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<p>Abstract (for dissemination)</p>	<p>This report presents a systematic mapping of 242 multistakeholder initiatives (MSIs) related to Food and Nutrition Security and Sustainable Agriculture (FNSSA) across the Africa-Europe (AU-EU) landscape, conducted under the CEA-FIRST project to support the International Research Consortium (IRC). The analysis reveals a predominance of globally and regionally focused initiatives, with limited bi-continental collaboration and a notable underrepresentation of African-led MSIs. Public funding—particularly from the EU—dominates (48%), while private sector involvement remains low. Academia is the most represented stakeholder group. Despite a majority of ongoing initiatives (62%), short-term project cycles threaten sustainability. The report highlights the need for stronger governance, more inclusive African participation, greater private sector engagement, and continuous updating of MSI data. It offers actionable recommendations to enhance coordination, reduce fragmentation, and strengthen long-term AU-EU collaboration through the IRC.</p>
<p>Keywords</p>	<p>Multistakeholder initiatives, Platforms, EU-AU R&I cooperation, FNSSA</p>

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Abbreviations

AU	African Union
AUC	African Union Commission
AU-EU	African Union-European Union
CEA-FIRST	Consortium Europe Africa on Research and Innovation for Food Systems Transformation
EC	European Commission
EU	European Union
EU-AU	European Union-African Union
FNSSA	Food and Nutrition Security and Sustainable Agriculture
HLPD	High Level Policy Dialogue
IRC	International Research Consortium
KPIs	Key Performance Indicators
LEAP	Long-term Europe-Africa Partnership
LEAP4FNSSA	Long-term EU-AU Research and Innovation Partnership for Food and Nutrition Security and Sustainable Agriculture
MSIs	Multistakeholder Initiatives
MSMEs	Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
RIs	Research Institutions
R&I	Research and Innovation
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SMEs	Small and Medium Enterprises
SNA	Social Network Analysis
STI	Science, Technology and Innovation
SWG	Strategic Working Group
WG	Working Group
WP	Work Package

Executive Summary

This report presents the results of a comprehensive mapping of multistakeholder initiatives (MSIs) related to Food and Nutrition Security and Sustainable Agriculture (FNSSA) across the Africa-Europe (AU-EU) region. Conducted under Work Package 3 of the CEA-FIRST project, the mapping aims to support the operationalization of the International Research Consortium (IRC) by identifying existing platforms and initiatives, assessing synergies, and informing strategic stakeholder engagement. The exercise responds to long-standing concerns around fragmentation, duplication, and inefficiencies in FNSSA-related research and innovation efforts, particularly within the AU-EU partnership context.

A total of **242 MSIs** were identified through a combination of structured desk research, internal and external stakeholder consultations, and targeted data analysis. Initiatives were categorized according to geographic scope, thematic focus, funding sources, stakeholder composition, and potential linkages with the IRC. The data reveals that while **38% of initiatives operate globally**, and **39% have a regional focus**, only **10% are bi-continental**, indicating a relatively limited number of AU-EU collaborative platforms. Moreover, **only 10% of the MSIs have a dedicated focus on Africa**, compared to 21% particularly focusing on Europe—highlighting a geographic imbalance and the need to foster more African-led and African-anchored initiatives.

Funding patterns show a heavy reliance on **public sources (64%)**, with **blended finance (24%)** and **private funding (12%)** playing more modest roles. The **European Union emerges as the primary funder**, supporting 48% of all mapped initiatives, further reinforcing a Euro-centric funding landscape. The private sector remains underrepresented, particularly in initiatives oriented toward research and innovation, suggesting untapped opportunities for greater private engagement in co-developing and sustaining MSIs. **Academia is the dominant stakeholder group**, participating in 48% of initiatives, followed by government actors (41%).

While 62% of the MSIs are ongoing, many are time-bound and dissolve once initial funding ends, raising concerns about long-term continuity. The frequent use of the “partnership” label for short-lived projects underscores the need for stronger governance structures, sustainable financing mechanisms, and institutional anchoring to ensure meaningful and durable multistakeholder collaboration.

This mapping also emphasizes the importance of **adopting a network-based analytical lens** to better understand interconnections and power dynamics among MSIs. It proposes the development of a **dynamic, continuously updated database** integrated into the IRC’s digital infrastructure to maintain the relevance of the mapping and support strategic engagement. Ultimately, the report offers practical insights to help the IRC position itself as a coordination hub that fosters inclusive, coherent, and long-term collaboration across the FNSSA R&I ecosystem in Africa and Europe.

