM

Harnessing science, technology  
and innovation for transforming  
our agrifood systems

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## SPECIAL EVENT

11:00 - 12:50 CEST | Plenary Hall, FAO, ROME

21

October  
2022

## DIGITALIZATION OF AGRIFOOD SYSTEMS

Science, Technology and Innovation provide us with new solutions to the complex problems that we face today in our agrifood systems, with updated projections indicating that more than 670 million people will still be facing hunger in 2030. Intertwined with science and innovation, digital technologies, in particular, are having a profound impact on vulnerable populations and societies. New digital capabilities have transformational effect and enormous potential to positively effect agricultural and food markets through the world. The event aims to bring forward discussions on key topics about Digitalization of Agrifood Systems, through concrete examples of FAO's Digital capabilities as accelerators to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and FAO's Four Betters.

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# DIGITALIZATION OF AGRIFOOD SYSTEMS

Special event organized by  
**Digitalization and Informatics Division (CSI), FAO**

## Background and rationale

Information and Communication Technologies have tremendous potential to help agriculture to meet the growing demand for safe and nutritious food; better manage natural resources; contribute to high quality growth in productivity; ensure inclusion; and contribute to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

Digital innovation holds indeed unique capabilities to bridge the rural divide, unlock employment opportunities, increase the resilience of rural areas and empower youth and women to access information, technology and markets.

In times of economic slowdown and uncertainty, FAO has a key role to play in promoting the use and adoption of digital technologies to facilitate the transformation of agrifood systems and agribusinesses, as well as in advising on and promoting a policy agenda and policy investments to address the digital divide and “massify” digital benefits, while making sure to leave no one behind.

Following its Digital Agriculture programme Priority Area, FAO has already introduced several programs and initiatives to translate this vision into concrete support and delivery for its Members States.

To better progress along this path, and bring the benefits of digital innovation closer to the people, further promotion and enhanced collaboration are needed throughout the UN system and with all relevant stakeholders including the private sector.

But as data-driven agriculture promises many opportunities across the sector, we must still ensure that digital investments do not generate divide and global challenges still need to be tackled, especially for agri-food systems in low and middle-income countries through a joint collaboration and holistic perspective that will take into consideration elements including: data ownership concerns, accuracy, power asymmetry on one side, and barriers such as infrastructure, digital divide and capabilities on the other side.

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## DIGITALIZATION OF AGRIFOOD SYSTEMS

# AGENDA

Organized by  
**Digitalization and Informatics Division, FAO**Moderator **Henry Burgsteden**, Coordinator, FAO

11:00 - 11:10

**OPENING**

Opening Remarks

**QU Dongyu**, Director-General, FAO**Máximo Torero Cullen**, Chief Economist, FAO

11:10 - 11:20

**KEYNOTE**

FAO Digital capabilities to target interventions

**Dejan Jakovljevic**, Director and CIO, Digitalization and Informatics Division, FAO

11:20 - 12:35

**DIGITAL AGRICULTURE - TRANSFORMATION IN ACTION**

Digital territorial ecosystems for innovation in agri-food systems in the LAC region

**Agustín Zimmermann**, FAO Representative in Ecuador, FAO

Senegal/Rwanda: Challenges and opportunities of the Digital Services Portfolio (DSP) in the field

**Coumba Sow**, FAO Representative in Rwanda, FAO

Scaling up Digital Agriculture Solutions to Harness the Agricultural Transformation: Ethiopia ATI Experience

**Temesgen Gebeye**, Director for Digital Agriculture, Ethiopia Agricultural Transformation Agency (ATA)

How digital finance can expand outreach of a National Development Bank: the case of UDB

**Francis Mwesi**, Chief Economist, Uganda Development Bank

Nuclear and digital techniques: enhancing the use and conservation of natural resources

**Gerd Dercon**, Laboratories Head, Soil and Water management and crop nutrition section, International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)

Best Practices for Technological Adoption among Smallholder Farmers: A Case Study in Kenya for Application in the United States

**Somil Aggarwal**, Cornell University, Transformative Research Challenge, World Food Forum

12:35 - 12:45

**Q&A SESSION**

12:45 - 12:50

**CLOSING**

Closing Remarks

**Dejan Jakovljevic**, Director and CIO, Digitalization and Informatics Division, FAO