



Transforming food systems and agriculture
through research in partnership with Africa

May **2026**

A photograph showing a man in a blue shirt and white cap operating a hand-dug well. The well is a large, circular concrete structure with a wooden frame and a pulley system. A blue plastic bucket is visible in the foreground, partially filled with water. The background shows a rural landscape with green vegetation and a cloudy sky.

A partnership-based research initiative that brings together Africans and Europeans, aiming to support the transition towards productive, resilient, and sustainable food systems. TSARA contributes to food security and job creation, while preserving resources and promoting overall health.

Objectives

TSARA is both a research partnership an ambition and a framework for sharing knowledge and practices, co-constructing impactful research, innovation and training projects, in support of actors in the field, public policies and international initiatives. The aim is to contribute jointly to addressing global, common, and exacerbated challenges in Africa, as well as interconnected crises, in line with the priorities of the African Union and the European Union.



Our approach aims to:

- combine solidarity and reciprocity in a balanced, long-term partnership
- develop integrated themes through nexus approaches
- bring together a variety of actors, scales, languages, networks, knowledge, methods and approaches
- strive for excellence in multi-, inter- and transdisciplinary research
- build on and capitalise on existing resources
- give a central place to young people and women, while paying attention to vulnerable groups.



Structure

The initiative now has 38 members from 16 African countries and one European country.

The governance of the TSARA initiative comprises a General Assembly with two co-chairs, a secretariat, an external advisory committee, and a scientific base consisting of task forces and communities, both thematic and inter-thematic.

MEMBERS

South Africa: Agricultural Research Council, U. Pretoria, U. Western Cape

Benin: Institut National des Recherches Agricoles du Benin, U. Abomey Calavi

Burkina Faso: L'Institut de l'Environnement et de Recherches Agricoles du Burkina Faso

Cameroon: L'Institut de Recherche Agricole pour le Développement

Côte d'Ivoire: Centre National de Recherche Agronomique de Côte d'Ivoire, Institut National Polytechnique Félix Houphouët-Boigny

Egypt: Agricultural Research Center

Ethiopia: Addis Ababa University, Dilla University, Ethiopian Institute of Agricultural Research

France: AgroParisTech, CIHEAM, Cirad, INRAE, IRD, L'Institut Agro

Kenya: International Centre of Insect Physiology and Ecology, University of Nairobi

Madagascar: FOFIFA, U. Antananarivo

Mali: Institut d'Economie Rurale

Morocco: École Nationale Forestière d'ingénieurs, École Nationale d'Agriculture de Meknès, Institut agronomique et vétérinaire Hassan-II

Nigeria: U. Obafemi Awolowo

Senegal: Institut Sénégalais de Recherches Agricoles, U. Gaston Berger, Universidad Cheikh-Anta-Diop, Université du Sine Saloum El-Hâdj Ibrahima NIASS