Disclaimer

This database (D3.5) is provided as a **non-exhaustive reference tool** intended to support research, analysis, and strategic collaboration in the field of food systems, sustainability, and agricultural innovation. While every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy and relevance of the information contained herein, the **compilers do not claim completeness or finality**. The database is **designed as a living, dynamic resource**. Given the evolving nature of initiatives, partnerships, funding mechanisms, and institutional roles, users are advised that **regular updates and validations are essential** to maintain its usefulness and relevance. Users are encouraged to contribute feedback, corrections, and new entries to ensure the continued accuracy and value of this tool for all stakeholders.

1. Introduction

The AU-EU International Research Consortium (IRC) on Food and Nutrition Security and Sustainable Agriculture (FNSSA) is a long-term bi-continental platform that brings together actors in FNSSA research, policy, and innovation. Launched under the Horizon 2020-funded project LEAP4FNSSA (Grant number 817663) in September 2022, the IRC already integrates various FNSSA actors, initiatives, strategies, and programs at national, sub-regional, and continental levels.

A major challenge in FNSSA research and innovation has been the fragmentation of the FNSSA landscape, which has resulted in overlapping initiatives, inconsistencies in research efforts, and inefficient use of knowledge management tools, financial resources, and innovation activities. This fragmentation has significantly hindered progress in achieving the objectives outlined in the 10-year AU-EU High-Level Policy Dialogue (HLPD) FNSSA Roadmap adopted in 2016. The lack of coordinated efforts has led to difficulties streamlining research activities, causing duplications rather than complementary collaborations. Implementing joint AU-EU research and innovation projects has also been affected, leading to delays and inefficiencies in knowledge exchange and impact assessment. Furthermore, the absence of a structured framework for evaluation has made it challenging to measure research impact effectively, limiting the ability to track progress toward FNSSA objectives.

Fragmentation has also restricted identification of suitable partners and setting up collaborations, making it also difficult for researchers and institutions to identify relevant initiatives and platforms. As a result, the translation of research findings into policy and practical applications has been weakened, reducing the effectiveness of FNSSA interventions in addressing food security and agricultural sustainability challenges. Addressing this fragmentation is crucial for strengthening research collaboration, improving partner identification and collaboration, boosting innovation, and ensuring that FNSSA stakeholders across various levels contribute meaningfully to policy development and knowledge transfer.

To tackle these challenges, the IRC is focused on reducing fragmentation by addressing its root causes. Weak and siloed knowledge management systems have hindered the efficient sharing and application of research findings across AU-EU partnerships. Inadequate mechanisms for sustained dialogue and collaboration have further disconnected FNSSA actors at national, regional, and continental levels. Additionally, insufficient communication frameworks have prevented effective dissemination of research results to policymakers, funding bodies, and end-users. At the same time, the absence of strong coordination structures has led to disjointed efforts between research institutions, funding agencies, and private sector stakeholders.

The IRC will be operationalised by the CEAFIRST project, where it is envisioned as a central mechanism to bridge existing gaps by fostering structured collaboration among research programs, initiatives, and funding instruments. This coordinated approach will be complemented by efforts to strengthen Science, Technology, and Innovation (STI) policy dialogues between the African Union (AU) and the European Union (EU), thereby supporting the development of a more cohesive and sustainable research ecosystem conducive to long-term food system transformation.

Within this overarching framework, Work Package 3 (WP3) of the CEA-FIRST project is specifically tasked with enhancing networking and stakeholder engagement. In particular, Task 3.2.2 under WP3 is focused on expanding the IRC's membership and reinforcing its value proposition. To increase outreach and improve the IRC's capacity to channel efforts toward effective EU-AU collaboration in research and innovation (R&I) partnerships, strategic actions are required. A major step of this includes the mapping of existing platforms and/or initiatives related to FNSSA thematics, and analyzing the potential synergies while considering their strengths and constraints.

