Smallholders produce much of the world’s food but face major challenges in profitable market engagement. Due to their physical, economic, social, and political marginalization, most smallholders pursue low productivity, subsistence-oriented livelihoods that support meagre and unhealthy diets. Millions of them are therefore chronically food insecure and vulnerable to shocks.

Strengthening the resilience, productivity and market engagement of smallholder farmers is critical to reversing the rising trend in hunger.

Given the pivotal role smallholders play in achieving a world with Zero Hunger, over the years WFP has been developing a diversified and complementary portfolio of smallholder-facing initiatives, which aim to assist smallholders in advancing from food insecurity and vulnerability to increased income and food security.

WFP’s robust but fragmented portfolio of pro-smallholder initiatives results in a wide variety of siloed solutions that lead to inconsistent data definitions hence inability to integrate WFP data and ground programme design on sound data-based evidence.

In this siloed environment, it is even more difficult leveraging on and integrating existing solutions and resources offered by external partners, such as host governments, the private sector and implementing partners, to multiplicate the provision of services to the smallholders supported.
Digital transformation in action

Digital transformation is a top priority for WFP. It involves integrating and adopting digital technology across the organization to fundamentally change how it operates and delivers value.

For WFP’s smallholder farmer portfolio, digital transformation means the development of a comprehensive digital platform, which will enable WFP and its partners better interact with the smallholder farmers they support.

At the same time, the scope of the platform is to provide smallholder farmers and their organizations with an increasing set of essential services to enhance their productivity, adaptive capacity, market engagement and income-generating opportunities.

The Solution: Farm2go

Farm2Go is the result of a strong collaboration between WFP’s Digital Transformation Services Unit and the Smallholder Agricultural Market Support team.

Currently, Farm2Go consists of a threefold platform, for three different user profiles or personas:

1. A mobile app for smallholder farmer aggregators, enabling farmer organizations to register their farmer members, record the produce they deposit, including essential information such as the price and quality, and engage in market offers with buyers.

2. A web app for partners that allows buyers to target market offers to farmer aggregators, as well as overseeing the status of their offers, including the quantity aggregated, the number of contributing farmers, and the transaction value.

   The partner web app could eventually be used by any other service provider with an interest in providing services to farmer aggregators, on a commercial basis. This could include agricultural input suppliers, processors, transporters or financial institutions.

3. A web app for WFP allows the organization managing and overseeing the partners and aggregators registered in the system, drawing statistics of their activities and market transactions.

   The web app is expected to integrate a procurement component, with the possibility of launching tenders or market offers to traders or aggregators.
The benefits

Overall, Farm2Go will act both as a market platform, where buyers’ demand can meet farmers’ supply, but also as an administrative system for all the users, to manage activities and record transactions.

This system will ensure accurate tracking, maintenance and use of relevant data to inform evidence-based decision-making across the entire value chain.

Leveraging on the concept of API integration, further development of the platform will also allow smallholder farmers to have access to a broad range of essential services to improve their production, productivity, and marketable surplus.

These services can include price and weather information, financial services, agricultural inputs, post-harvest handling facilities, transports or training opportunities.

Testing, development and the way forward

Currently, minimum functionalities for all the three personas have been developed and are being tested in Kenya and Rwanda.

In Kenya, 20 aggregators working with close to 1,000 farmers have started using the Farm2Go mobile app to register their member farmers and sell to multiple buyers in sorghum and green grams value chain.

Additionally, two large buyers have already registered, placed their offers and started sourcing from the aggregators through the app.

In Rwanda, three large cooperatives with a farmer base of approximately 1,000 farmers have started using the app to register their members, track stock of each member in their warehouse and provide digital receipts to them through the app. At a later stage, the cooperatives want to also access the different buyers through the market access module.

Additional features in the pipeline for the future will include bulk SMS feature for all stakeholders, agricultural inputs, weather information, e-extension services and activities. The latter will allow aggregators to arrange and manage meetings and training sessions with farmer members and track attendance.

Further developments, testing and rolling out will have to rely on the mobilization of resources and the strong collaboration of WFP’s Country Offices.

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