

ITU Regional Development Forum for Europe (RDF-EUR)

Information and Communication Technologies for attaining Sustainable Development Goals

organized by the International Telecommunication Union with the support of the National Authority for Management and Regulation in Communications (ANCOM) of Romania and cooperation with the European Conference of Postal and Telecommunication Administrations (CEPT)

22-23 May 2023
Timisoara, Romania

Remote participation at http://itu.int/go/RDF_EUR_23
(Meeting held back-to-back with Com-ITU of CEPT – 24-26 May 2023)

Please note that submitted information will be presented during the RDF-EUR P2C Roundtables and it will also be reflected on the pledging platform of the Partner 2 Connect Digital Coalition.

CONTRIBUTION FORM

ORGANIZATION: International Telecommunication (ITU) and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia

FOCAL POINT: FAO Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia (REU-Digital-Agriculture@fao.org) and ITU Office for Europe (EURregion@itu.int)

TITLE: FAO-ITU Digital Excellence in Agriculture in Europe and Central Asia

DESCRIPTION OF ACTION:

In 2021, FAO and ITU launched a joint Digital Excellence in Agriculture in Europe and Central Asia: Regional Contest to identify, showcase, and celebrate good practices and innovative digital solutions that have proven successful in advancing the digital transformation of agricultural sector and contribute to building resilient and sustainable food systems in the region.

This Contest was built upon the outcomes of a joint ITU and FAO review on the Status of Digital Agriculture in 18 countries in Europe and Central Asia (2020), which demonstrated how Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) play an emerging role in the agriculture of Europe and Central Asia. While ICTs are acting as an engine for agricultural development and have spawned a consistent wave of innovation in the region, the review also highlighted that the adoption of digital technologies in agriculture differs from country to country, and from region to region. In particular, it stressed that smallholder farmers have yet to experience the widespread benefits of this digital transformation; they are lagging behind when it comes to the adoption of digital agriculture solutions and innovations due to a lack of trust in the potential of ICTs, limited digital skills, connectivity issues and restricted availability of ICT-based solutions to utilize and scale up. The Contest therefore aimed at identifying solutions that are applying ICTs to address identified challenges across the following areas: Regulatory Frameworks, Enhanced market access, Financial services and insurance, Capacity Development and Empowerment, Agriculture innovations systems and Sustainable farming, Disaster risk management and Early warning systems, Food safety and traceability, Food loss and waste.

The first main phase of the contest consisted of an Open Call for Good Practices which mobilized 200 applicants from 36 countries. Of these, 170 solutions were considered to meet the eligibility criteria to enter the Contest. Such solutions were displayed in an ITU-FAO Stocktaking Report. The second main phase of the contest consisted



in selecting the finalists and awardees of the contest. All finalists' solutions are presented in the FAO-ITU Digital Excellence in Agriculture Report, constituting the final main phase and outcome of such a Contest. This Report

This report, released in May 2023, summarizes the main trends in digital services and products, the most important technologies used, as well as the difficulties and challenges that arise in the development of digital agricultural applications. Presenting the finalists, the report shares the key challenges applicants are addressing, the digital technologies they are using to succeed, their journeys and their plans for the near future based on the information provided. The latter analyses how the technology infrastructure, the regulatory and business environment, the availability of human capital, and the COVID-19 pandemic represented both challenges and opportunities for digital agriculture practitioners. It provides useful information for developers and service providers already active in this field or planning to enter it, as well as guidance for decision-makers on possible points of intervention and areas to support or regulate. Finally, it provides lessons learnt, and recommendations to advance digital agriculture in Europe and Central Asia.

COUNTRIES in FOCUS: [Name countries to be impacted by this action]

Europe and Central Asian Countries covered by ITU and FAO Regional Offices.

YEARS of IMPLEMENTATION: [Tick the relevant boxes or delete the irrelevant items]

☒ 2023

☒ 2024

☐ 2025

RELEVANT ITU REGIONAL INITIATIVE: [Tick the relevant boxes or delete the irrelevant items]

☐ EUR1: Digital infrastructure development

☒ EUR2: Digital transformation for resilience

☐ EUR3: Digital inclusion and skills development

☐ EUR4: Trust and confidence in the use of telecommunications/ICTs

☐ EUR5: Digital innovation ecosystems

Please find more information on the ITU Regional Initiatives 2023-2025, as defined by WTDC-22, [here](#).

RELATED ITU-D PRIORITIES AS DEFINED BY THE ITU WORLD TELECOMMUNICATION DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE 2022

☐ Affordable connectivity

☐ **Digital Transformation**

☐ **Enabling policy and regulatory environment**

☐ **Resource mobilization and international cooperation**

☐ Inclusive and secure telecommunications/ICTs for sustainable development

Please find more information on the ITU-D Priorities, as defined by WTDC-22, [here](#).



RELATED ITU PRIORITIES AS DEFINED BY ITU PLENIPOTENTIARY CONFERENCE 2022

- ☐ Spectrum use for space and terrestrial services
- ☐ International telecommunication numbering resources
- ☐ Inclusive and secure telecommunication/ICT infrastructure and services
- ☐ **Digital applications**
- ☐ **Enabling environment**

Please find more information on the ITU Priorities, as defined by PP-22, [here](#)

RELATED WSIS ACTION LINE: [Tick the relevant boxes or delete the irrelevant items]

- ☐ C1: The role of governments and all stakeholders in the promotion of ICTs for development
- ☐ C2: Information and communication infrastructure
- ☐ C3: Access to information and knowledge
- ☐ **C4: Capacity building**
- ☐ C5: Building confidence and security in the use of ICTs
- ☐ **C6: Enabling environment**
- ☐ **C7: ICT applications**
- ☐ C8: Cultural diversity and identity, linguistic diversity and local content
- ☐ C9: Media
- ☐ C10: Ethical dimensions the Information Society
- ☐ **C11: International and regional cooperation**

RELATED SDG: [Tick the relevant boxes or delete the irrelevant items]

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> SDG 1: No Poverty | <input type="checkbox"/> SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SDG 2: Zero Hunger | <input type="checkbox"/> SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities <input type="checkbox"/> SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SDG 3: Good Health and Well-being | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SDG 12: Responsible Consumption and Production |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SDG 4: Quality Education | <input type="checkbox"/> SDG 13: Climate Action |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SDG 5: Gender Equality | |



☐ SDG 6: Clean Water and Sanitation☐ SDG 7: Affordable and Clean Energy☐ SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth☒ SDG 9: Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure☐ SDG 14: Life Below Water☐ SDG 15: Life on Land☐ SDG 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions☒ SDG 17: Partnerships for the SDGs