



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations

Veneto Data Platform
Bruxelles, Belgium
24 April 2024

DIGITAL VILLAGES INITIATIVE IN EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA



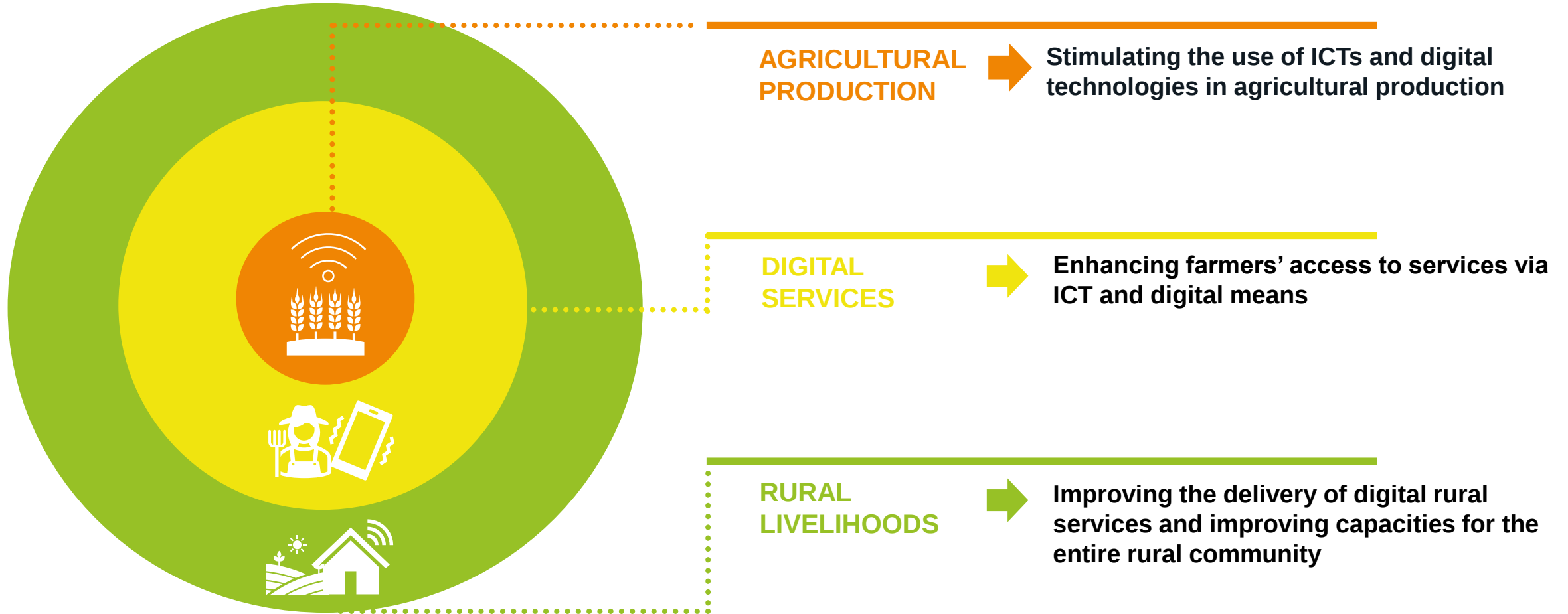
Capitalizing on lessons learned from EU's Smart Villages

The FAO Digital Villages Initiative (DVI) was launched in January 2021 with the goal of converting at least **1000 villages** around the world into **digital village hubs**.

FAO aimed at capturing **lessons learned** from the implementation of the **Smart Villages** approach in Europe, so as to embed its success factors in FAO's DVI approach in Europe and Central Asia.



