

Action-Research in Partnership for innovation and sustainability transitions (ARPIST)

Successes and challenges of international partnerships in DeSIRA

Aurélie Toillier (CIRAD/FAO)

Leader of DeSIRA-LIFT facility in support of DeSIRA Pillar 1

***Boosting agrifood research and innovation
cooperation for impact at scale***



March 11-13, 2025

Brussels, Belgium

Activating agricultural transitions to sustainability through participatory research and co-innovation

Stories of change across Africa, Asia and Latin America from the DeSIRA initiative

DeSIRA
LIFT

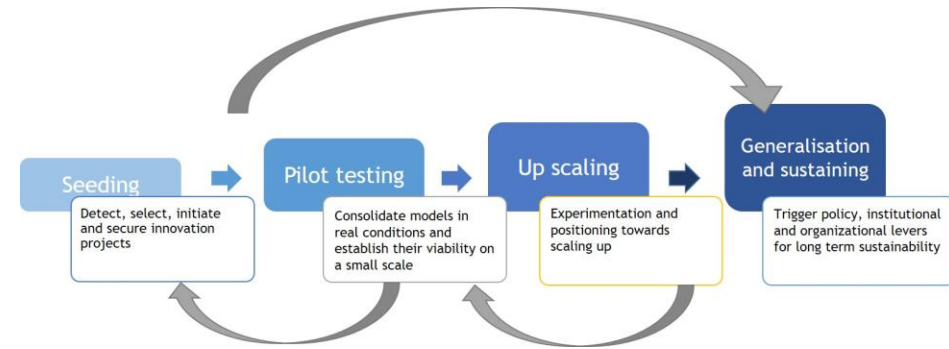


What is ARPIST in DeSIRA

Action-Research in Partnerships for Innovation and Sustainability Transitions

A new set of research purposes and practices geared toward societal missions

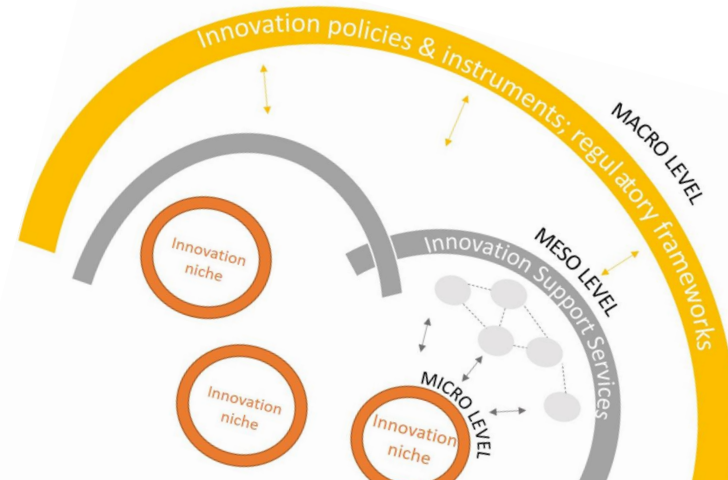
1- RESEARCH IN SUPPORT OF INNOVATION PROCESSES