While setting up the IRC, there is growing recognition that transforming global food systems requires a profound shift in norms, perspectives, and the structural dynamics of inclusion and exclusion in decision-making spaces. As research has shown, food system challenges cannot be resolved through technical solutions alone. Instead, a shift toward holistic, systems-based approaches is needed to create food systems that are not only more affordable and sustainable, but also health-promoting and inclusive (Candel & Pereira, 2017; IFPRI, 2021; Van Bers et al., 2019). In line with this systems-thinking perspective, global food system governance is increasingly moving toward multistakeholder approaches. These are promoted as more inclusive and capable of generating diverse policy outcomes that are better suited to address the complexities of today's food systems compared to traditional governance models (Ansell & Gash, 2007; Siddiki et al., 2015). However, as such governance structures proliferate, it becomes increasingly difficult to capture the full landscape of initiatives, understand their interconnections, and assess their societal and systemic impacts. Equally important is the need to scrutinize who is truly driving these initiatives and whose interests are being represented.

Therefore, this mapping initiative (D3.5) aims to map the currently existing multistakeholder initiatives related to research & innovation on FNSSA, and captures crucial information on the governance and goals of these initiatives and/or platforms. Doing so it aims to presents valuable insights for both various FNSSA actors, as well as to the structural organisation of the IRC. By stimulating and developing a more structured research and innovation ecosystem and enabling environment for collaboration, this mapping initiative aims to contribute to a more impactful and coherent FNSSA landscape, ensuring stronger linkages and synergies with ongoing initiatives while promoting long-term sustainability in FNSSA research.

2. Adopted Methodology for Multistakeholder Initiative Mapping

This mapping initiative exercise was designed to systematically identify and categorise existing initiatives and platforms related to **FNSSA, and operating in the EU-AU landscape**. After defining and clarifying the objectives and scope, the methodology was structured into major steps of desk research, stakeholder consultations, and data categorization and mapping.

2.1 Defining Objectives & Scope

Defining a clear scope is crucial to map the right initiatives, aiming to be exhaustive, while avoiding mapping too many initiatives that do not directly align with FNSSA goals, or do not relate within the EU-AU landscape. The present scope needs to allow to understand the ecosystem of initiatives and actors within the FNSSA Partnership and broader FNSSA related actions, and furthermore to understand their

potential linkage and potential relevance to the IRC and allow possible stakeholder engagement based on the mapping.

Multistakeholder approaches or initiatives were defined by the High Level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition (HLPE) (2018) as *“any collaborative arrangement between stakeholders from two or more different spheres of society (public sector, private sector and/or civil society), pooling their resources together, sharing risks and responsibilities in order to solve a common issue, to handle a conflict, to elaborate a shared vision, to realize a common objective, to manage a common resource and/or to ensure the protection, production or delivery of an outcome of collective, and/or, public interest”* (HLPE, 2018).

The emphasis on having a *common* vision or objective is both one of the core rationales behind engaging in multistakeholder initiatives (MSIs) (Dentoni et al., 2018). However, the same common objective may also be a cause for concern regarding the different objectives and interests in the food system, particularly when including commercial actors whose profit is derived from unsustainable products and practices (Carriedo et al., 2022; Lauber et al., 2020; McKeon, 2017).

Here, a **multistakeholder initiative related to Research or Innovation in Food and Nutrition Security and Sustainable Agriculture** is considered a collaborative platform or process that brings together diverse actors—such as governments, farmers’ organizations, civil society, private sector companies, research institutions, and international organizations—to jointly address challenges and develop solutions that promote food and nutrition security and sustainable agricultural practices.

These initiatives aim to leverage the strengths, resources, and perspectives of each stakeholder group to:

- Improve access to safe, nutritious, and sufficient food for all.
- Promote environmentally sustainable farming systems.
- Enhance the livelihoods of smallholder farmers and rural communities.
- Align with national and international goals, such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

These research and innovation related MSIs often operate through dialogue, joint planning, coordinated actions, knowledge sharing, and policy advocacy to drive systemic change and foster resilience in food systems. Hence in this exercise, we focus on multi-stakeholder initiatives (MSIs) whose stated aim is to drive a healthier and more sustainable food system.

This mapping exercise focuses on Multi-Stakeholder Initiatives (MSIs) directly involved in food and farming systems that include actors in Europe and/or Africa, and relate to research or innovation. As the main goal is to support AU-EU cooperation on R&I on FNSSA, the geographic focus is primarily on Africa and Europe. However, global MSIs with strong relevance to Africa-EU FNSSA priorities are also included—provided the AU-EU region is a major target. MSIs that do not engage with or cover AU-EU food and farming systems or actors are excluded.