ACHIEVING A HOLISTIC DIGITAL RURAL TRANSFORMATION



Pathway to Digital Villages' transformation

Sustainable pathway to the selection of potential rural areas and their transformation



Candidate DVI identification: Scan the territory to preliminary identify villages that appear to be good candidates to become active players in a digital village transformation process and that should be further assessed

REU DVI Readiness Assessment Tool: Assess the maturity of a rural area to engage in a Digital Village transformation process, identify strengths and weaknesses by assessing 17 criteria across 3 dimensions (digital ecosystem, strategic context, leadership and governance)

DVI roadmap: Design a DVI strategy for the transformation of the village based on the strengths and weaknesses identified, selecting tailored interventions that leverage the endogenous potential of the village, while addressing the systemic challenges



DVI transformation: Translate the roadmap into action by implementing the identified interventions. These may include fostering the adoption of digital technologies in agriculture production, the delivery of digital services (extension and advisory, financial, insurance, e-subsidies), the development and deployment of digital solutions locally, digital literacy programmes and digital farm labs, the promotion of local champions, etc.



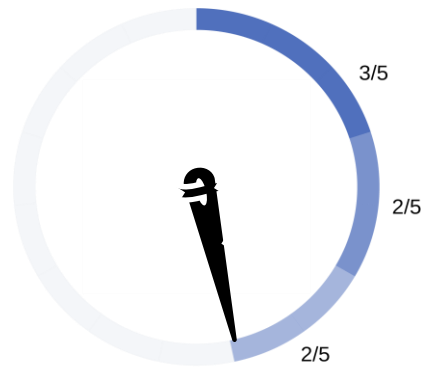
Village-twinning: engage and link rural communities with nearby or geographically dispersed villages, towns, cities, rural communities, existing Smart Villages, etc., to enter into formal or informal agreements to cooperate on local development matters



Food and Agriculture Organization
of the United Nations

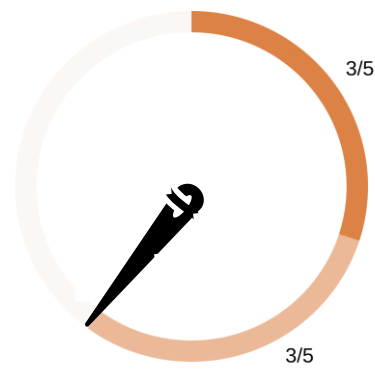
REU Digital Village readiness assessment tool

17 criteria across 3 dimensions to analyze and select villages that hold the best potential for DVI



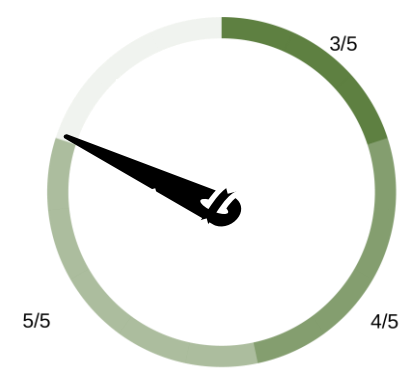
Digital ecosystem

- Digital infrastructure
- Digital penetration
- Digital skills



Strategic Context

- Strategic planning
- Financial resources



Leadership & Governance

- Human capital
- Governance bodies & mechanisms
- Stakeholder engagement

Piloting village-twinning to foster knowledge and technology transfer

Establishing strategic collaborations with smart villages for knowledge and technology transfer