Innovations at scale

From 2 to 20 years

2-RESEARCH IN SUPPORT OF INNOVATION SYSTEMS

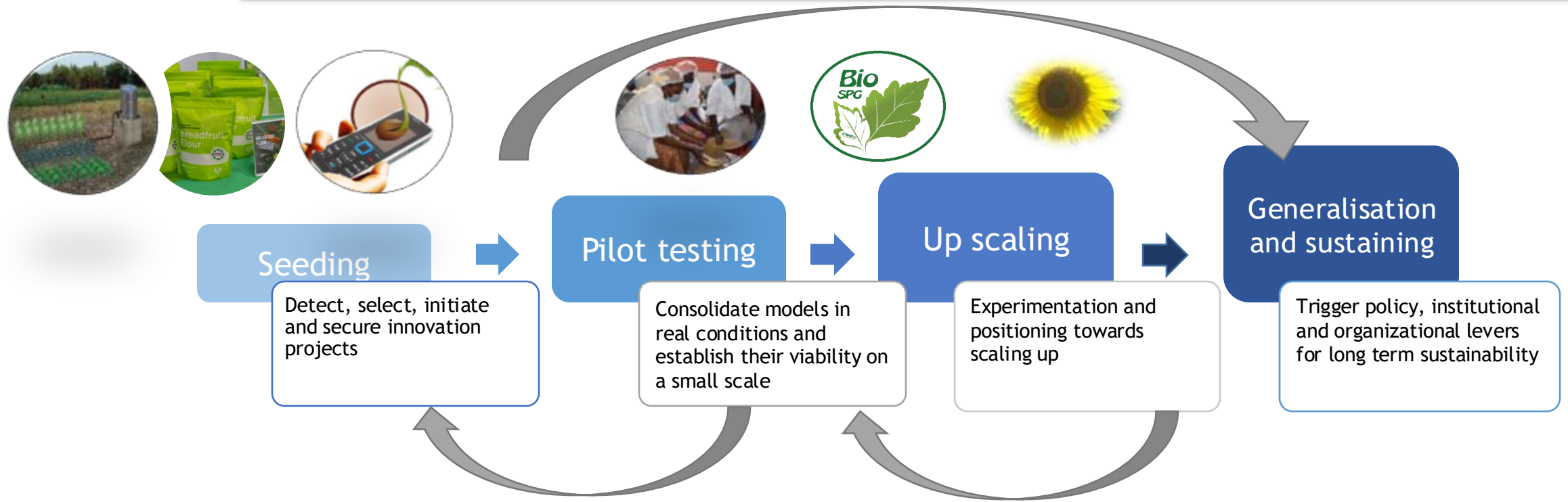


New capacities for open and responsible innovation

From 10 to 15 years

1. Solving problems with end-users
2. Testing new things, based on demands
3. Creating new capacities, based on needs
4. (Re)framing transformative processes
 - Providing evidence, methods and models of action
 - Address trade-offs and barriers to change
 - Supporting decision making
5. Facilitating multistakeholder collaboration mechanisms

1- Action-Research in Partnership (ARP) in support of innovation PROCESSES



Research functions

- Formalization and systematization (creation of links between local knowledge and research knowledge)

Partnerships

- Pluridisciplinary project teams (Universities, laboratories, etc.)
- Scientific collaboration

Time horizons

- temporality of research

- Codification (transformation of knowledge into manuals, checklists, training, etc.)

- Plurifunctional project teams : end-users, designers, experimenters
- Co-creation collaboration or competition

- variable, adaptable

- Legitimation (transforming knowledge into “political currency”)

