ITU Regional Development Forum for Europe (RDF-EUR)

Information and Communication Technologies for Attaining Sustainable Development Goals

Tuesday 26 May 2020 | 11:00 – 15:30 | Remote Meeting

https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Regional-Presence/Europe/Pages/Events/2020/RDF/Remote.aspx

CONTRIBUTION BY [ORGANISATION / COUNTRY]

TITLE: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)

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Europe Regional Initiative: [Tick the relevant boxes or delete the irrelevant items]

- ☐ EUR1: Broadband infrastructure, broadcasting and spectrum management
- ☐ **X EUR2: A citizen-centric approach to building services for national administrations**
- ☐ EUR3: Accessibility, affordability and skills development for all to ensure digital inclusion and sustainable development
- ☐ EUR4: Enhancing trust and confidence in the use of information and communication technologies
- ☐ EUR5: ICT-centric innovation ecosystems

Year(s) of implementation:

- ☐ **X 2019**
- ☐ **X 2020**
- ☐ **X 2021**

Background

FAO Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia has been collaborating with ITU in 2019, undertaking a survey on the use of Information and Communications Technologies in agriculture and the status of digital agriculture strategies in Europe and Central Asia in the summer of 2019. The first results were presented at ITU World Telecomm 19 sessions entitled **"Developing digital agriculture strategies in Europe and Central Asia"** https://telecomworld.itu.int/2019-event/2019-programme/?year=2019&sessionid=C-00006490

As a follow up, the two organizations have undertaken a joint review in the winter 2019-2020 on the **"Status of Digital Agriculture in 18 countries of Europe and Central Asia**". The publication is expected end of spring 2020.

At the ITU World Telecomm 19, FAO and ITU also co-organized the meeting on the **International Digital Council for Food and Agriculture**: https://telecomworld.itu.int/2019-event/2019-programme/?year=2019&sessionid=C-00006856.

During the World Teclecomm19, FAO also participated in the session on "**Accelerating the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals in Europe: ICT4SDG Regional Initiatives**": https://telecomworld.itu.int/2019-event/2019-programme/?year=2019&sessionid=C-00006491

ITU and FAO have been preparing **a session on Digital Agriculture for the 2020 Balkan Digital**, which was to take place in April 2020 but has been postponed.

Proposal

FAO and ITU will hold a webinar on the "**Status of Digital Agriculture in 18 countries of Europe and Central Asia**" for the launch of the publication in 2020.

Several countries have sought FAO support to develop their national e-agriculture strategies in Europe. This is the case of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina ad well as Armenia.
ITU collaboration is foreseen to bridge the rural digital divide, work together on the accessibility, affordability and skills development for all to ensure digital inclusion and sustainable development in agriculture and rural development, enhance trust and confidence in the use of information and communication technologies in rural areas, and enhance innovations in the agriculture sector.

FAO would like to invite ITU to assist in **monitoring indicators on digitalization** in the region and other information in support of programme of work (digital index). For this work, more **disaggregated data** is needed to collect and analyse the status and trends, policies and strategies, challenges for **rural and urban areas**, paying attention to **gender aspects of digital divide**.