

DeSIRA LIFT



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The future of R&I
as driver of
agrifood system
transformation
and sustainability
transitions in
fragile contexts

Perspectives from

Burkina Faso



This brief presents the outcomes of the national DeSIRA workshop and policy dialogue in Burkina Faso

The DeSIRA Perspectives Brief Series: a roadmap for research and innovation from stakeholder perspectives in Africa, Asia-Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean

The DeSIRA Perspective Briefs present lessons learned by the community of implementers of the European Commission-funded DeSIRA Initiative and their views on the future of research and innovation (R&I) as drivers of agrifood system transformation and sustainability transitions in their respective regions. By distilling key lessons from DeSIRA's successes and challenges, these perspectives offer actionable insights into agricultural innovation systems (AIS) for innovation stakeholders, decision makers, policy actors and investors. Each Perspective Brief focuses on a specific region where the DeSIRA Initiative was deployed (Africa, Asia-Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean).

In order to capture the joint learning and pending challenges among the DeSIRA community, DeSIRA-LIFT organised a series of four regional workshops entitled the "DeSIRA CONNECT Days". Two national workshops were organised in Burkina Faso, the country with the highest number of DeSIRA projects under implementation. These gatherings were designed to assess the progress of innovations within DeSIRA projects, foster collaboration among stakeholders, amplify the cross-project impacts within countries, and cultivate peer learning on open and responsible R&I for AIS transformation. Moreover, they served to strategise the subsequent steps post-DeSIRA.

In a nutshell, they were designed to strengthen the Community of Action and Reflection among DeSIRA projects and their stakeholders. These events aimed to facilitate collaboration through regional field and in-person meetings with the following objectives:

- facilitate discussions among projects aligned with the joint learning agenda, focusing on progress, challenges and developing recommendations to sustain momentum;
- carry out meetings and roundtables with policy makers, stakeholders, private-sector representatives and regional organisations to promote innovation adoption and strengthen AIS;
- promote discussions to develop exit strategies, handover processes and pathways for ensuring continuity.

These workshops served as a platform for sharing innovations, research contributions, experiences, good practices and lessons learned from implementing DeSIRA projects, while fostering stronger engagement with policy makers, regional organisations and private-sector actors. Key themes included scaling agricultural innovation, farmer-led research and fostering enabling environments for innovation scaling. Regional agricultural innovation stakeholders were invited to attend and identify priority actions and key messages for the region, to connect the DeSIRA community to broader initiatives or opportunities for putting at scale the outcomes of the DeSIRA projects. The workshops facilitated discussions among research, extension and education actors, farmer organisations, advisory service

providers, civil society, international organisations, funders and policy actors to evaluate efforts and identify challenges. The regional workshops took place in Bogotá, Colombia (25-27 June 2024); Kigali, Rwanda (29-31 July 2024); Accra, Ghana (24-26 September 2024); and Hanoi, Vietnam (14-16 January 2025). The three-day events included keynote presentations, two workshops and six thematic panel discussions focusing on three main themes:

- New paradigms in research for innovation – Enhancing the impact of research through participatory and system-based approaches.
- Farmer-led innovations and research – Strengthening farmer organisations as key actors in scaling agroecology and sustainable agriculture.
- Creating a conducive environment for scaling – Addressing food system governance, policies, education and financing to foster sustainability.

These themes structured the workshop discussions and informed the synthesis of insights and recommendations in the Perspective Briefs series. By engaging in these workshops, DeSIRA-LIFT contributed to building a collective understanding of what it takes to co-develop innovations for sustainability transitions through international R&I partnerships and public investments.

The National DeSIRA Days in Burkina Faso followed a similar pattern.

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Key messages

As part of efforts to enhance the value of research for development and embed agricultural innovation in public policies, two complementary events were organised in Burkina Faso: the National DeSIRA Days in June 2023 and the multistakeholder policy dialogue for scaling up innovations in April 2025. The DeSIRA Days aimed to raise the visibility of the DeSIRA Initiative and its projects in Burkina Faso, strengthen synergies between them through the sharing of experiences on innovation support and the reinforcement of the National Agricultural Innovation System (NAIS), and

demonstrate the relevance of the participatory research and innovation approaches promoted by the initiative in driving the sustainable transformation of agrifood systems. The 2025 policy dialogue, in turn, aimed to create enabling conditions for scaling up the innovations supported by these projects. These two major events brought together researchers, producers, policy makers, and technical and financial partners around a common goal: to strengthen the impact and sustainability of agricultural innovations across the country.