- External stakeholder engagement
- genuine cooperation

- Policy cycles

1- Action-Research in Partnership (ARP) in support of innovation PROCESSES

Multi-Stakeholder Mechanisms and researchers' contributions

Seeding

Tracker

Pilot testing

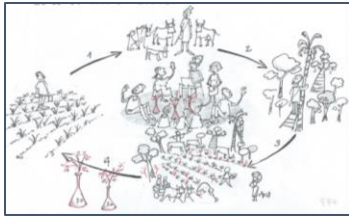
Explorer

Up scaling

Trainer

Generalisation and sustaining

Expert



In situ & ad-hoc co-design of innovations led by rural communities

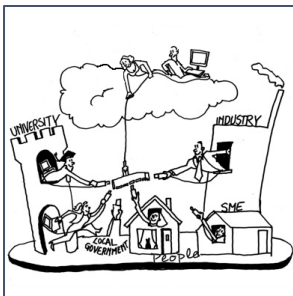
Living Labs, local innovation platforms



**Transfer of Technology
Farmer Field Schools**



Incubation Services for innovative entrepreneurs – Social incubators

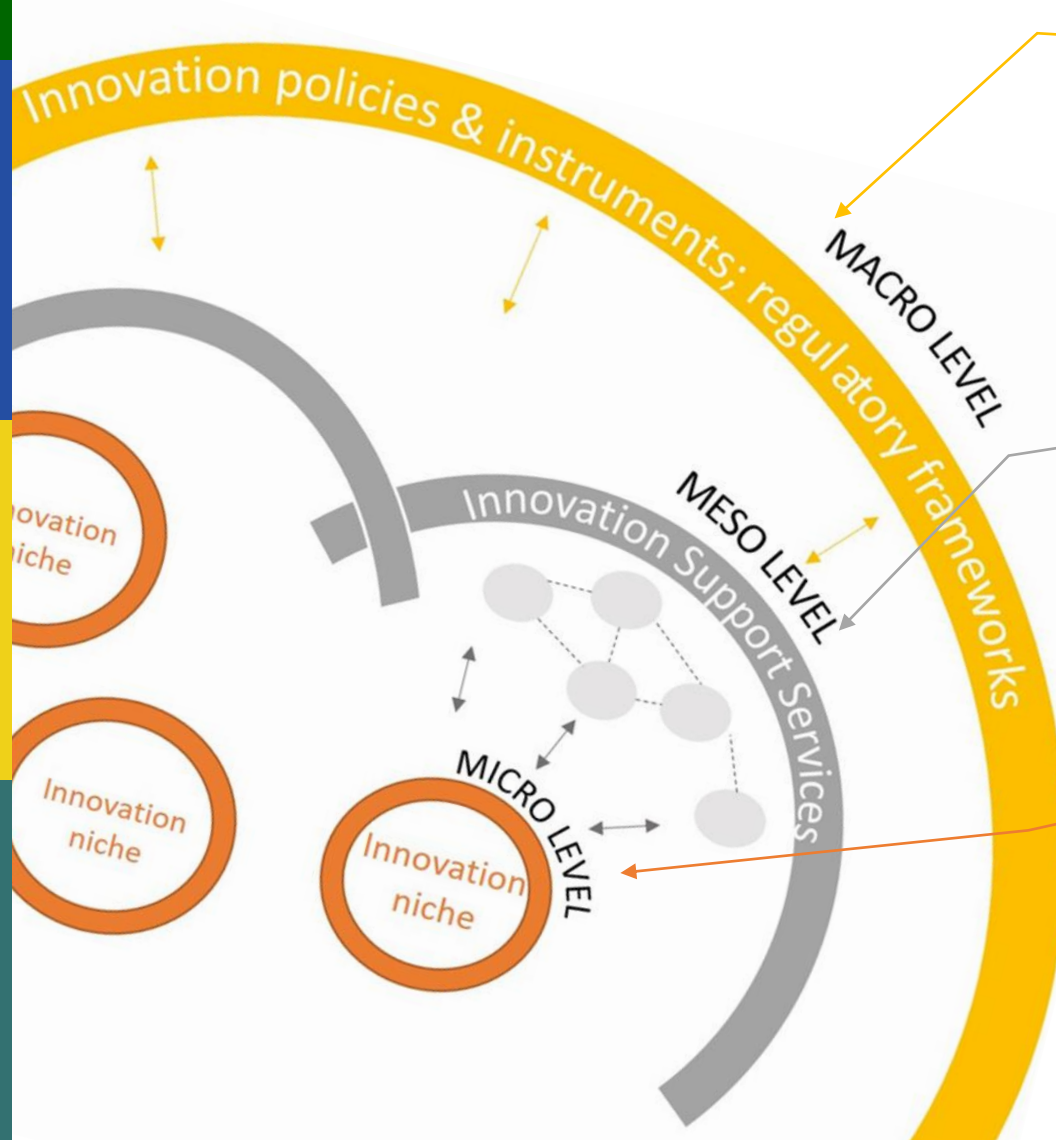


Open innovation between public/private sectors - Place-based multi-service and bridging platforms (campus, territorial ecosystems)



**Policy making for more enabling environments
Policy Labs, science-policy interfaces, regional alliances**

New collaborative capacities for open and responsible innovation



Build Policy Capacities

Create push & pull innovation instruments, Align efforts toward missions

Build service ecosystems capacities

Change the knowledge regime

Build open innovation capacities

Engage scaling actors with rural communities

- Parliamentaries
- Government agencies
- Think Tank, Learning Alliances
- Interprofessional associations

- National public research institutions
- Advisory services
- NGOs

- Financing institutions
- AgriTech
- Grassroot innovation networks
- Local authorities



Generating impacts with international R&I interventions



Supporting
AgrInnovation
PROCESSES

Development-
oriented

*Scaling innovation portfolios for
sustainability transitions*

**Co-creation, knowledge
integration around a
new practice, product,
service, policy**

Formalization-
oriented

COMPLEX PROJECTS AND PARTNERSHIP ARCHITECTURES

**In-country innovation capacity
building
→ Education, institution
building, ecosystem building,
innovation policies 3.0**

