**FAO presents results of a comprehensive study on the digitalization of agriculture in Tajikistan**

On 17 December 2024 the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the Centre for Sociological Research “Zerkalo” hosted a workshop in Dushanbe to present the results of a comprehensive study on the digitalization of agriculture in Tajikistan. The "Digital Agriculture in Tajikistan: Results of a Large-Scale Study with Smallholder Farmers and Joint Development of Recommendations" workshop brought together key stakeholders, including farmers, policymakers, technology providers, and experts, to discuss the barriers and opportunities associated with the adoption of information and communication technologies (ICT) in the agricultural sector.

The event marked an important step in advancing the digital transformation of Tajikistan's agricultural landscape, particularly for smallholder farmers who form the backbone of the country's agricultural production. The large-scale study, conducted from September to December 2024 in collaboration with the Center for Sociological Research "Zerkalo", aimed to understand smallholder farmers’ interactions with ICT, including their awareness, attitudes, the use in farming, barriers to access, and perceptions of the benefits of the technologies.

The workshop highlighted the key findings of the study conducted across Tajikistan with 1400 small, and medium dehkan farms. It also served as a platform for formulating practical recommendations for expanding access to ICT and its effective use in agriculture. Participants co-designed recommendations that promote ICT adoption, particularly in rural areas, with the aim of increasing access to technologies that increase productivity, improve market linkages and support sustainable agricultural practices.

"FAO recognizes the transformative potential of ICTs in agriculture, particularly in increasing productivity, promoting sustainable practices and improving food security. Through this workshop, FAO aimed to support the Government of Tajikistan and other stakeholders in advancing a digital agenda that empowers farmers and creates a more resilient agricultural sector.", said Aghasi Harutyunyan, FAO Representative ad interim in Tajikistan.

Importantly, participants had the opportunity to address barriers to ICT adoption among smallholder farmers as well as factors enabling the use of ICT in farming, among which are awareness of benefits, accessible mobile and internet services, affordable devices and internet, availability of support and training, and others.

“Our collaborative efforts highlight the need to bridge knowledge and technology gaps for smallholder farmers. By leveraging data collected through the survey, especially the data on the main barriers that farmers face in accessing and using the technology in farming, the Government of Tajikistan, FAO and our development counterparts will be able to design targeted interventions for smallholder farmers that enhance access to digital tools and improve agricultural practices.”, said Veronika Sherova, Digital Development Specialist at FAO.

The workshop is part of FAO's project “Support to the implementation of the National Digital Agriculture Strategy of Tajikistan: Empowering Farmers through Data and AI Solutions” launched in 2024 to support the implementation of the national digital agriculture roadmap in Tajikistan.