

#IFADiNNovationTalk no. 4



Join us
**DIGITAL AGRICULTURE AND
THE RURAL POOR:
CHALLENGES AND
OPPORTUNITIES IN
DELIVERING RESULTS**

Wednesday 5 May 2021
14:00-15:00 CEST

innovation@ifad.org

  

Where: https://ifad.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_hQ3EcTb8SQ66n3RsHejQTw
Registration required

Please join IFAD and [Precision Agriculture for Development \(PAD\)](#) at the fourth #IFADiNNovationTalk featuring Prof. Michael Kremer, Nobel Memorial Prize in Economic Sciences (2019), in a dialogue about digital agriculture and the rural poor on Wednesday 5 May from 14:00 - 15:00 CEST.

Digital agriculture and the rural poor: Challenges and opportunities in delivering results

The COVID-19 pandemic has fast-tracked the adoption of digital technologies and reshaped our societies. The rapid penetration and development of digital technologies has the potential to revolutionise the ways in which poor farmers receive and exercise information to improve their livelihoods and advance their resilience to shocks.

This event will aim to answer the following questions:

- As we rapidly adopt new digital tools, how do we ensure that the world's poorest households are not left behind?

- How do we design tools and interventions that are inclusive, human centred and user-friendly?
- What efforts are being made to give farmers equal access to timely and accurate information to secure and advance their livelihoods?
- Discuss the advantages that phone-based agricultural services present, particularly at a time when traditional in-person extension services are severely constrained by the COVID-19 pandemic.

PAD is transforming agricultural extension in developing countries by utilizing digital technologies and rigorous research methods. PAD works with partners to build, scale, and improve mobile phone-based agricultural extension with the goal of increasing the productivity and income of 100 million smallholder farmers and their families.

In 2020, IFAD and PAD established a partnership that aims to deliver personalised agricultural advice to farmers through their mobile phones, establishing a two-way information channel by which farmers can receive low cost, customised advice to improve on-farm practices, input utilisation, pest and disease management, environmental sustainability, and access to markets.

Panellists will share progress and highlight key challenges and opportunities in the implementation of digital agricultural advisory services for smallholder farmers in Kenya, Pakistan, and Nigeria. This work is supported by the grant “Development and Expansion of Digital Agricultural Advisory Services for Smallholder Farmers in the Context of COVID-19,” funded with a US\$2 million grant from IFAD and co-financed by PAD and the Government of Punjab in Pakistan.

The grant aims to reach 1.7 million small-scale farmers in Kenya, Nigeria and Pakistan with personalized agricultural advice through their mobile phones, to sustainably improve their incomes, food security and resilience to economic shocks caused by COVID-19.

Main takeaways for the audience

- Digital agriculture extension can provide smallholder farmers with timely and accurate information capable of shifting their behaviours to be more productive and profitable.
- Digital extension is extremely cost-effective and can be implemented for \$1-2 per farmer per year.
- Digital extension can be implemented during COVID-19 lockdowns, in fragile and conflict-affected settings, and in other contexts where traditional in-person extension is not feasible.
- COVID-19 presents a catalytic opportunity to invest in digital agricultural extension to help farmers weather short-term shocks associated with the pandemic and to build more accessible extension systems in the longer term.

For questions or to learn more about the learning events organized by the Change, Delivery and Innovation Unit (CDI) please contact Gladys H Morales, Senior Innovation Adviser, g.moralesguevara@ifad.org or write to innovation@ifad.org.

Interested in the event but unable to attend? Register [here](#) and we will send you a link to the event’s proceedings.

IFAD Innovation Talks

In November 2020 IFAD launched the Fund's first community of practice (CoP) for innovation on the IFAD Dgroups.io platform.

The [IFAD Innovation Network](#) is an informal, democratic, non-hierarchical space where members can share ideas, good practices, tools and lessons learned on how IFAD can: use innovation to improve performance and better address the needs and challenges of IFAD's target groups and beneficiaries; and develop innovation for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

[IFAD Innovation Talks](#) are a series of monthly sessions, lasting one hour. They feature innovative approaches, tools, products and services developed by IFAD, its partners and the members of the IFAD Innovation Network in order to further the aims of the network, as listed above. The Talks follow various formats: from interviews and panel discussions to TEDx talks and demonstrations of new technological tools.