2.2. Data Collection & Validation Methodology

Step 1: Desk Research and Database Review

The first step involved an extensive desk review aimed at identifying MSIs within the defined scope. Given the absence of an official registry of multi-stakeholder initiatives, the process relied on the extraction of relevant initiatives from previous mappings and a wide range of existing databases. Consulted databases included the LEAP4FNSSA project database, the EU CORDIS database, a partnership database from Agrinatura, the RUFORUM platform, and internal COLEAD databases, among others. Keyword searches were performed using terms such as “initiative”, “platform” “forum” and “partnership”.

In addition to these sources, we reviewed the 2018 report by World Wildlife Fund UK (WWFUK) and SustainAbility—*Sustainable Food Systems and Diets: A Review of Multi-stakeholder Initiatives* (Harvey, 2018). This publication, based on a desk review and stakeholder interviews, provided a valuable foundation for identifying relevant global MSIs (Harvey, 2018).

To identify any other MSIs that may have emerged since the 2018 review, we conducted a supplementary search of both academic and grey literature in March 2025. Academic literature was explored through the Web of Science core collection. Searches were carried out using combinations of the following search terms: (multi-stakeholder OR 'multi AND stakeholder') AND (initiative OR partnership OR collaboration OR platform) AND 'food AND system' AND (Europe OR Africa).

For the grey literature, we conducted a Google search using the same terms. The first ten pages of results (approximately 100 entries), sorted by relevance, were screened for inclusion. This method was deemed a sufficiently broad yet manageable scope, consistent with recommendations from Godin et al. (2015). Only English-language records were considered, and no date limitations were applied.

For each selected MSI, we extracted publicly available data regarding founding organizations, funding sources, and listed partners, primarily from initiative websites and strategic or annual reports. If partner or funder information was unavailable or unclear, it was excluded from the dataset. All extracted data were compiled in an Excel spreadsheet.

To enhance the inclusion of private sector-focused MSIs, participation lists from relevant agro-oriented trade fairs were reviewed where available. These lists were screened using the same keyword strategy mentioned above.

Step 2: Internal Stakeholder Consultation

Following the desk research, internal consultation was conducted to validate and enrich the dataset. All CEAFIRST project collaborators were requested to review and complete the data file by embedding additional resources, references, or reflections deemed relevant. Partners were also encouraged to include MSIs that may not have been captured through external searches.

Step 3: External Stakeholder Consultation

The final step involved engaging external stakeholders identified as highly relevant to the research focus. These included consultations with individuals from projects such as DesiraLIFT and The Guild, among others. In addition, MSIs identified through participation lists and attendance records from earlier stakeholder engagement activities were also extracted and included in the mapping.

2.3 Categorization and lexicon used

To ensure consistency in mapping and analysing initiatives and platforms, the study used a predefined set of variables that captured the essential aspects of each initiative. These variables were selected to ensure a **comprehensive understanding** of the initiative landscape while maintaining a **structured and comparative approach**. Several factors guided the selection of these variables. **First, comprehensiveness** was a priority, ensuring that the mapping captured all relevant aspects of initiatives and platforms. **Second, comparability** was necessary to allow structured analysis across different initiatives and identify common trends. **Third, alignment with FNSSA priorities** ensured the mapping remained relevant to food system transformation efforts. Finally, **IRC stakeholder relevance** played a crucial role, as variables were selected based on inputs from consulted research institutions, policymakers, and funding agencies that are targeted to become future IRC members.

Doing so, the following variables and information was captured, as explained in Table 1: Acronym, Description, Type of Initiative, Key Activities, Scale, Geographic Focus, Website, Projected Duration, Major Funding Source, Specific Funder Info (if only one), Major Type of Actors Involved, Examples of Specific Stakeholders Involved, and Thematic focus area. In this work, we categorized actors building on Baker & Demaio's, 2019 Food Systems Actor Framework, which distinguishes between market, state, civil society and hybrid actors (Baker & Demaio, 2019). We also added some relevant categories, including research institutes and universities, and have further divided the private sector category into more specific subcategories.