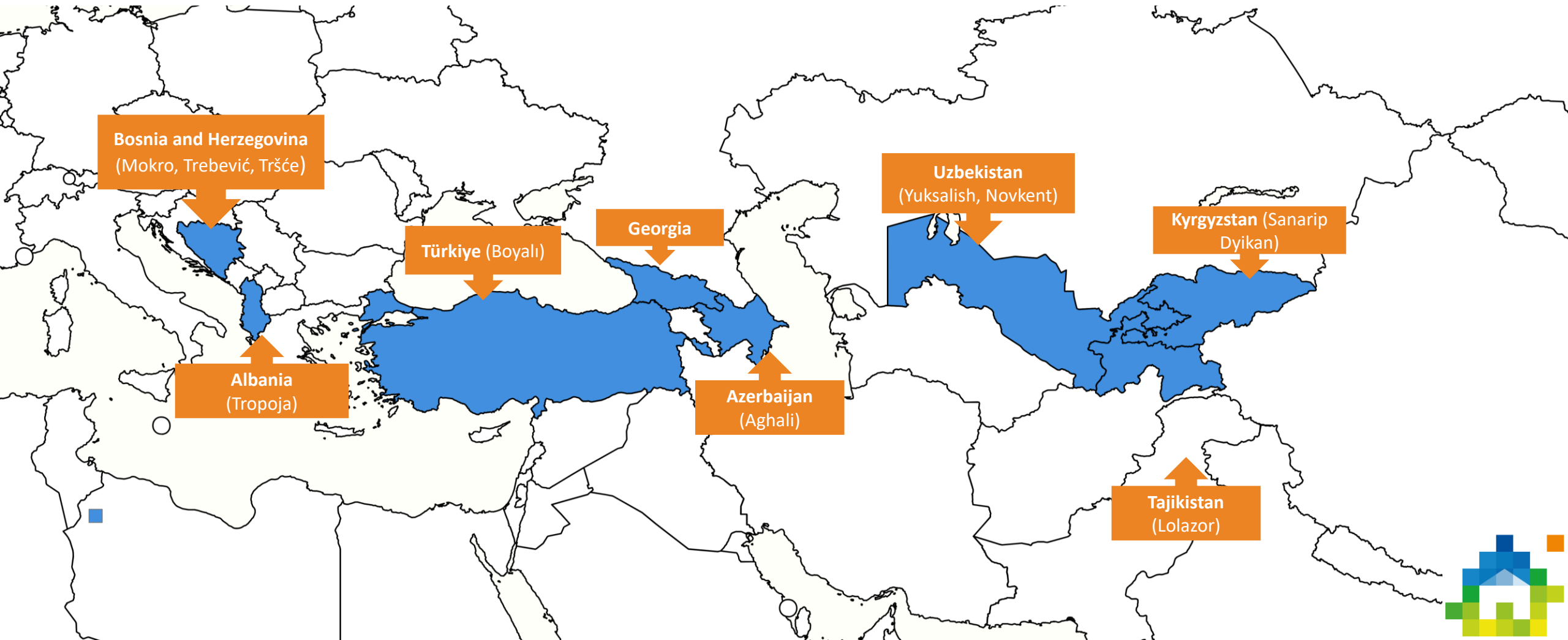
VILLAGE TWINNING

- Foster the exchange of knowledge, good practices, and technology transfer by linking rural communities with nearby or geographically dispersed villages, towns, cities, existing Smart Villages, etc.



Food and Agriculture Organization
of the United Nations

DIGITAL VILLAGES PILOTS IN EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA



DIGITAL VILLAGES PILOTS IN EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA



Food and Agriculture Organization
of the United Nations

Discover ▾

English ▾

Digital Villages Initiative in Europe and Central Asia

Digital Villages ▾



Digital Villages Initiative in Europe and Central Asia

DVI aims to transform villages in Europe and Central Asia into hubs that are smarter, greener, and richly digitally connected and interconnected. The goal is to empower every village and rural community to utilize digital technologies to increase agricultural productivity and access to services, and uplift rural livelihoods by leveraging their local strengths.

DVI's approach is inclusive and participatory; interventions are co-created with rural communities and designed to enhance their capacities and build resilience while ensuring long-term sustainability.

Several countries in the region have laid the groundwork for the implementation of DVI, while others are in the process of establishing their first Digital Villages. These countries include Albania, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Türkiye, and Uzbekistan.