1. Key results from DeSIRA projects

DeSIRA projects have enabled the co-creation of innovative solutions tailored to Burkina Faso's agroecological contexts, in collaboration with local actors. These results span areas such as agroecological practices, bio-inputs, agricultural advisory tools and value chain structuring. The participatory approach—anchored in territorially based innovation mechanisms—fostered user ownership and enhanced synergy among actors within the innovation system. These experiences showed that research, when embedded in local dynamics, can serve as a powerful lever for transforming production systems.

2. Conditions for successful co-innovation and scaling up

Discussions highlighted that successful co-innovation depends on the involvement of producers, sustained support, project flexibility, and alignment between local and national levels. Scaling up requires tested and contextualised innovations, supported by legitimate institutions and embedded within long-term support systems. Research plays a structuring role when it acts as a bridge between scientific knowledge and practical know-how, thereby enhancing stakeholders' capacities while informing public policy.

3. Lessons from the policy dialogue

The April 2025 policy dialogue marked a key milestone in bringing DeSIRA project outcomes closer to policy concerns. It underscored the need to establish a conducive framework for the valorisation of innovations through more inclusive public policies, improved interinstitutional coordination and stronger territorial anchoring. Political ownership of innovations involves their official recognition, integration into national rural development support mechanisms, and the creation of a favourable institutional and regulatory environment for innovation.

4. Key recommendations

Four priority recommendations emerged: (i) institutionalise co-innovation approaches in agricultural policies and territorial development plans; (ii) strengthen the governance of the NAIS by actively supporting the coordination unit for the NAIS (CC-SNIA); (iii) adapt financing mechanisms to support innovation pathways through blended public, private and local funding; and (iv) ensure stronger capitalisation and dissemination of results, involving local authorities and decision makers from the early stages of projects to foster ownership and facilitate scaling up.

DeSIRA in Burkina Faso

Challenges of agrifood systems transformation in Burkina Faso

The transformation of agrifood systems in Burkina Faso faces significant structural and contextual challenges that hinder the adoption, ownership and scaling up of agricultural innovations (FAO, 2023)¹. A central obstacle is the low productivity of agricultural production systems, exacerbated by limited access to quality technologies, efficient agricultural inputs (seeds, bio-inputs, equipment) and technical support services (PNDES, 2016)². This situation is further aggravated by high dependence on climatic variability, increasing pressure on natural resources and limited diversification of agricultural production systems.

Additionally, the country suffers from inadequate rural infrastructure—particularly in transport, storage, processing and marketing—which restricts access to markets and results in substantial post-harvest losses (World Bank, 2020)³. The lack of adapted equipment hampers the value addition of local agricultural products, reduces producers' profit margins and weakens the competitiveness of local value chains. In this context, agricultural innovation emerges as a critical lever for transformation, yet it continues to struggle to establish itself sustainably in both practices and policies.

Several structural factors further constrain the development and dissemination of innovation (Toillier et al., 2016)⁴. The NAIS suffers from poor coordination among key stakeholders—including research institutions, training centres, extension services, producers, the private sector and local authorities. This weak coordination limits knowledge sharing, the complementarity of initiatives and the overall effectiveness of innovation support mechanisms.

CREAF Kamboinsé: off-season millet improvement plot



Moreover, funding dedicated to experimentation, action research and collective learning remains insufficient, restricting the capacity to test, adapt and disseminate innovative solutions suited to the country's diverse agroecological contexts. Added to this is the lack of support services for innovation, which hampers the scaling up of innovative initiatives and their long-term anchoring in local areas (Toillier et al., 2021)⁵.

The insufficient integration of local knowledge and farmer experience in innovation processes also hinders end-user ownership and limits the relevance and applicability of proposed solutions. Furthermore, the absence of clear, incentivising public policies that promote inclusive, multistakeholder and cross-sectoral approaches significantly curbs the scaling of high-impact innovations—particularly in agroecology, artisanal and semi-industrial processing, and sustainable natural resource management (FAO, 2023).

Overcoming these barriers is essential to unlock the full potential of agricultural innovation as a driver of structural transformation. This requires rethinking the governance of the NAIS, strengthening synergies among actors, investing in local capacities for experimentation and co-innovation, and creating a more enabling political, regulator and financial environment for inclusive and sustainable innovation. Only through such a comprehensive approach can Burkina Faso build resilient, equitable agrifood systems capable of addressing the challenges of food security, rural employment and climate change adaptation.