Tanzania: Nelson Mandela African Institution of Science and Technology

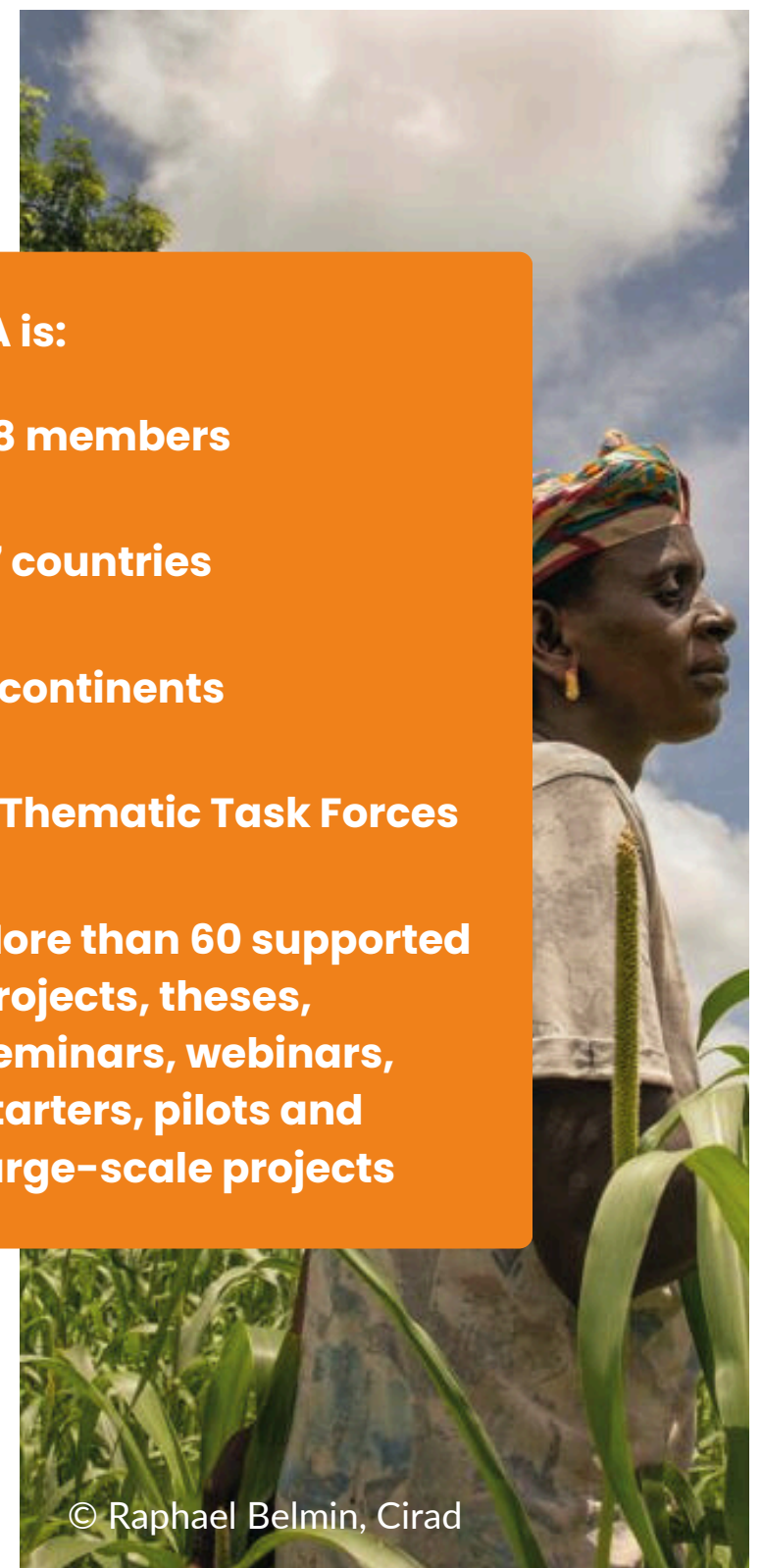
Tunisia: Institution de la Recherche et de l'Enseignement Supérieur Agricoles, U. de Carthage

