More than 500 million smallholder farmers worldwide play a significant role in food production and provide diversity of food supply. Mobile technology, customer-facing data and digital mapping are emerging as key tools for changing how smallholder farmers are identified, understood and supported.

**DIGITAL FARMER PROFILES: THEN AND NOW**

A digital farmer profile is a profile that can capture comprehensive data on a farmer and their farm. It can be accessed simultaneously by multiple service providers such as financial service providers, input suppliers, agro-processors and farmer cooperatives.

In digital management, a farmer profile data becomes the norm, the farmer becomes only one of many sources of that data, and only one of many users.

**DATA GENERATORS: SERVICE PROVIDERS**

Service providers who collect data and find smallholder farmers (i.e., extension agents, researchers) face many challenges and opportunities.

Data can be collected face-to-face on farmers, using phone-based capture methods, and through digital methods such as satellite imagery, GPS, and drones.

Digital data capture is the starting point for developing a digital farmer profile ecosystem.

The type of service provider does not determine how they collect data, how they collect it, or how it is used, but service provider models are an important point of entry to understanding farmer profile data management.

Digital management of a farmer profile data becomes the norm, the farmer becomes only one of many sources of that data, and only one of many users.

**DATA CAPTURE, ANALYSIS AND USE**

Digital data can capture the starting point for developing a digital farmer profile ecosystem. To leverage this, there are tools and technologies that enhance the accuracy of profiles.

Farmers need to make decisions in critical moments. The aggregation of information from their profile, data, and market and weather data can provide a powerful Big Data approach to leveraging segmented data, resources and service providers together to support a farmer's ecosystem.

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**DATA AND REVENUE FLOWS**

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Today, farmers provide data to service providers in exchange for support services in the future. Farmers might monetize their own data. All service providers should consider how to use the data to provide better support for farmers and monetize it.

**KEY CONSIDERATION**

When designing data flows and services to link with existing and new services:

- What is the technology available or likely to be available given the timeframe and budget?
- Is there a clear business model for monetizing the data?
- Is there an alignment with existing digital ecosystem?

**FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

For more information on digital agriculture technologies, including farmer profiles, please visit www.usaid.gov/digitalag.