

Grow Asia invites innovators to advance digital AgTech for climate-resilient agriculture in the Philippines

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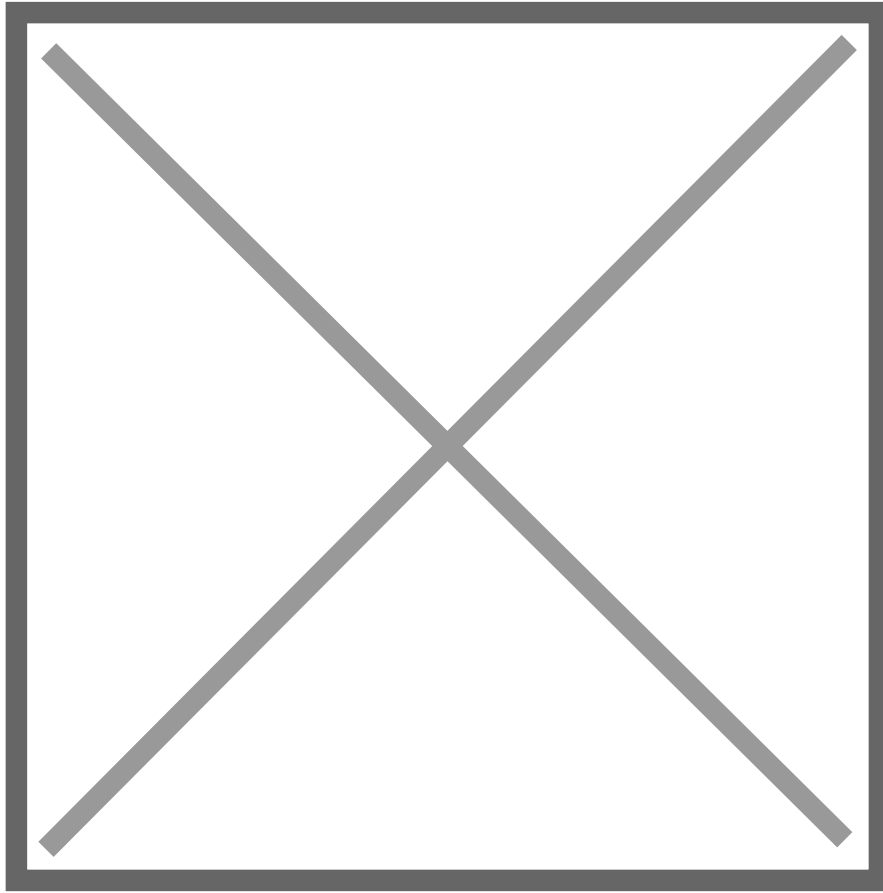
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Grow Asia is launching the 2025 Innovation Challenge in the Philippines. Philippines Partnership for Sustainable Agriculture (PPSA) will support the Grow Asia Innovation Challenge 2025 this year. By matching founders of climate-smart agritech solutions with mentors and partners, Grow Asia Innovation Challenge provides them with a catalytic launch pad, accelerating their journey to market and helping Southeast Asia advance a climate-resilient agriculture sector.

Innovations that address at least one of the identified challenge statements will be eligible to enter the challenge, which supports smallholder coconut, cacao, and coffee producers in Southeast Asia, particularly in the Philippines.



Grow Asia Innovation Challenge aligns with these national efforts, identifying and scaling farmer-friendly digital solutions that increase agricultural productivity and sustainability. The challenge will focus on three key areas: traceability and logistics tools to improve certification and sustainability compliance, digital advisory solutions to expand access to climate-smart farm insights, and strategies for increasing smallholder farmer digital literacy and usability.

"Innovation and digital solutions play a crucial role in transforming agriculture in Southeast Asia. Through the Grow Asia Innovation Challenge, we are not only identifying groundbreaking technologies but also building the necessary support systems to ensure their successful adoption among smallholder farmers," said Chrissa Marey Borja, Head, Programs, Grow Asia. "We are grateful to our partners at Korea's Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs and IFAD for their relentless commitment to furthering innovation across the region."

Finalists will receive direct mentorship from industry leaders, strategic advisory sessions, and exposure through Grow Asia and PPSA's networks. By bridging the gap between technology providers and farmers, the innovation challenge aims to build a more inclusive and resilient agricultural ecosystem in the region.

Angel Bautista, Country Director of PPSA, said "The Grow Asia Innovation Challenge presents a unique opportunity to support local agribusinesses in harnessing digital solutions that can drive sustainable growth for smallholder farmers. Agriculture plays a vital role in the Philippine economy, contributing approximately an eighth of the national GDP. As a significant player in the global market, PPSA realizes the need to focus on coconut, cacao, and coffee, by addressing key sectors with high economic potential while ensuring that farmers benefit from cutting-edge technologies that improve livelihoods and resilience."

Additionally, Villgro Philippines joins GAIC 2025 as a key program partner, bringing its expertise as an incubator that funds, mentors, and nurtures enterprises tackling critical social and climate issues.

Priya Thachadi, Co-Founder and CEO of Villgro Philippines, expressed her enthusiasm for the partnership, stating, "Innovation is at the heart of solving agriculture's most pressing challenges. Through our partnership with Grow Asia, we aim to empower startups that are developing sustainable solutions while creating tangible economic opportunities for smallholder farmers—especially women in agriculture. Fostering entrepreneurial solutions will be key to creating lasting change across broken food systems."

Additionally, in Philippines, Approximately two out of five Filipino households possess at least one of the six basic ICT skills monitored for sustainable development goals, according to the 2019 National ICT Household Survey. A number of government agencies, including the Department of Agriculture, the Agricultural Training Institute, the Department of Science and Technology, the Department of Trade and Industry, and the Department of Information and Communications Technology, are implementing digital literacy programs and technology initiatives to address this issue.