Exploration-
oriented

*Changing the ways of behaving, thinking and perceiving
the environment*

Innovation Niches /
micro-level

Support Services /
meso-level

Policy /
macro-level

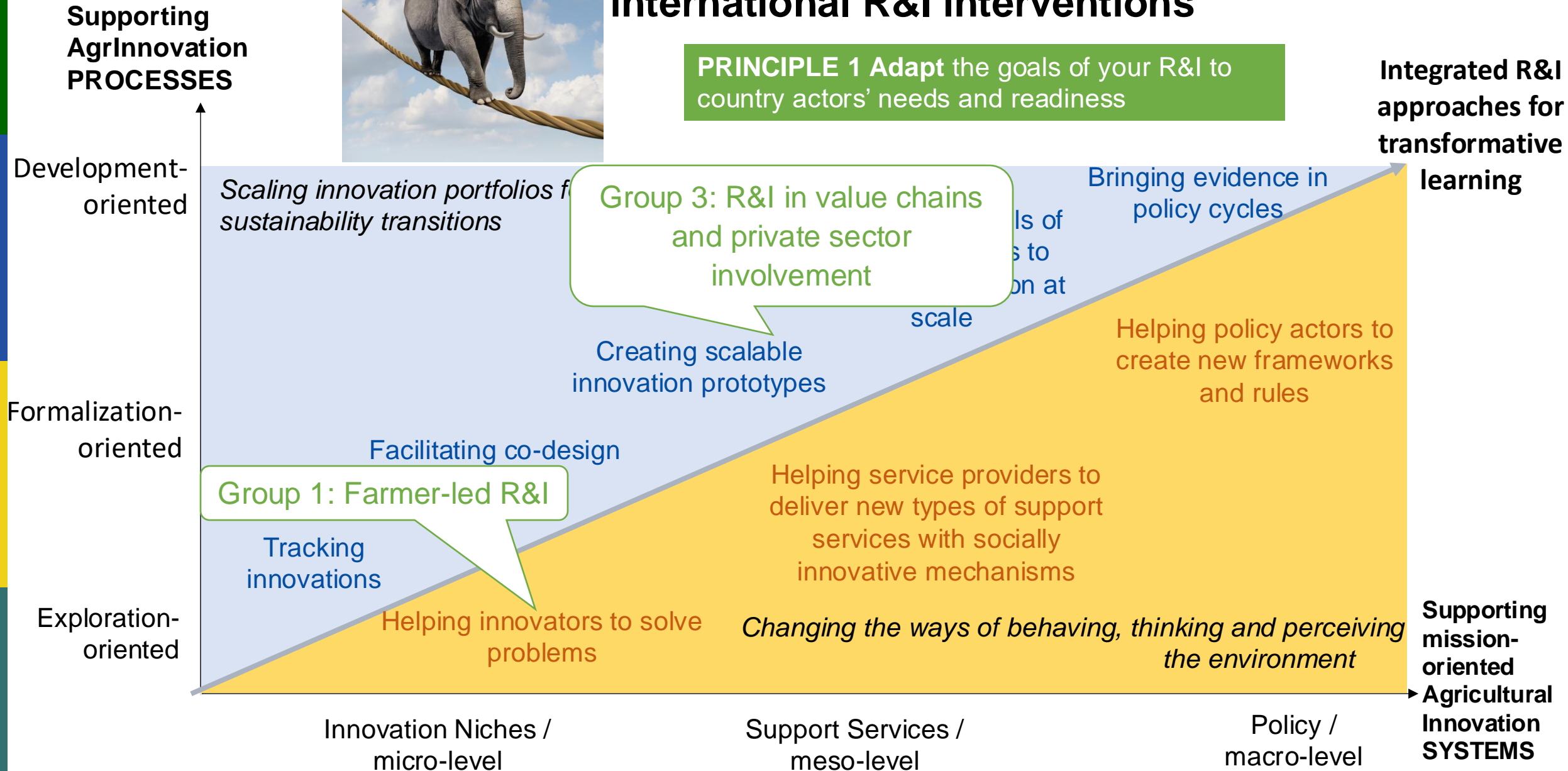
**Integrated R&I
approaches for
transformative
learning**

**Supporting
mission-
oriented
Agricultural
Innovation
SYSTEMS**

Generating impacts with international R&I interventions



PRINCIPLE 1 Adapt the goals of your R&I to country actors' needs and readiness





Generating impacts with international R&I interventions

PRINCIPLE 2 Adapt your PARTNERSHIP ARCHITECTURE to the goals of the R&I intervention and existing arrangements