1] FAO, 2023. *Diagnostic orienté-action du système national d'innovation agricole au Burkina Faso. Rapport consolidé. Janvier 2023.* Rome. <https://doi.org/10.4060/cc3824fr>

2] Gouvernement du Burkina Faso (2016), *Plan national de développement économique et social (PNDES) 2016–2020*, Ouagadougou, Ministère de l'Économie, des Finances et du Développement. 3] World Bank. (2020). *Burkina Faso Economic Update: Protecting the vulnerable during the recovery.* Washington, DC: World Bank. 4] Toillier, A., Derra, S., Guillet, M., Temple, L. (collab.), Courcier, R. (collab.), Kiebre, Toe M.B. (collab.), Zongo B. (collab.). 2016. *Etude exploratoire sur les systèmes d'innovation au Burkina-Faso pour le projet CDAIS (Renforcement des capacités pour les systèmes d'innovations agricole)*. Montpellier: CIRAD, 111 p. <https://agritrop.cirad.fr/580421/> 5] Toillier, A., Kola, P., Sempore, A. Audouin, S., Mathé, S., Traore, O. 2021. «Mapping innovation support services in the assessment of agricultural innovation system: evidence of functional gaps and new perspectives for innovation policies in support to sustainable agriculture.» ESEE. Cavan: ESEE, 3 p. European Seminar on Extension and Education (ESEE 2021). 25, Cavan, Irlande, 21 June 2021/23 June 2021. <https://agritrop.cirad.fr/601725/>

Objectives and challenges of the DeSIRA projects

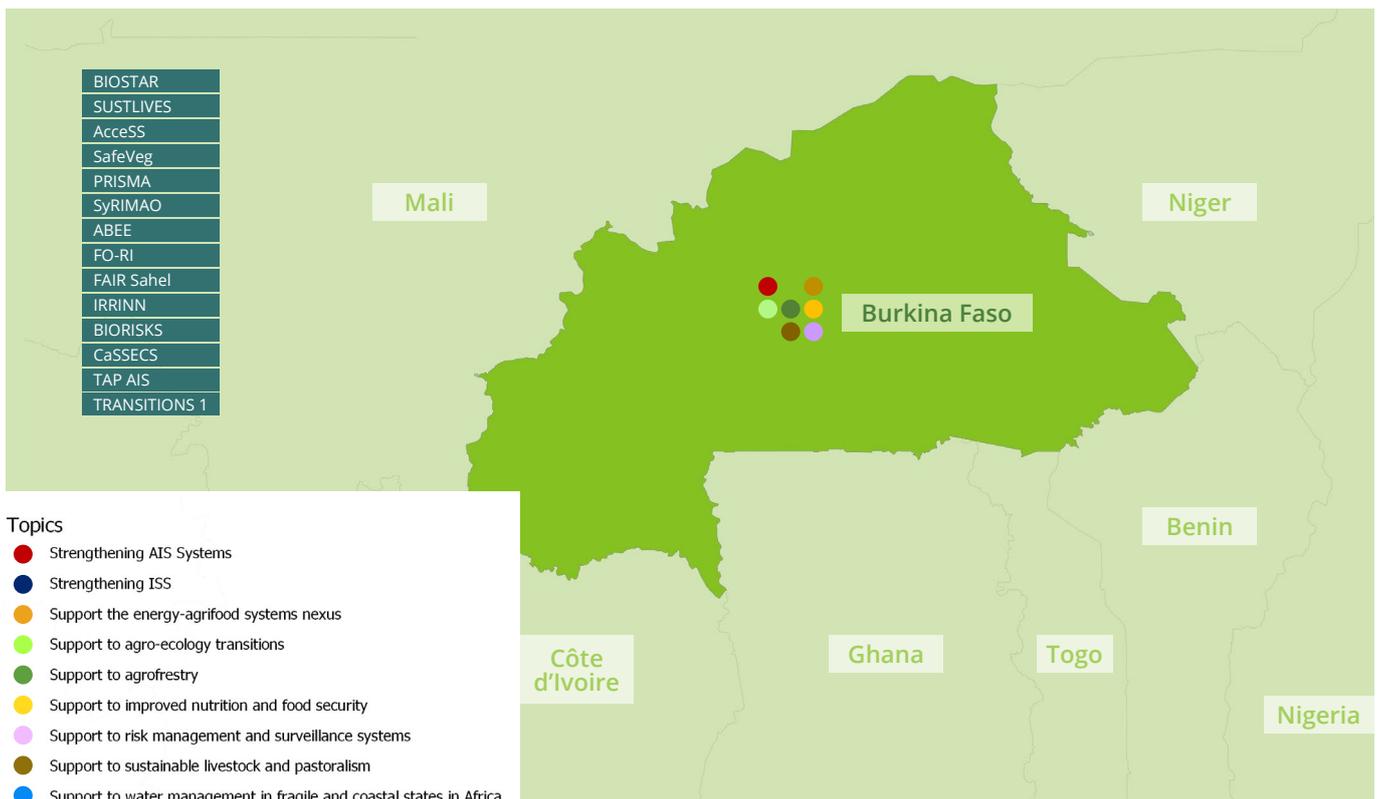
The DeSIRA (Development Smart Innovation through Research in Agriculture) Initiative, supported by the European Union, aims to foster the sustainable transformation of agrifood systems in developing countries. In Burkina Faso, DeSIRA supports around 10 projects focused on agricultural research and innovation, with the following key objectives: strengthening national agricultural innovation capacities; enhancing resilience to climate change; and promoting inclusive and sustainable agrifood systems. These projects target specific challenges through innovative approaches.

