



Development of Smart Innovation through Research in Agriculture

The DeSIRA initiative was launched in 2017. The objective is to contribute to climate-relevant, productive and sustainable transformation of agriculture and food systems in low and middle-incomes countries

Three outcomes are expected:

- **Foster innovation** in agriculture through research for Food, Nutrition Security, and Sustainable Agriculture with a climate change perspective
- **Strengthen national agricultural research** (capacities, governance mechanisms) and innovation systems
- **Improve efficiency of research and innovation support services** for climate resilient food systems by enhancing evidence for policy design and implementation

The strategic approach for DeSIRA is based on the following key points:

- Connecting both EU & EU Member States development agendas and national priorities regarding agricultural and food systems
- Linking research and innovation to contribute to impacts at scale addressing climate change with clusters of projects funded by UE and Member States
- Strengthening national research capacities both at individual and organizational levels
- Contributing to the continental (Africa) and global governance of research (GFAR, CGIAR, AIRCA)
- Building strong partnerships involving European, International and National research capacities
- Contributing to the assessment and fostering of Agricultural Innovation Systems and national innovation policies with a Capacity to innovate based approach

The first contracts were signed at the end of 2019 and we already have **20 projects** of research and innovation on the track including 6 regional projects for a total reaching €100 million including contributions from European donors. A large number of countries are involved. In Africa : Senegal, Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger, Côte d'Ivoire, Benin, Guinea Bissau,

Liberia, Ghana, Nigeria, Chad, Eritrea, Zimbabwe, Malawi, Mauritius, Rwanda. In Latin America : Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, and Central America (proyecto regional).

The research and innovation projects address different topics such as diversified cropping systems with a value chain perspective (including genetics, pest and diseases), agroecology and sustainable intensification (including agroforestry), livestock management with a territorial and value chain perspective, sustainable resources management (including water, energy, forest), improved nutrition and food security, strengthening of innovation support services and innovation policies.

All these research and innovation projects are based on key principles to produce scientific knowledge and achieve realistic outcomes :

- Addressing key challenges and problems to promote FNSSA (Food, Nutrition Security, and Sustainable Agriculture) with a climate change perspective
- Designing and monitoring an impact pathway approach based on a plausible theory of change
- Implementing a multistakeholder approach mobilizing farmers, private sector, public sector, civil society and researchers to promote innovation processes
- Joint designing of innovation with local actors based on science and other source of knowledge to change behaviors, skills and agricultural/managerial practices
- Strengthening innovation support services including advisory services

Other projects contribute to the governance of the agricultural research and innovation in Africa and at global level. To achieve this objective the projects are aimed at strengthening regional and international organizations in charge of coordination of research in Africa (CORAF, ASARECA, CCARDESA), supporting strategic thinking regarding advisory services (AFAAS), contributing to the capitalization of experiences related to innovation systems (TAP/FAO, GFAR). One project contributes to build research capacities through the training of young African researchers (One Planet Fellowships). The total amount of this project is €40 millions from EU and €12.5 million from IFAD.

To support the DeSIRA initiative DEVCO will develop key actions in 2020 for communication and information sharing as well as support tools to DeSIRA projects addressing several domains such as innovation processes with a multistakeholders perspective, participatory research for solving problems with actors, or monitoring and evaluation for learning. It will also help us to draw lessons for promoting policies aiming at strengthening the agricultural innovation systems in the countries.

In 2020, 22 other projects including 31 countries will be finalized. One more project will be dedicated to support the CGIAR reform and better articulate the DeSIRA initiative with the international research community. The total amount of these projects is € 112 million (including 16 million of co-funding).

Joining forces with GCCA+ (Global Climate Change Alliance Plus Initiative) **a new call for expression of interests will be launched** and will target a selection of EU delegations. More information soon.

Some useful documents to present DeSIRA

A video : <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1HyfzS96luqswVqrWI9xCGwb2NPcriz7a/view>).

A power point : **see DeSIRA presentation 2020.ppt**

Some useful websites :

AFAAS African Forum for Agricultural Advisory Services): <http://www.afaas-africa.org/>

AGRINATURA (European universities and research organizations with a common interest in supporting agricultural development): <https://agrinatura-eu.eu>

ASARECA (Association for Strengthening Agricultural Research in Eastern and Central Africa):
<https://asareca.org/>

CCARDESA (Centre for Coordination of Agricultural Research and Development for Southern Africa): <http://www.ccardesa.org/>

CORAF (Conference des Responsables de Recherche Agronomique Africains):
<http://www.coraf.org/>

GFAR (Global Forum on Agricultural Research): <https://www.gfar.net/>

FARA (**Forum for Agricultural** Research in Africa): <https://faraafrica.org>

TAP (Tropical Agricultural Platform): <http://www.fao.org/in-action/tropical-agriculture-platform/en/>