



# MCDF Webinar Workshop



## Investing in Digital Infrastructure for Rural Transformation: IFAD's DPI-First Approach to Inclusive Scale



Presented by

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## **The problem we're solving and Why rural Solutions fail to scale**

- **Fragmented data, fragmented delivery, fragmented markets**
- **Last-mile constraints: language, literacy, bandwidth, affordability**
- **Climate risk and biodiversity loss are accelerating while advisory capacity is overstretched**
- **“Pilot-to-scale” gap is usually a delivery and a financing gap,**

# DPI for Agriculture

Connecting Farmers to Services & Markets

## Why DPI matters for IFAD

The core enabler Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI)

- **Farmer identity / registry** as a public good a gateway to services
- **Interoperability** -with Open standards, API to reduce duplication promote repeatability
- **Consent & governance**- trust, rights, accountability
- **Delivery rails** - Extension Services lowering cost for small producers
- **Services Layer** for improved production and productivity and private sector innovation

**Examples:** Open Agri Connect for Rwanda and Nigeria (farmer registries as DPI)

Joint Programme under the SDG Fund on Data for Digital Transformation Tanzania

Farmer Registry & Digital ID



- ✓ Data Governance
- 🔒 Consent & Privacy

Agri Advisory

Access to Finance

Market Linkages

Climate Alerts

Interoperable & Inclusive Platforms



# How IFAD channels Digital Investments

- **Country Sovereign investments:** embed digital infrastructure services into value chains, extension services, finance, climate resilience
- **Partnerships:** innovators, private sector for scale
- **Innovation with technology institutions:** Proof of concepts and pilots that graduate into sovereign investment projects

*Examples AI advisory pilots with Farmer.Chat Nigeria and early warning, digital market linkages MAVIM Project in India*



# Challenges and Progress Vs Demand

- IFIs often finance “build” more than “run” leaving projects in Pilots
- Time horizons- Digital platforms need multi-year commitment not project based
- Procurement of services in relation to country capacity bottlenecks slow institutionalisation
- Risk concerns (data misuse, data models bias, accountability) lead to overly cautious scaling
- Shift more financing to system-layer investments with long-term operating capacity- example of India Agri stack



# Replicable Models Public Services Plus Sovereign and Private Sector integration

- **Public funds** finance the core DPI rails farmer registry/ID, interoperability (open standards and APIs), consent and data governance, and integration into delivery systems such as extension and market platforms.
- **Concessional loans** finance national rollout and operational scale: infrastructure, institutional capacity, service delivery expansion, and the long-term “run” costs needed to keep services reliable and trusted.
- **Grants** are used strategically to pilot, learn, and de-risk innovation supporting proof-of-concept deployments, inclusion design for women and last-mile users, product hardening, evaluation, and iteration before scaling nationally.

*Example: RDDP2 Project and Open Agriconnet Grant in Rwanda*



# Why this model works and can be replicated

- DPI leverages shared infrastructure by allocating grants for experimentation and combining public and concessional funding for scaling, ensuring resources are available for nationwide implementation.
- DPI is modular, the same rails can support multiple services such as advisory, finance and insurance, market linkages, climate alerts reducing duplication across projects and preventing vendor lock-in.
- Agribusinesses, fintechs, insurers, input providers, and advisory firms can plug into the interoperable ecosystem to expand offerings new products, bundled services, and distribution models at lower cost and with faster scale



# **Three Priorities to Deliver Inclusive Digital Infrastructure at Scale**

- **Invest in DPI rails:- registries, interoperability, governance**

**Prioritise investments in farmer registries and digital identity/credentials to reliably reach and target farmers with an interoperability layer to prevent fragmentation and vendor lock-in and ensure data governance to establish trust and enable responsible data-sharing.**

- **Fund last-mile delivery and inclusion voice, extension integration, feedback loops**

**Digital enabled services only matters if it is usable in real rural conditions.**

- **Use blended finance to scale with risk-sharing to crowd in private capital**

**Move beyond pilots by financing the full pathway from adoption to sustainability.**



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Thank  
You!