Zimbabwe: U. Zimbabwe

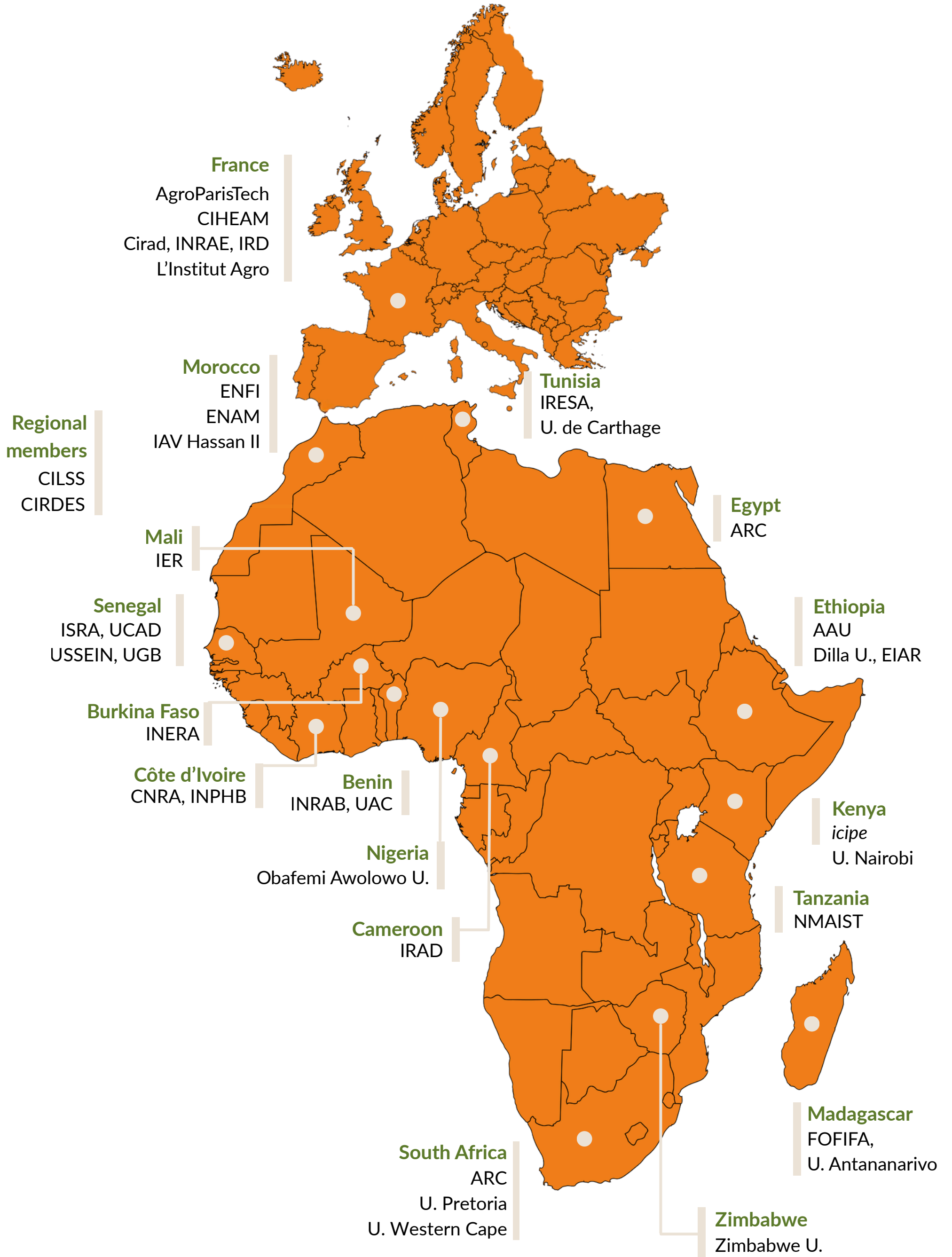
Regional members: Comité inter-État de lutte contre la sécheresse au Sahel, Centre International de Recherche-Développement sur l'Élevage en zone Subhumide.

TSARA is:

- ✓ 38 members
- ✓ 17 countries
- ✓ 2 continents
- ✓ 9 Thematic Task Forces
- ✓ More than 60 supported projects, theses, seminars, webinars, starters, pilots and large-scale projects



© Raphael Belmin, Cirad



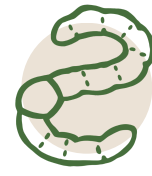
Scientific agenda

TSARA's scientific agenda, developed by the collective, backed by an action plan and approved by the general assembly, focuses on nine interconnected themes.