Table 1: Captured variables and information per initiative

Variable	Description
Initiative/Platform Name	The name of the Multistakeholder Initiative or Platform
Acronym	The short name or abbreviation of the initiative/platform for easy reference
Description	A short description of the initiative

Variable	Description
Type of initiative	An indication of the type of initiative, comprising a network, consortium, platform, association, project, coalition, partnership, research collaboration, or funding program.
Key activities	A brief overview of the initiative's major objectives, activities, and programs.
Scale	An indication of the initiatives' scale of operations, ranging from local, national, regional, continental, bi-continental, or global.
Geographic focus	An indication of the initiatives' geographic target, scope, and/or area of operations.
Website	Providing website or other contact information of the initiative
Projected Duration	Indication the status of the initiative, i.e. closed, ending, or ongoing.
Major funding source	Indicating the nature of the initiatives' major funding streams, i.e. public, private, or blended funding.
Specific funder info (if only one)	If available, more specific information of major funding instruments are indicated.
Major Type of actors involved	<p>This indicates the type of the gross stakeholders involved in the initiative; and includes following classification:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Government 2. International Organisation 3. Academic institution 4. NGO 5. Private sector actors <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Transnational corporation b) Banks c) Business association

Variable	Description
	d) Consulting firm e) Industry-funded non-profit f) other g) Private foundations
Examples of specific stakeholders involved	If available, more specific information on the initiative members or actors are indicated.
Thematic Focus	This field indicates the major thematic focus as well as the areas of focus related to roadmap themes, such as food security, nutrition, agricultural innovation, and climate resilience
IRC linkage and synergies	This includes an indication on the potential in participation to the IRC functions

The collected information across the listed variables provides a robust foundation for a comprehensive analysis of multi-stakeholder initiatives (MSIs), enabling both qualitative and quantitative insights into the current landscape of collaboration in research and innovation. Each variable serves a distinct analytical purpose and, when synthesized, allows for a multidimensional understanding of MSI dynamics. Acronyms and descriptions offer initial identifiers and contextual overviews that aid in distinguishing initiatives and categorizing them by purpose or thematic alignment. The type of initiative and key activities helps classify MSIs by their operational models and strategic orientations. Scale and geographic focus are critical for mapping the spatial distribution and reach—whether local, regional, continental, or global—providing insights into coverage gaps or redundancies across geographies. The website serves as a validation and data enrichment source, allowing access to real-time updates and supplementary documentation. Projected duration offers a temporal lens, highlighting the sustainability or temporal limitations of initiatives and helping prioritize long-term versus short-term engagements.

Financial aspects such as the major funding source and specific funders' information are vital for understanding funding flows, dependencies, and strategic interests behind initiatives, potentially revealing influence structures and priority areas set by funders. Meanwhile, the major types of actors involved (e.g., private sector, academia, civil society, government) and examples of specific stakeholders allow for stakeholder ecosystem mapping, enabling analysis of inclusivity, diversity, and power dynamics within initiatives. Finally, the thematic focus provides a basis for clustering MSIs around key policy areas (e.g., climate resilience, food security, sustainable agriculture), facilitating the identification of thematic synergies, overlaps, and underrepresented domains. Cross-referencing these variables using analytical techniques such as network mapping, thematic clustering, or gap analysis can generate actionable

insights for strategic planning, resource alignment, and policy coherence within the framework of collaborative platforms like the International Research Consortium (IRC).

2.5 Data Analysis & Insight Extraction

The analysis of the collected data across the selected variables was carried out using a combination of descriptive and comparative statistical methods to generate insights into the landscape of multi-stakeholder initiatives (MSIs). Each variable provided a unique analytical dimension, and their integration enabled a comprehensive understanding of initiative characteristics and distributions. Acronyms and descriptions served as identifiers and introductory context for categorizing initiatives. The type of initiatives and key activities were used to classify operational modalities and strategic orientations. Variables such as scale and geographic focus were essential in identifying the spatial scope and reach of initiatives—whether local, national, regional, or global—and contributed to the identification of geographical gaps or overlaps. Website references were validated and used to extract additional documentation. The projected duration offered a temporal lens to assess the longevity and sustainability of each initiative.

Financial variables, including major funding source and specific funders' information, were analyzed to understand the flow of resources and the strategic priorities of different funding actors. The variables capturing major types of actors involved and examples of specific stakeholders were used to assess the diversity and inclusiveness of stakeholder engagement. Standard analytical techniques such as frequency distributions and cross-tabulations were applied to explore relationships across variables—for example, how MSIs varied by geographic scope or actor type. Additionally, temporal trends in MSI formation and funding patterns were explored using simple trend analysis, aiming to assess how this might impact MSIs' potential to drive transformative change. Although the dataset could have the potential to support more advanced approaches, such as social network analysis (SNA) or stakeholder mapping, these techniques were explicitly excluded from the scope of this activity. The data collected did not include the level of granularity required for such relational analysis, such as the intensity, frequency, or type of interaction among stakeholders. As such, the methodological approach remained focused on producing statistical summaries and comparative insights, aligning with the objectives of the initiative under the framework of the International Research Consortium (IRC).