For instance, BioStar addresses the limited access to energy for agrifood small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) by developing a locally adapted bioenergy sector. SUSTLIVES focuses on valorising local agrobiodiversity, while AcceSS aims to create and deploy innovation support services in the agricultural sector by strengthening the capacities of service providers. Other initiatives—such as SafeVeg, FO-RI, IRRINN, BIORISKS, SyRIMAO and ABEE—explore improving nutrition and income through, respectively, strengthening leafy vegetables value chains; improving agroecological practices in the onion sector; scaling up innovative irrigation practices and technologies; anticipating and managing biological risks; fruit fly control; and the modernisation of regional

variety selection. Meanwhile, FAIR SAHEL and PRISMA (for agro-pastoral systems) work to support agroecological transition; CaSSECS aims to improve the assessment of the carbon balance of (agro-)pastoral livestock systems to inform livestock policies; TRANSITIONS aims to develop holistic metrics for agriculture and food systems; and TAP-AIS strengthens agricultural innovation systems.

However, achieving the ambitious objectives of the DeSIRA projects in Burkina Faso faces notable challenges. Effective coordination among the numerous stakeholders involved is a major issue for maximising synergies and avoiding duplication. Ensuring the sustainability of funding beyond the project duration is crucial for guaranteeing the long-term adoption and diffusion of innovations. Another essential challenge lies in the institutional anchoring of innovations, requiring their integration into the policies and practices of national actors. Finally, the effective scaling up of innovations in often complex local contexts demands adapted strategies and a deep understanding of territorial dynamics, particularly in Bobo-Dioulasso and the Hauts-Bassins region. The success of the DeSIRA Initiative in Burkina Faso will depend on the ability to overcome these challenges, foster fruitful collaborations, influence public policies, and sustainably strengthen the national agricultural research and innovation system.

DeSIRA projects in Burkina Faso



All DeSIRA projects in Burkina Faso

Project acronym	Themes	Implementation partners
BioStar	Bioenergy for SMEs in West Africa	CIRAD, 2iE, IRSAT, Thomas Sankara University, ISRA/BAME, Gaston Berger University, Catholic University of Louvain, University of Hohenheim, Roma Tre University, Nitidæ
SUSTLIVES	Support and promotion of the heritage of local cultures in Burkina Faso and Niger to improve living conditions and ecosystems	CIHEAM Bari, AICS, Joseph Ki-Zerbo University, Abdou Mounouni University, LUKE, Roma TRE University, CNR, Bioversity International
AcceSS	Accelerating innovation dynamics in agriculture by strengthening innovation support services	CIRAD, CNRST, La Fabrique, CEDRES of Thomas Sankara University, ESC, Afric'innov, ICRA, FAO
SafeVeg	Safe locally produced vegetables for West Africa's consumers	World Vegetable Center, CIRAD, Wageningen University & Research, INERA, IER, Faculty of Agricultural Sciences of the University of Abomey-Calavi, National University of Agriculture
PRISMA	Research and innovation project for productive, resilient and healthy agro-pastoral systems in West Africa	Enabel, AECID, LuxDev, The Sahel Institute, University of Liège, Sciensano, Vétérinaires sans frontières, INERA, CIRDES, AGRHYMET regional centre, CIRAD, KIT, University of Luxembourg, INRAE, Paris Dauphine University, Plan Vivo Foundation, CO2Logic
SyRIMAO	Innovative regional fruit fly control system in West Africa	ARAA, CNS-FL, MRAC, Belgique, SNRA, CORAF, Cirad, OIRD- Virginia polytech & state university, MRAC, DNRI, ACCESS, INERA, INRAN
ABEE	Strengthening networks and institutional capacities in plant breeding for the development of resilient crops, meeting the needs of farmers in West Africa	CORAF, INERA, ISRA/CERAAS, INRAN, CIRAD, AfricaRice/IBP
FO-RI	Agroecological innovations based on endogenous knowledge for the development of the onion value chain in Burkina Faso	CPF, UNAPOB, INERA, IRSAT, AFDI, AGRICORD,
FAIR Sahel	Promoting agroecological intensification to foster farm resilience in the Sahel	CIRAD, Diobass, AMSP, UNPCB, INERA, ISRA, IER, IRD, Wageningen University & Research, ZALF, CSIC, AVSF, ENDA Pronat
IRRINN	Intensification of agricultural production through the scaling up of innovative and adapted irrigation practices and technologies	CIRAD, 2iE, CSIC, APESI, INERA, PRACTICA, ZALF, ESC
BIORISKS	Anticipating and managing biological risks to strengthen farmers' resilience to climate change in West and Central Africa	CORAF, Felix Houphouët Boigny University, WAVE
CaSSECS	Carbon sequestration and greenhouse gas emissions in (agro-)sylvopastoral ecosystems in the Sahelian CILSS states	CIRAD, ISRA
TAP AIS	Developing capacities in agricultural innovation systems: scaling up the Tropical Agriculture Platform Framework	FAO
TRANSITIONS 1	Development of holistic metrics for agriculture and food systems	ICRAF/FTA