AGROECOLOGICAL TRANSITION

Enhancing biodiversity and the services provided by agroecosystems



SOILS

Preserving and rehabilitating soils and contributing to climate change adaptation



NUTRITION & HEALTHY AND SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEMS

Combating undernutrition, dietary deficiencies and chronic diseases



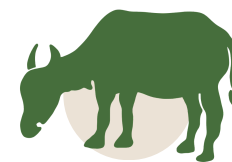
FORESTS AND AGROFORESTS

Promoting the adaptation of (agro)forestry areas to global changes



ONE HEALTH

Addressing human health, animal health and ecosystem health together



LIVESTOCK

Rethinking the role of livestock farming in a context of climate change and water scarcity



WORK AND EMPLOYMENT

Assessing the capacity of agricultural systems and value chains to create quality jobs



WATER

Developing water-efficient agriculture and circularity, preserving the quantity and quality of resources



DIGITAL AND AGRICULTURE

Contribute to the deployment of digital technology in agriculture, using a low-cost, equitable approach that is accessible to all, through the sharing of knowledge, methods and tools.



“ Faced with major challenges in the areas of agriculture, food and the environment, which Africa and Europe are confronting in a context heavily marked by climate change, the TSARA initiative demonstrates our collective ability to work on key issues.”

*Philippe Mauguin, CEO of INRAE and
Co-Chair 2024/25*

Projects examples

LOCAL BREEDS



WEBINARS - Local breeds for sustainable livestock systems in Africa

A series of 3 webinars offered by the Livestock Task Force on the issue of local breeds for sustainable livestock systems: episodes 1 - Meeting the challenges of tomorrow, 2 - Methods and tools, 3 - Research priorities and special attention to CBBP - Community Based Breeding Programs.

Food and microbiota in Africa : Nutrition, from microbiota to public policy. (Organisations from South Africa, France and Senegal)

The aim is to (i) generate knowledge about African microbiota and the link between traditional foods and health, (ii) strengthen the value chains of traditional and indigenous African foods, and (iii) provide policy support for these sectors. Particular attention will be paid to the inclusiveness and environmental sustainability of agri-food systems.

FAMA



Projects examples

EMPLOYAE



Employment and agroecological transition *(Organisations from Burkina Faso, France, Ghana, Senegal)*

Employment, working conditions and the attractiveness of professions are some of the main challenges facing Africa. EmployAE aims to study the conditions under which agroecology can create quality jobs. This involves (i) linking agricultural practices, organisation, working hours and conditions on farms, (ii) characterising the associated jobs (activity profiles, remuneration, social protection) for farmers, family workers and employees, and (iii) integrating a labour/employment perspective upstream and downstream of production.

Research and Training Network on Soil Functionality in West Africa

(Organisations from Benin, Burkina Faso, Ivory Coast, France, Senegal)

The aim is to collate and promote research findings on the region's soils and how they are affected by agrosystem management. The network organises thematic schools to harmonise sampling and analysis methods, supports the establishment of consortia, and promotes exchanges between researchers and student mobility.

SOIL AFRICAO



Some highlights



➔ MAHDIA project group internship in February 2025 in Djilor, Senegal. Forty-eight students from the University of Sine Saloum El-Hâdj Ibrahima Niass (USSEIN, Senegal) and the Institut Agro Montpellier (France) carried out intensive fieldwork in scientific immersion. ↑

© BAME



© BAME



➔ Field day bringing together scientists and members of the external advisory committee during the Inter-Task Force Seminar in December 2024 at ENA Meknes, Morocco.

© ENAM

Third General Assembly attended by member institutions of the TSARA Initiative during the International Agricultural Show in Paris, France, in February 2025. ←



© Cirad



“By facilitating the interface between science, policy and the field, TSARA’s work supports reforms and implements practical solutions to modernise the sector and make agricultural professions attractive.”

Moustapha Guèye, CEO of
ISRA and
Co-Chair 2024/25



CONTACT

secretariat@initiative-tsara.org

www.initiative-tsara.org