Explore Digital Villages

Find good practices

Assess your village

DVI countries

- DVI in Albania
- DVI in Azerbaijan
- DVI in Bosnia and Herzegovina
- DVI in Georgia
- DVI in Kyrgyzstan
- DVI in Tajikistan
- DVI in Türkiye

Self-assessment survey

Digital Villages



DIGITAL VILLAGES PILOTS: INTERVENTIONS IN EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA

1) ICTs: adopting exiting or creating new digital technologies/services

Kyrgyzstan's "Sanarip Dyikan" – digital farmer registry and provision of services to farmers

Farmer Service Center model - "Sanarip Dyikan" ("digital farmer") for collection, storage and aggregation of farmers' data and digital provision of public services to farmers.



TAJIKISTAN - Promoting agritourism and cultural engagement through digital marketing

A new tourism route featuring nature trails and local activities has been developed supported by digital maps



2) Human capacities: learning digital skills

TAJIKISTAN - Digital demo farm

Digital demo farm on the Tajik Agrarian University campus, providing students, academic staff, local community members and farmers with a valuable opportunity to witness the practical application of smart insect traps and smart irrigation in a real-world agricultural setting.



3) Digital infrastructure: broadband, living labs or digital hubs

TAJIKISTAN- Nurturing agripreneurship and empowering the community through Living Labs digital skills training

Several Living Labs have been established focused on stimulating business and social entrepreneurship with the involvement of community stakeholders and external experts. Digital literacy and marketing trainings empowered young entrepreneurs in the community to use Instagram to advertise their produce



UZBEKISTAN - Regular physical or virtual community meetings Living Labs

Regular physical or virtual meetings that bring together rural communities and a diverse range of stakeholders to collaborate in the identification and testing of innovative solutions that address the issues affecting the community.



4) Digital governance: regulations, enforcement support, strategies;

Uzbekistan and Tajikistan Cooperation between digital villages DVI Twinning

Formal cooperation between Fergana and Hisor Digital Villages of Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, to exchange insights into agricultural best practices, share knowledge on technology utilization, enhance digital literacy and skills, and more. As part of the Digital Villages Twinning programme, Fergana State University and Tajik Agrarian University also signed a Memorandum of Understanding.





Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations

European Summit of Regions and Cities
Mons, Belgium
18-19 March 2024

FERGANA VILLAGES

IN UZBEKISTAN

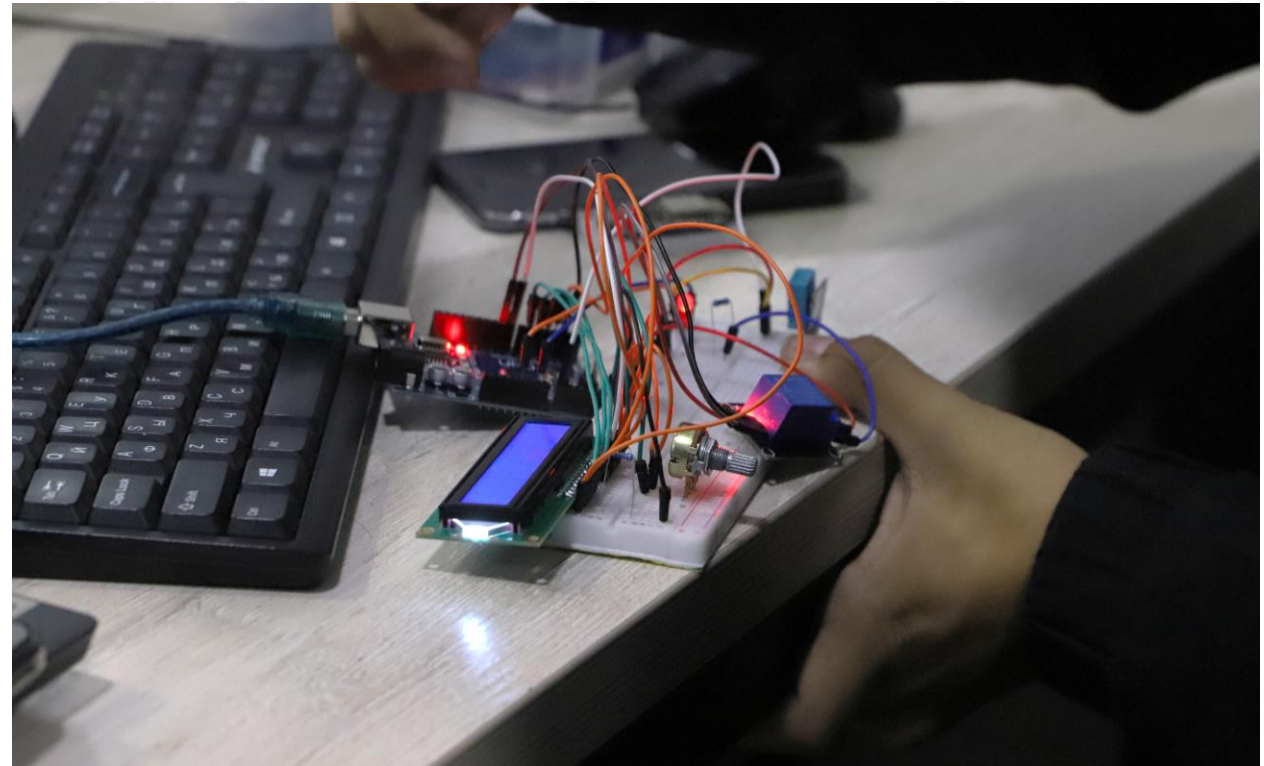
YUKSALISH AND NOVKENT VILLAGES



Youth innovation programme

DVI Camp

Local youth was mobilized through a **dedicated coding training** encouraging them to develop **digital innovations** that meet the needs of the rural communities