DeSIRA stakeholders at the national conference and policy dialogue

The National Days of the DeSIRA Initiative, held from 14 to 16 June 2023 in Ouagadougou, marked a turning point in the agricultural innovation landscape in Burkina Faso. Bringing together a wide range of stakeholders—public institutions, research centres, the private sector, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and civil society—the event aimed to raise the visibility of DeSIRA projects, foster experience-sharing among initiatives, and demonstrate the relevance of participatory research and innovation approaches. The involvement of ministerial representatives (research, agriculture, environment, industry) reflected political commitment to the sustainable transformation of agrifood systems. Research institutions under the CNRST (INERA, IRSAT, INSS, IRSS) presented results stemming from collaborative processes. The private sector and professional organisations highlighted key challenges related to funding, innovation dissemination and advisory support. NGOs and international organisations (such as GRET, SNV, Inades-Formation, FAO, IFAD, GIZ), along with civil society actors, broadened the scope of the discussions by integrating territorial, social and ecological dimensions. This cross-sector mobilisation laid the foundation for a strategic dialogue space aimed at strengthening the NAIS.

At a time when several projects funded under the DeSIRA Initiative had reached maturity and produced significant results to support the agricultural innovation system in Burkina Faso, a pressing need for political ownership emerged. Despite the progress achieved, the Delegation of the European Union to Burkina Faso and the National Centre for Scientific and Technological Research (CNRST) observed that political and institutional decision makers remained insufficiently informed about the activities, results and lessons learned from these projects.

Questions persisted regarding the actual impacts of the DeSIRA Initiative and the conditions required to scale up the most promising innovations. Against this backdrop, the political dialogue held on 11 and 12 April 2025 brought together a wide range of key stakeholders to create an enabling environment for scaling up innovations from the DeSIRA projects. High-level representatives from strategic ministries (Higher Education, Research and Innovation; Agriculture, Animal and Fisheries Resources; Industry, Trade and Handicrafts; Environment, Water and Sanitation; Economy, Finance and Planning), the EU Delegation, CNRST research institutes, Burkina Faso's universities, Cirad, the private sector, and technical and financial partners participated in this high-level consultation.

Together, they identified the political, institutional and financial levers needed to sustain and scale up the most impactful innovations. This joint mobilisation helped translate project results into concrete commitments, while reinforcing coherence between research, public policy and local development dynamics.

Participants in the policy dialogue on DeSIRA projects, April 2025





Group work during the DeSIRA Days, June 2023



Group work with various stakeholders during the DeSIRA Days, June 2023



Visit to a shea nut processing unit powered by bioenergy, April 2025

Main lessons learned in the DeSIRA community

The DeSIRA National Days provided a pivotal opportunity for collective reflection on the dynamics of agricultural innovation in Burkina Faso. They generated several structuring lessons regarding the central role of research, the importance of collaborative innovation processes and the critical conditions for scaling. These insights fostered strong convergence within the DeSIRA community and laid the foundation for a renewed strategic dialogue between researchers, public institutions, the private sector, producers and civil society.

