International Platform for Digital Food and Agriculture

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Webinar series - Nutrition in a Digital World

EPISODE ONE | The challenges of digital food marketing
How did it start?

1. 2019
   - Phase: 74 Agriculture Ministers requested FAO & other IO's to develop a Concept Note for the establishment of an inclusive forum for digital food and agriculture.

2. Consultations
   - Process: Design thinking workshops & individual consultation meetings & online global consultation groups interviews.
   - Output: Preliminary feedback from relevant stakeholders and first structure and draft of the document.

3. Concept Note
   - Process: Based on the feedback from the consultation process a more comprehensive document was drafted.
   - Output: FAO & multi-stakeholders finalized the Concept Note.

4. 2020
   - Process: The final Concept Note was discussed at a side event.
   - Output: 71 Ministers of Agriculture called upon FAO’s and its governing bodies to support the process for the establishment of the initiative.

5. 2020
   - Process: In July 2020, the FAO Council endorsed the Platform & requested its ToRs to be reviewed by the FAO governing & technical bodies.
   - Output: The Platforms’ ToRs have been reviewed by COAG & COFO and will be further reviewed by the Programme Committee, COFI & FAO Council.
What is it about?

• **Cooperation & soft governance** – recommendations, best practices and voluntary guidelines to support policy-makers in developing programmes, regulations and policy approaches, e.g. CFS-RAI, Voluntary Guidelines for Sustainable Soils

• **Multi-stakeholder** discussion forum – voluntary and inclusive (countries, farmers, agribusiness, NGOs, academia, technology companies, and international organizations)

• Focus on the potential of digital technology applications on food and agriculture – impacts, challenges and risks

• In line with the UN Secretary’s-General ‘Roadmap for Digital Cooperation’ and the High-level Panel of Experts on Digital Cooperation - multi-stakeholderism and multilateralism
Global cooperation architecture for digital technologies

International Telecommunications Union - UN agency mandated for the digital economy and the standard-setting body for digital technologies

World Telecommunications Development Conference - digital development, skills, connectivity, infrastructure

World Summit on the Information Society Forum - broad objective to achieve a common vision on the role of digitalization in SDGs

Internet Governance Forum is a multi-stakeholder platform for discussion of Internet governance issues

AI for Good Global Summit - identify AI solutions, scale applications and accelerate progress towards SDGs
Why the Platform?

• **There is a gap:** food and agriculture not always included in the discussions in fora mandated for digital economy – often in a broad and overarching manner (e.g. digital divide)

• Impacts on food and agriculture can be **specific:**
  - **Farm/consumer data** – ownership, analysis and privacy issues
  - **Artificial intelligence** – human rights, food safety, health, environment and animal welfare
  - **Digital public goods** – accelerate progress to SDGs
  - **Automation** – employment, wages, rural economy and social changes

• Platform will **bridge the gap** and **increase awareness** on digital food and agriculture, **facilitate discussion** among stakeholders and promote **common understanding and solutions**
Structure and operating mechanism

Inter-governmental Representatives’ Group
(27 FAO Members)

FAO Council or relevant technical committees

reporting to

Coordination Unit
(day-to-day management)

providing technical inputs
facilitating operations
ensuring inclusiveness

Advisory Committee
(International Organizations & stakeholders)

Online Multi-stakeholder Forum

Ad Hoc Working Group
Many approaches across the United Nations

- UNESCO provides a space where norms related to AI are debated and explore the linkages between these technologies, education and livelihoods.

- UNICEF is seeking inputs from diverse stakeholders on the issues related to AI and children’s rights.

- WHO has established a Digital Health Technical Advisory Group and organizes a series of roundtables with stakeholders to discuss the development of global standards for digital health products.

Nutrition in the Digital World - marketing

Digital technologies reduce search, tracking and verification costs.

**Enlarge the scope and quality of the search**

- more information, better variety and lower prices can lead to better diets
- e-commerce, market structure impacts / transformation in food retail and service

**Easier to track behavior**

- privacy issues, targeted advertising & children influencing behavior and food preferences
- need for guidelines (e.g. WHO & UNICEF)

**Establish reputation and trustworthiness**

- can affect demand and facilitate the use of labelling recommendations/guidelines
Thank you