Youth innovation programme

Hack4DigitalVillages Innovation Challenge

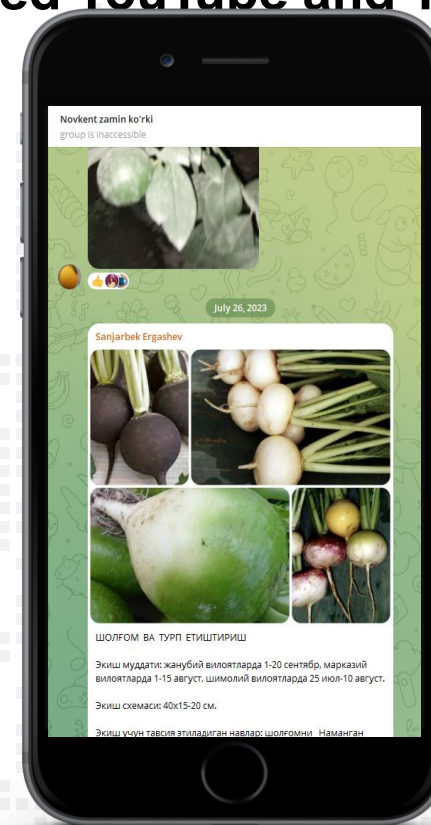
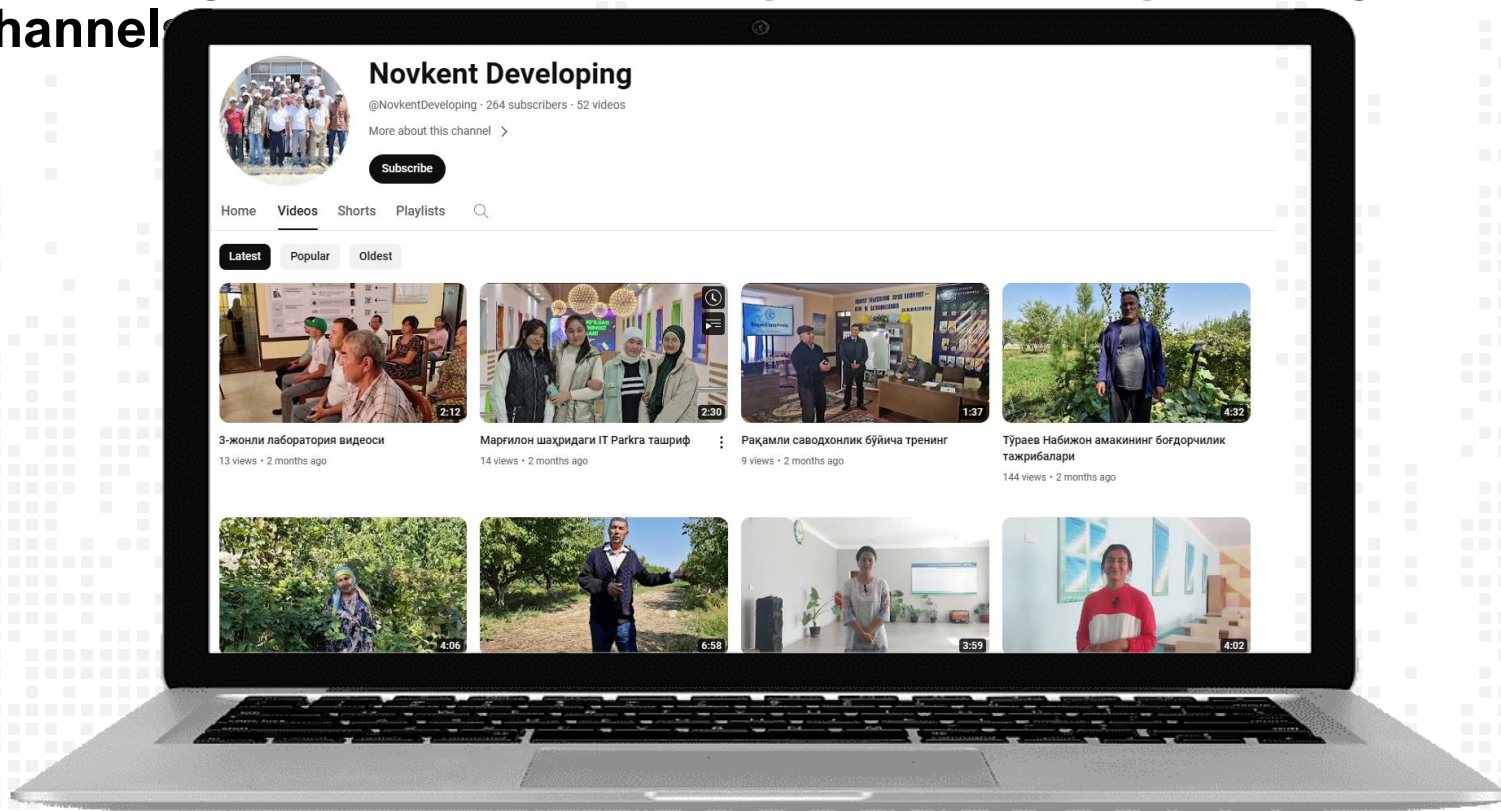
Local youth was mobilized through a dedicated by an innovation challenge encouraging them to develop **digital innovations** that meet the needs of the rural communities **together with mentors and farmers**



Centralized knowledge exchange hub

DVI Hub

Centralized platform for information, resources and community engagement through which farmers gain access to timely and relevant **agricultural insights** and continuous learning, facilitating **peer-to-peer exchanges of knowledge** through dedicated YouTube and Telegram channels