1. Research plays a pivotal role in agricultural innovation processes, acting as a driver, facilitator or co-leader depending on the context.

- Action research, co-innovation and participatory research approaches have demonstrated their relevance, but require institutionalisation beyond project timelines to ensure long-term impacts.
- Early and meaningful involvement of researchers in initiatives led by other stakeholders (private sector, NGOs, producer organisations) is essential, alongside a redefinition of agricultural advisory roles to those of innovation facilitators.

2. Innovation as a social as well as a technological process

- Innovation is not only technological—it is also social, organisational and institutional in nature.
- Effective innovations emerge from co-construction with end-users and are grounded in territorial dynamics and real-life experimentation.
- Multistakeholder platforms need to be sustained beyond project cycles, and a structured dialogue framework is necessary to promote synergy and collective action.

3. Agricultural innovation: a long-term, adaptive and strategic process

- Innovation is an uncertain, evolving and resource-intensive process that requires long-term commitment and coordination between public, private and research actors.
- The short life cycles of typical projects (3–5 years) hinder impact. Embedding innovation efforts within national systems such as the NAIS is vital for sustainability.
- A shift is needed from a “project-based” approach to an “innovation trajectory” approach, with progressive milestones, handover mechanisms and increasing ownership by local actors.

4. Leveraging collective dynamics and interproject synergies

- Many DeSIRA initiatives have successfully experimented with strategic alliances (cooperatives, interprofessional organisations, public-private partnerships) to ensure long-term impact.
- National and regional synergies between projects should be promoted through shared coordination frameworks and tools.
- The West and Central African Agricultural Research and Innovation Network (RESCAR-AOC) could serve as a key facilitator of this coordination by promoting networking, knowledge exchange and alignment across initiatives.

5. Scaling: a concerted and integrated approach

- Scaling innovation requires the early involvement of beneficiaries, the formation of user networks and strong alignment with public policy frameworks.
- It is essential to reconcile the agendas and timeframes of funders, researchers, producers and policy makers to enable shared ownership of innovation processes.
- Improved communication of research and innovation outcomes—particularly towards policy makers and broader audiences—is necessary to foster long-term political commitment and support.



Submission of the activity report to the MESRI Project Manager, April 2025

Outcomes of the policy dialogue

The national policy dialogue helped strengthen convergence among public and private actors, research institutions, civil society, and technical and financial partners around a shared vision for scaling up agricultural innovations. It resulted in several major outcomes:

1. A shared vision for effective innovation scaling

- Stakeholders agreed that scaling innovations is not limited to technical dissemination but depends on social, economic, political and institutional dynamics.
- A systemic and territorialised approach is required—one that combines technological innovation, institutional support, economic incentives and local ownership.

2. Stakeholder commitment to strengthen public-private partnerships

- Participants agreed on the need to formalise collaboration agreements among research institutions, businesses, farmer organisations and public authorities.
- Concrete proposals were made to engage the private sector in innovation, including awareness raising, tax incentives, access to finance and integration into value chains.

3. Operational pathways to improve access to finance for innovative SMEs

- The dialogue identified tangible solutions to improve SME access to credit and investment, including forming cooperatives to pool risks; opening equity to responsible investors; creating specific co-financing funds; and strengthening and restructuring the National Fund for Research and Innovation for Development (FONRID).

4. Clear recommendations for technical and financial partners

- A shift towards long-term financing aligned with innovation trajectories was proposed.
- There was broad consensus on the importance of investing in local capacities—especially innovation facilitators, entrepreneurs, local authorities and technical services.
- The call for improved capitalisation, evaluation and monitoring of innovation scaling efforts was strongly supported.

5. Prioritisation of policy and institutional reforms

- Stakeholders emphasised the need to implement existing national policies and revise regulations (e.g., biopesticides, seeds, certification) to remove barriers to innovation.
- The role of the CC-SNIA was reaffirmed as the national coordination body.
- The need to strengthen consultation frameworks and multistakeholder platforms at all levels was acknowledged.

6. Proposal for a national mechanism for sustainable innovation financing

- The dialogue outlined the creation of a national fund for scaling up agricultural innovations, linked to mechanisms for monitoring economic and social performance.
- This fund would aim to mobilise public, private and endogenous resources (e.g., carbon credits, local contributions).

7. Commitment to sustainability and political ownership

- Participants recognised the importance of integrating innovations into national and local agricultural policies and co-planning projects with authorities from the outset.
- Measures were proposed to ensure the long-term economic impact of innovations (e.g., spin-off models, valorisation by hosting structures).
- The idea of a monitoring and evaluation mechanism embedded in political steering was retained to ensure sustainable integration.



