



Is Precision Farming the Next Agriculture Revolution?

Experts Opinion



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Background. Precision Farming also commonly referred to Precision Agriculture is transforming the agriculture landscape by supporting farmers with optimal management of agriculture inputs based on site-specific requirements of farm fields and animals, enabling more effective and efficient use of natural, human, and financial resources. Precision Agriculture has also been attributed to contribution of ecological and environmental gains through optimal use of water, soil and other resources acting as decision support system to farmers to understand farm conditions while increasing farm management efficiency.

The rise of Precision Technologies for on farm data analysis has recently been coupled with by the rising popularity of e-extension services that support farmers make informed decision on farm to increase productivity. However, these solutions are not readily available for small-scale farmers.

On a more positive note, the use of mobile technologies has increased in popularity as a means of enabling smallholder farmers in accessing digital technologies. The increased availability of mobile phones and access to timely and accurate agriculture information has made it easier and more accessible for farmers to adopt digital agriculture solutions over time. Precision agriculture is not a panacea. Poor small-scale producers who lack access to infrastructure, technology, and literacy – particularly women – barriers to accessing these solutions. Second, attaining scale is a significant challenge to reach rural and low-income smallholder farmers, but the cost of these technologies can be prohibitively expensive for small-scale farmers. Precision agriculture solutions should be widely accessible to majority of rural farmers to have an impact.

The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) views precision agriculture adoption as a way for smallholder farmers to increase productivity, significantly contribute to poverty and hunger alleviation, and benefit from climate change mitigation gains.

Due to the importance of these technologies, IFAD's (ICT4D) Strategy (2020-2030) places importance on integrating Precision Agriculture into its programs and projects that promote smallholder farmer adoption. To accomplish this, IFAD will continue to collaborate with other development partners, technology experts, academia, and industry companies to pilot and validate solutions that address long-standing challenges faced by small-scale producers and rural communities, including financial inclusion, climate change adaptation, access to input and information, and risk management in agriculture.

Purpose of the event. This webinar will bring together experts from the development sector, academia, and industry with extensive field experience employing precision farming technologies. The webinar will share the lessons learned from researchers and practitioners, as well as how these lessons can be applied to advance precision farming and address the challenges faced by small-scale producers in remote areas. The webinar will emphasize the critical role of IFAD and other development partners in collaborating with the public and private sectors to invest in rural and remote areas and develop solutions for small-scale producers.

Date & Time. The event will be held on Zoom, on 22 October at 14:00-15:15 CEST

Zoom Registration.

https://ifad.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_CK0fSJowQ6G0vLgQsl4cUQ

Agenda

Moderator of the event: **Nixon Mageka Gecheo**, Senior Programme Officer, Digital Solution and System for Agriculture at AGRA

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| 14.02-14.05 | OPENING REMARKS <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mylene Kherallah, Lead Global Technical Advisor, Rural Finance, Markets and Value Chains at IFAD |
| 14.05-14.30 | INTRODUCTION OF PANELISTS AND OVERVIEW OF PRECISION FARMING TECHNOLOGIES <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dr. Raj Khosla, Professor and Head of Agronomy Department at Kansas State University• Sriram Bharatam, Founder & Chief Mentor of Kuza Biashara Limited• Lohento Ken, Digital Innovation Strategy Specialist at FAO's Regional Office for Africa• Putso Nyathi, Senior Regional Technical Specialist, Agronomy at IFAD• Virpi Stucki, Chief of Rural Entrepreneurship, Job Creation and Human Security Division at UNIDO |
| 14.30-15.00 | MODERATED PANEL DISCUSSION |
| 15.00-15.10 | LIVE Q&A |
| 15.10-15.15 | CONCLUDING REMARKS AND SUMMARY |