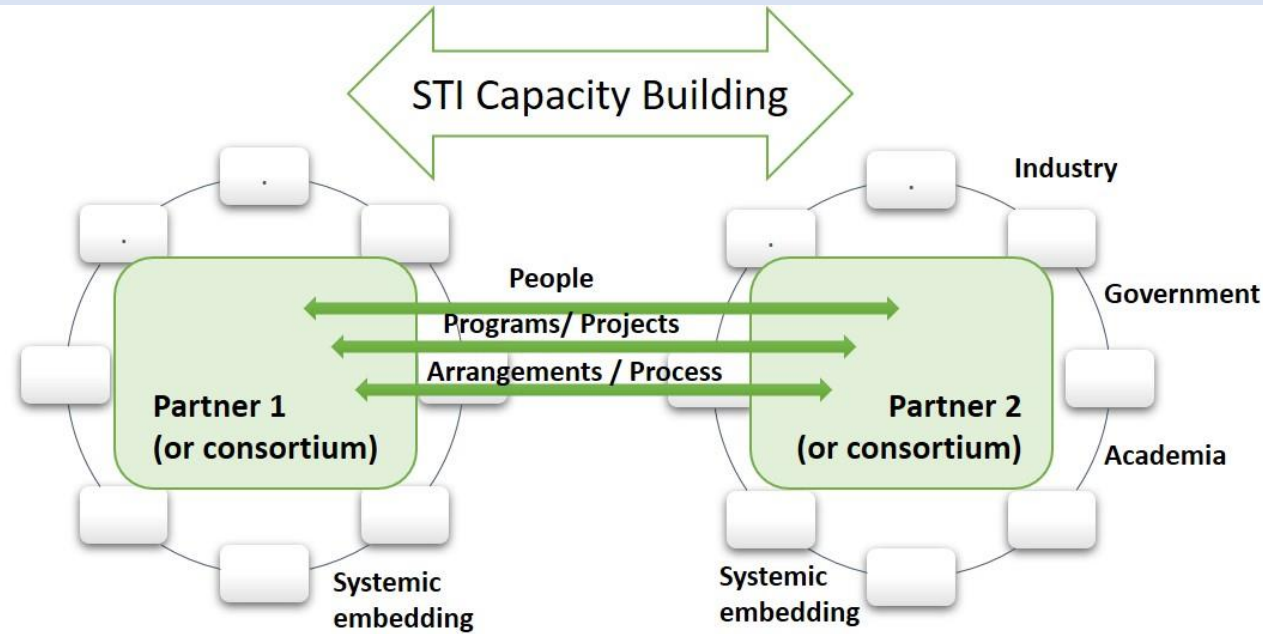
Supporting AgrInnovation PROCESSES

Integrated R&I approaches for transformative learning

Development-oriented

Scaling innovation portfolios for sustainability

Formalization-oriented



Group 2: R&I in fragile contexts (insecurity, conflicts)