Guided tour of the innovation fair

Recommendations on the way forward

The lessons learned from the DeSIRA National Days and the national policy dialogue on agricultural innovation led to the formulation of a set of strategic recommendations aimed at strengthening the conditions for scaling agricultural innovations in Burkina Faso:

1. Acknowledge and strengthen the strategic role of research in innovation systems

- Embed action research, co-innovation and participatory research approaches sustainably within national development frameworks.
- Systematically involve researchers from the design phase of initiatives, including those led by the private sector, NGOs or farmer organisations.
- Redefine agricultural advisory services as a key lever for innovation facilitation by enhancing advisors' skills in facilitation, mediation and multistakeholder process support.

2. Promote the social and territorial co-construction of innovations

- Recognise innovation as a holistic process that integrates technical, social, institutional and organisational dimensions.
- Support innovation dynamics rooted in territories and driven by inclusive and sustainable multistakeholder platforms.
- Establish a structured and permanent framework for stakeholder dialogue—under the leadership of the CC-SNIA—to ensure coordination, coherence and synergy of efforts.

3. Stimulate public-private partnerships around sustainable economic models

- Create an enabling environment for private investment in agricultural innovation through targeted incentives (grants, adapted taxation, improved access to strategic information).
- Encourage the formalisation of partnerships between research institutions and professional organisations or companies.
- Integrate enterprises into territorial innovation ecosystems and value chains to strengthen the sustainability and ownership of solutions.

4. Establish financing mechanisms adapted to innovation trajectories

- Move beyond short-term project logic by setting up long-term financing mechanisms based on public-private co-responsibility.
- Restructure and strengthen existing instruments such as FONRID to better meet the needs of innovators and promote sustainable impacts.

5. Integrate innovation into public policies and territorial planning frameworks

- Ensure the explicit inclusion of innovations in agricultural, environmental and local development policies.
- Coordinate scaling-up plans with local governments through structured and proactive dialogue.
- Revise regulatory frameworks (e.g., seed standards, bio-inputs, certification) to remove institutional barriers to innovation.



Participants' recommendations for scaling up DeSIRA projects, April 2025

6. Strengthen capacities at all levels of the innovation ecosystem

- Develop a modular and continuous training offer for all actors: researchers, producers, entrepreneurs, facilitators, elected officials and public agents.
- Support the professionalisation of innovation facilitators, recognised as key catalysts of collective dynamics and change processes.
- Establish technical, organisational and strategic support programmes tailored to innovative initiative holders.

7. Build a shared system for monitoring, evaluation and capitalisation

- Develop a national shared monitoring and evaluation system to measure results, capture learning and inform public policy.
- Strengthen the capitalisation of experiences and the dissemination of results to policy makers, partners and the wider public.



Dr Haguétou Sawadogo-Lingani,
Project Manager at MESRI, representing the Minister of Higher Education, Research and Innovation

"I commend the innovation-based approach underpinning the DeSIRA projects and the valuable contributions of technical and financial partners. Thanks to research, these projects provide concrete solutions to the challenges of climate change and sustainable development. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, through ANVAR and its internal mechanisms, remains fully committed to supporting the scaling up of these results, as the promotion of research is an integral part of our mission."



Prof Jacques Nanema, Research Lecturer at Joseph Ki-Zerbo University

"We welcome the success of this initiative, which truly exemplifies the social reflexivity championed by DeSIRA. It highlights the importance of co-construction and co-innovation in transformation dynamics. It is essential to capitalise on the lessons learned from projects and share them widely. Civil society has a structuring role to play in coordinating these initiatives, and scaling up innovations cannot be achieved without an equitable sharing of risks among all stakeholders involved."