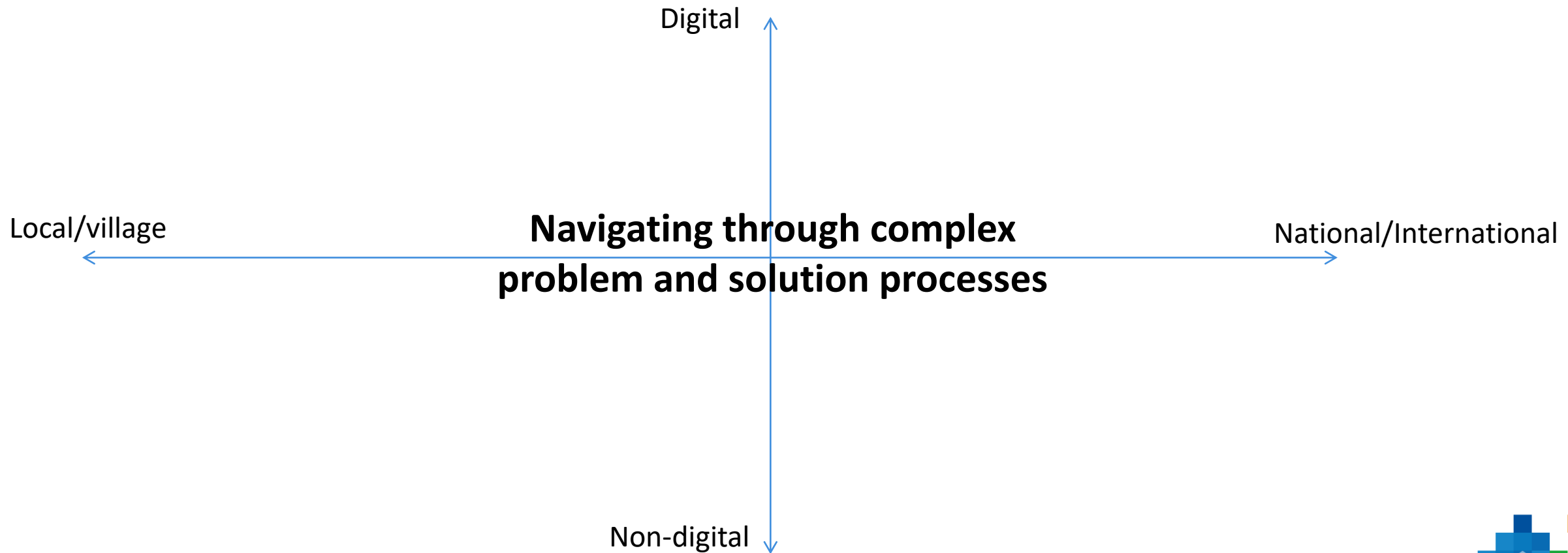
Capacity development programme

DVI Training

Training programme aimed at providing farmers with essential digital and entrepreneurial skills, including training in **digital literacy, social media management and e-commerce** strategies with a view to enhancing their digital skills, business operations and market reach.



DIGITAL VILLAGES PILOTS: REFLECTIONS IN EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA



DIGITAL VILLAGES PILOTS: REFLECTIONS IN EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA

1. Digital technology provision

- **Operationalization is a long way:** Lack of local tech providers, resources needed for iterative design process, administrative considerations (e.g. intellectual property rights)
- **Look outside:** twinning, networking and cooperation
- **Think about transferability:** low adaptability, limited time, and high costs of existing technologies
- **Beautiful, but for whom?:** consider ownership, maintenance costs, and scalability
- **Don't overlook the non-digital part:** stimulate solutions beyond digitalization, involve others, etc.

2. Digital technology use

- **Overcoming skepticism:** making digital a priority (i.e. catalyzer of systemic change), search for digital champions/local leaders
- **Gender, generation, class, culture...rural sociology matter**
- **Look for loud-speakers:** NGOs/collective groups/institutions can channel multiple interests groups and facilitate communication/ownership
- **Adoption requires resource mobilization:** financial, human, time, infrastructure





Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations

European Summit of Regions and Cities
Mons, Belgium
18-19 March 2024

We are looking for **partnerships** to further **scale the DVI** in Europe and Central Asia

Contact us at:

REU-Digital-Agriculture@fao.org



EXPLORE DVI VIRTUAL HUB