3. Mapping Exercise

3.1 Results on mapped MSIs

Overview of Mapped Multistakeholder Initiatives (MSIs)

A total of **242 Multistakeholder Initiatives (MSIs)** were identified and systematically mapped through the adopted methodology:

1. 10YFP Sustainable Food Systems Programme
2. 2020 Vision
3. A long term EU-Africa research and innovation partnership on food and nutrition security and sustainable agriculture
4. Advancing SSA-EU cooperation in research and innovation for global challenges
5. Advocacy for the fight against Neglected Zoonotic Diseases
6. Africa Economic History Network
7. Africa Lead
8. Africa MILK
9. Africa-Europe Clusters of Research Excellence (CoRE) initiative
10. African Food Safety Network
11. African Forum for Agricultural Advisory Services
12. African Research Universities Alliance
13. AFRICAN YOUTH INITIATIVE ON CLIMATE CHANGE
14. African-European Digital Innovation Bridge Network
15. AfriFOODlinks
16. African Food Fellowship
17. Afrilabs
18. Agri-Business Facility for Africa
19. Agriculture and Food Systems Network
20. Agrifood Africa Connect Map
21. Agro-ecological strategies for resilient farming in West Africa
22. Agroecology Coalition
23. An interlinked digital platform for Food Integrity and Traceability of relevant MEDiterranean supply chains
24. Assessing the impact of climate change on food and nutrition security and designing more sustainable and resilient food systems in Europe and beyond
25. Association for Strengthening Agricultural Research in Eastern and Central Africa
26. AU-EU International Research Consortium on FNSSA
27. Better Buying Lab
28. Better Rural Innovation: Linking Actors, Instruments and Policies through Networks
29. BIOPEN
30. Boosting Rural Bioeconomy Networks following multi-actor approaches
31. C40 Food Systems Network
32. CAAST-Net Plus
33. CARE4BIO
34. Centre for Coordination of Agricultural Research and Development for Southern Africa
35. Champions 12.3
36. Chatham House
37. climate resilient agri-business for tomorrow
38. Coalition of Action for Healthy Diets from Sustainable Food Systems
39. Co-creating the prototype 'Sustainable FOOD Systems PARtnersHip'
40. Comesa East Africa Horticulture Accelerator
41. COmmittee Linking Entrepreneurship-Agriculture-Development.
42. Common Oceans
43. Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme
44. Consortium Europe-Africa for Research and Innovation on Food Systems Transformation
45. Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research
46. Cool Farm Alliance
47. Coordination of International Research Cooperation on soil CARbon Sequestration in Agriculture
48. Copa-Cogeca
49. CORAF
50. COST: Europe's most empowering research programme Strengthening science and innovation through research networking
51. Courtauld Commitment 2025
52. CropLife Europe
53. CSA Booster
54. Designing Food Value Chains to foster the Agenda 2030 Education Programme