Mr Marc Duponcel, Head of EU Cooperation in Burkina Faso

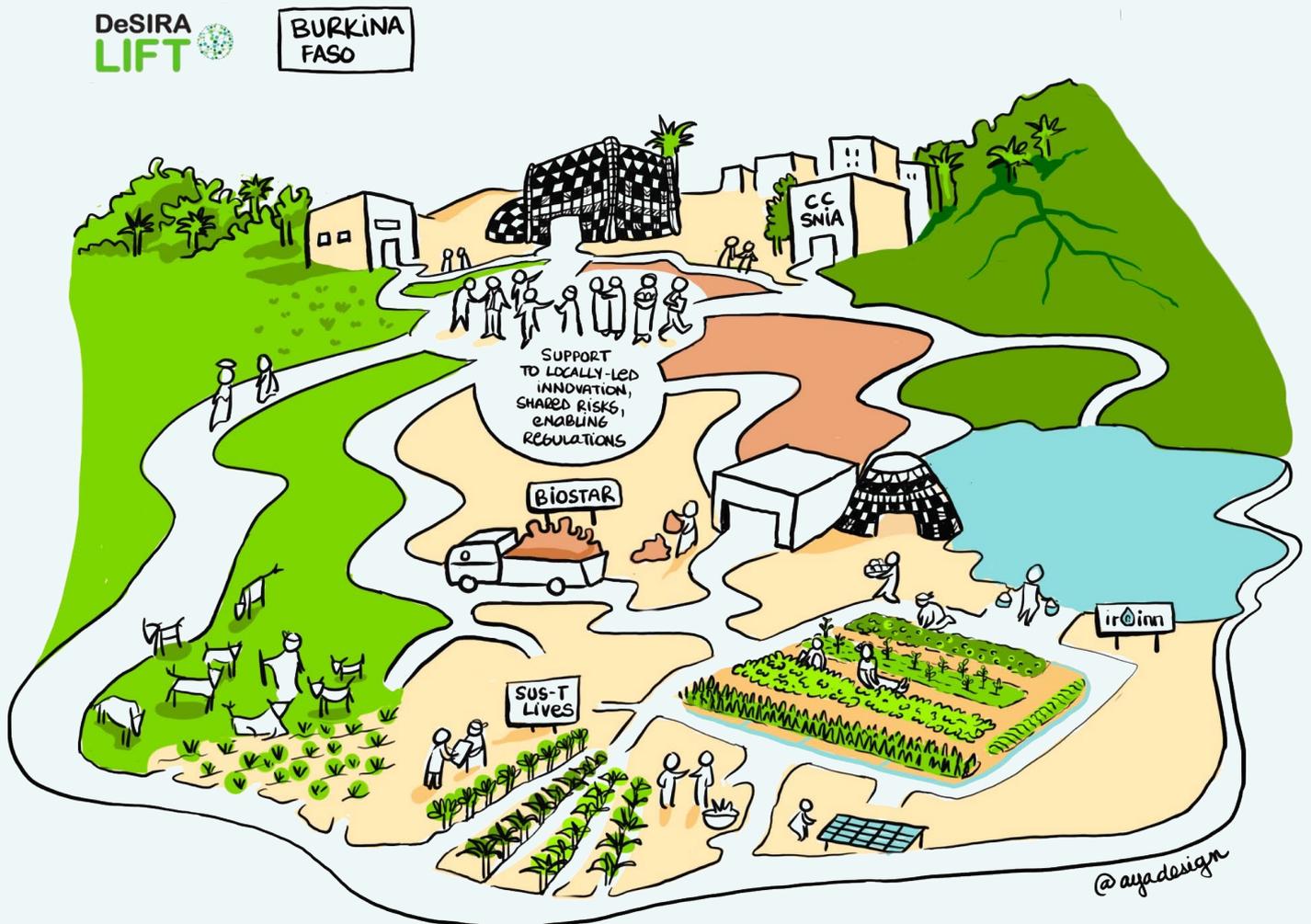
"I would like to warmly thank all the partners for their presence and commitment to the scaling-up of DeSIRA projects. Through this initiative, the European Union reaffirms its support for the development of Burkina Faso, particularly in the strategic area of agricultural innovation. We believe that action research is an essential lever for progressing towards food sovereignty."

Conclusion

The DeSIRA National Days and the national policy dialogue on agricultural innovation have jointly laid the foundation for a shared strategic framework that can support a more inclusive, coherent and resilient agricultural innovation system in Burkina Faso. These two events underscored the urgency of moving beyond fragmented initiatives by fostering greater alignment between public policies, research agendas, private-sector engagement and local dynamics.

They call for collective action grounded in the complementarity of roles, knowledge and territorial realities, reaffirming the need for strong political will to translate lessons learned into coordinated policies, long-term investments and sustainable partnerships. This shared ambition paves the way for a national strategy that recognises innovation as a lever for transformation and sovereignty, anchored in both local ownership and systemic change.

Key takeaways in a picture



Acknowledgement

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Faria (Agrinatura/ISA, University of Lisbon), and managed by Renaud Guillonnet (Agrinatura). The purpose of the Community of Action and Reflection was to share and learn about challenges and practices in managing for impacts in R&I projects.

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