Exploration-oriented

Changing the ways of behaving, thinking and perceiving the environment

Supporting mission-oriented Agricultural Innovation SYSTEMS

Innovation Niches / micro-level

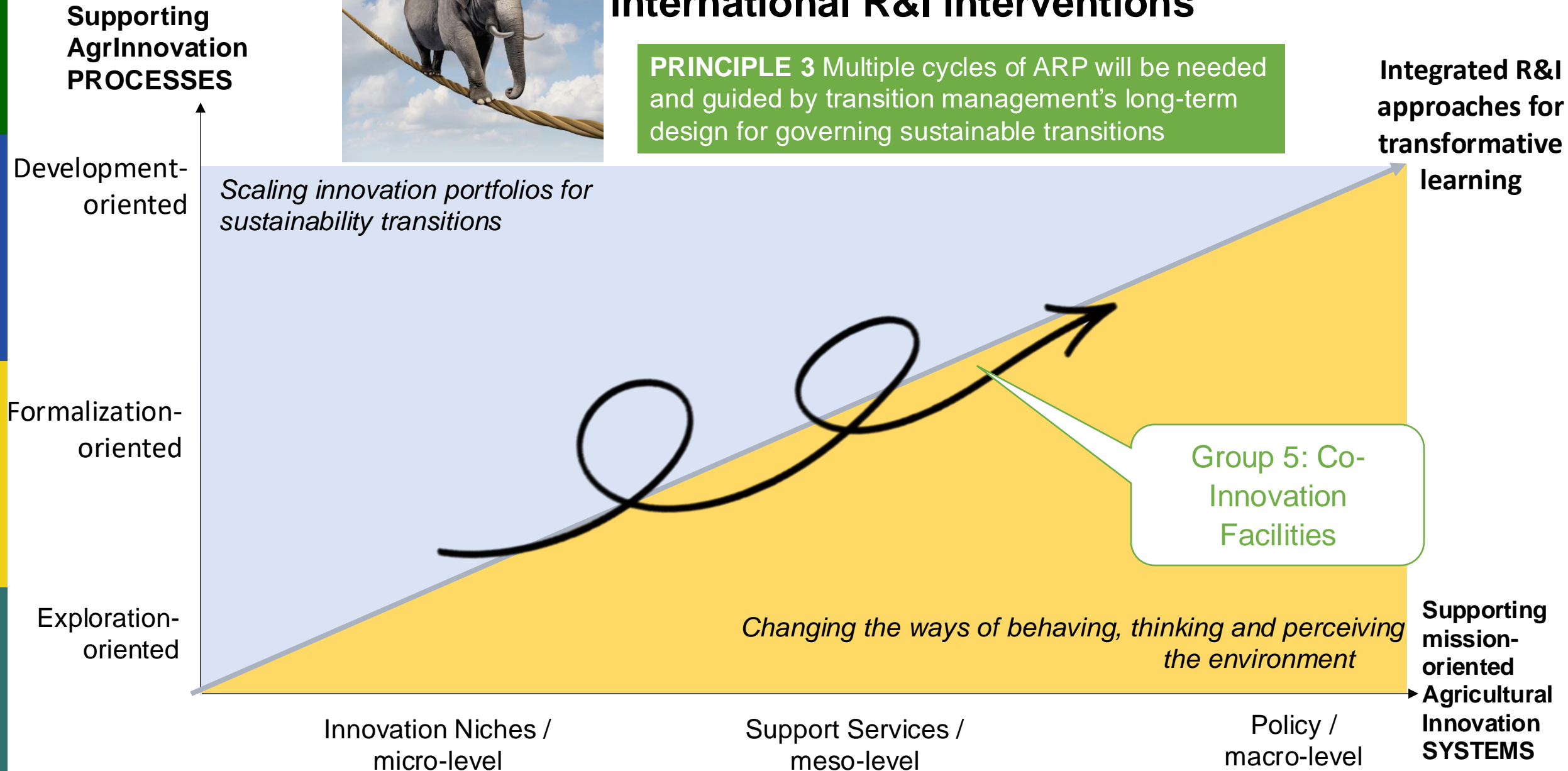
Support Services / meso-level

Policy / macro-level

Generating impacts with international R&I interventions



PRINCIPLE 3 Multiple cycles of ARP will be needed and guided by transition management's long-term design for governing sustainable transitions



Generating impacts with international R&I interventions



LESSON 4 Managing Trade-off, building trust, balancing power, sense making are at the core of collaboration and take most of the time

Supporting AgrInnovation PROCESSES

Integrated R&I approaches for transformative learning

Development-oriented

Scaling innovation portfolios for sustainability transitions

Group 4: Science-policy interfaces

Formalization-oriented

What innovations should be scaled?
What research should be stopped?

How to Reconnect science to end users and society?

Exploration-oriented

Why shall we invest effort with young entrepreneurs?

Changing the ways of behaving, thinking and perceiving the environment

Innovation Niches / micro-level

Support Services / meso-level

Policy / macro-level

Supporting mission-oriented Agricultural Innovation SYSTEMS

Thanks for your attention!

DeSIRA-LIFT team

Follow us:

<https://www.desiraliftcommunity.org/>

Service Area 1

- Leader: Aurélie Toillier (CIRAD) – aurelie.toillier@cirad.fr
- Co-leader : Margarida Lima de Faria (ISA) – margaridalf@isa.ulisboa.pt

DeSIRA-LIFT SA1 team

S. Mathé (CIRAD), P. Henriquez (WUR/Agrinatura), R. Guillonnet (WUR/Agrinatura), C. Lecomte (CIRAD), B. Douthwaite (WUR/Agrinatura), B. Triomphe (CIRAD), R. Ramirez (WUR/Agrinatura), M. Roefs (WUR), B. Lof (WUR/Agrinatura), A. Dolinska (WUR/Agrinatura), C. Alexandre (CIRAD), S. Drimi (WUR/Agrinatura), J. Navas (WUR/Agrinatura), E. Juguet (Horus Cabinet)