platforms/initiatives

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| 55. DeSIRA: Development Smart Innovation through Research in Agriculture | 73. European Partnership Animal health and Welfare | 98. Food System Impact Valuation |
| 56. Developing African-European joint collaboration for Science and Technology | 74. European partnership for a sustainable Future of Food Systems | 99. Food Systems Network |
| 57. Development of a multi-stakeholder dialogue platform and Think tank to promote innovation with Nature based solutions | 75. European partnership on accelerating farming systems transition – agroecology living labs and research infrastructures | 100. Food Waste Resolution |
| 58. Driving agroecological transitions in the humid tropics of Central and Eastern Africa through transdisciplinary Agroecology Living LabS | 76. European Union Common Agricultural Policy | 101. FoodDrinkEurope |
| 59. EAT-Lancet Commission on Food, Planet, Health | 77. Exploring food system transformations in rapidly changing African cities | 102. Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa |
| 60. Edible Cities Network Integrating Edible City Solutions for social resilient and sustainably productive cities | 78. Farm Sustainability Assessment | 103. FUTURE4PRIMA |
| 61. EIT food | 79. Farm to Market Alliance | 104. Global Agri-business Alliance |
| 62. EIT Food Business Plan 2023-2025 | 80. Finance Facility | 105. Global Agriculture and Food Security Program |
| 63. Enabling Rural Innovation | 81. Floriculture Sustainability Initiative | 106. Global Alliance for Climate-Smart Agriculture |
| 64. Enhance New Approaches in BioBased Local Innovation Networks for Growth | 82. FOOD 2030 Flagship Conference on Research and Innovation for Food and Nutrition Security and Quality Empowerment | 107. Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition |
| 65. ERA-NET Cofund on Blue Bioeconomy - Unlocking the potential of aquatic bioresources | 83. Food 4 Life (Global Awareness Campaign) | 108. Global Food Regulatory Science Society |
| 66. EU-AU PARTNERSHIP FOR RESILIENT, INCLUSIVE AND SAFE FOOD SYSTEMS FOR EVERYONE | 84. Food Action Alliance | 109. Global food safety initiative |
| 67. European Agricultural Research towards greater impact on global CHallenges | 85. Food and Agriculture Organization | 110. Global Food Security Programme |
| 68. European Forum on Agricultural Research for Development | 86. Food and Climate Systems Transformation (FACT) Alliance | 111. Global Forum for Rural Advisory Services |
| 69. European Initiative for Agricultural Research for Development (EIARD) | 87. FOOD and Local, Agricultural, and Nutritional Diversity | 112. Global Horticulture Initiative |
| 70. European innovation partnership network promoting operational groups dedicated to forestry and agroforestry | 88. Food Coalition | 113. Global Nars Consortium |
| 71. European Landowners' Organization | 89. Food Environment Actions for the Promotion of Health - The Guild | 114. Global Network Against Food Crises |
| 72. European Organic Certifiers Council | 90. Food For Life | 115. Global Programme for Small-scale Agroecology Producers and Sustainable Food Systems Transformation |
| | 91. Food For Life UK | 116. Global Strategic Alliances for the Coordination of Research on the Major Infectious Diseases of Animals and Zoonoses |
| | 92. Food Loss & Waste Protocol | 117. Grow Africa Initiative |
| | 93. Food Loss and Waste Protocol | 118. GROW Observatory |
| | 94. Food Reform for Sustainability and Health (FReSH) | 119. Holistic approach for tackling food systems risks in a changing global environment |
| | 95. Food Safety for Africa | 120. Improving nutrition in Africa by strengthening the diversity, sustainability, resilience and connectivity of food systems |
| | 96. Food security information network | 121. Initiative Française pour la Banane Durable |
| | 97. Food Sustainability Index | 122. Innovation UK |

platforms/initiatives

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| 123. Innovations in Technology, Institutional and Extension Approaches towards Sustainable Agriculture and enhanced Food and Nutritional Security in Africa | 144. Nutrition Research Facility | 168. Research and Innovation Network for Europe and Africa |
| 124. Innovative tools and solutions for governing the water-energy-food-ecosystems NEXUS under global change | 145. One Health Sustainability partnership between EU-AFRICA for food security | 169. Research Program on Agriculture for Nutrition and Health |
| 125. International Agri-Food Network | 146. One Planet network | 170. Resource Smart Food Initiative |
| 126. International Cocoa Initiative | 147. One Planet Plate | 171. Rethink Food Waste through Economics and Data |
| 127. International Food Waste Coalition | 148. Open Source Seed Systems | 172. SAMS - International Partnership on Innovation in Smart Apiculture Management Services (Apiculture = Beekeeping) |
| 128. International Fund for Agricultural Development | 149. Operationalising the International Research Cooperation on Soil Carbon | 173. Save Food |
| 129. Knowledge Platform for Organic Agriculture and Agroecology in Africa | 150. OPTA Europe | 174. Scaling Seeds and Technologies Partnership in Africa |
| 130. Leveraging the DeSIRA Initiative for Agri-Food Systems Transformation | 151. Organic Food System Programme | 175. Scaling Up Nutrition |
| 131. Literacy boost through an Operational Educational Ecosystem of Societal actors on Soil health | 152. Overseas Development Institute | 176. SDG2 Advocacy Hub |
| 132. Living Income Community of Practice | 153. Pan-African Farmers' Organization | 177. Seed Africa |
| 133. Long-Term Joint EU-AU Research and Innovation Partnership on Renewable Energy | 154. Pan-African Network for economic Analysis of Policies | 178. Seeds for Needs |
| 134. Long-Term Joint EU-AU Research and Innovation Partnership on Sustainable Energy | 155. Pan-African Support to the AU-IBAR for a Sustainable Development of Livestock for Livelihoods in Africa | 179. Seeds of Prosperity Programme |
| 135. Love Food Hate Waste | 156. Parabere Forum | 180. Setting the table for our children |
| 136. Mainstreaming Climate Smart Value Chains | 157. Partnership For Inclusive Agricultural transformation-in-africa-piata Transformation In Africa | 181. Sharecity |
| 137. Malawi Tea 2020 | 158. Partnership for Research & Innovation in the Mediterranean Area | 182. Smallholder Performance Measurement Community of Practice |
| 138. MANAGING RESILIENT NEXUS SYSTEMS THROUGH PARTICIPATORY SYSTEMS DYNAMICS MODELLING | 159. Pathways to a sustainable intensification of the agri-food system in Africa | 183. SMART agriculture for innovative vegetable crop PROTECTION: harnessing advanced methodologies and technologies |
| 139. Milan Urban Food Policy Pact | 160. Plate2Planet | 184. SOil Innovation Labs: Co-Regenerating And Transforming European Soils |
| 140. Networking, partnerships and tools to enhance in situ conservation of European plant genetic resources | 161. Platform for an Africa-Europe Partnership for Agricultural Research for Development | 185. Solutions for African Food Enterprises (SAFE) |
| 141. New Partnership for Africa's Development | 162. Policy Relevant Indicators for Consumption and Environment | 186. Southern African Sustainable Seafood Initiative programme |
| 142. New Vision for Agriculture | 163. Practice-led innovation supported by science and market-driven actors in the laying hen and other livestock sectors | 187. Standing Committee on Agricultural Research |
| 143. Nitrogen to Africa | 164. Protein to Food | 188. STREFOWA: Strategies to Reduce Food Waste in Central Europe |
| | 165. ReFresh | 189. Strengthening Evidence-Based Policy Practice for Sustainable Food Systems under the EU-AU Partnership |
| | 166. Regional Multi-Actor Research Network on Agroecology | |
| | 167. Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture | |

platforms/initiatives

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|---|---|---|
| 190. Sufsans (Metrics, Models and Foresight for European SUSTainable Food And Nutrition Security) | 206. Sustainable Productivity Growth Coalition | 225. The Pig Idea |
| 191. Sugar Smart | 207. Sustainable vanilla initiative | 226. The Protein Challenge 2040 |
| 192. Support to the implementation of the Long-term EU-AU Research and Innovation Partnership for Food and Nutrition Security and Sustainable Agriculture | 208. Swedish International Agricultural Network Initiative | 227. The Southern African Development Community |
| 193. Supporting EU-African Cooperation on Research Infrastructures for Food Security and Greenhouse Gas Observations | 209. Swiss Sustainable Coffee Platform | 228. The United Nations Industrial Development Organization |
| 194. Sustainability along all value chains: identifying and promoting local initiatives- linking small-scale producers and consumers | 210. Switch Africa Green | 229. Think Eat Save |
| 195. Sustainable & Healthy Food Systems (SHEFS) | 211. Tea 2030 | 230. Towards coordinated microbiome R&I activities in the food system to support (EU and) international bioeconomy goals |
| 196. Sustainable Agriculture Initiative Platform | 212. The Association of International Research and Development Centers for Agriculture | 231. Towards Food Sustainability: Reshaping the Coexistence of Different Food Systems in South America and Africa (FoodSAF) |
| 197. Sustainable and healthy gastronomy | 213. The Capacity Development for Agricultural Innovation Systems | 232. Towards SUSTainable and RESilient EU FARMing systems |
| 198. Sustainable Coffee Challenge | 214. The Crunch | 233. TRIFOCAL |
| 199. Sustainable Consumption Platform | 215. The European Agroecology Living Lab and Research Infrastructure Network: Preparation phase | 234. Tropical Agriculture Platform |
| 200. Sustainable Diets for All | 216. The European Alliance on Agricultural knowledge for Development | 235. UKRI Agrifood Systems |
| 201. Sustainable diets in the context of sustainable food systems | 217. The European Biodiversity Partnership | 236. Water4All – Water Security for the Planet |
| 202. Sustainable Food Systems Mediterranean Platform | 218. The European Food Sustainable Consumption and Production Round Table | 237. West Africa Food System Resilience Programme |
| 203. Sustainable Hub to Engage into Rural Policies with Actors | 219. The Food and Land Use Coalition | 238. West and Central Africa Research and Education Network |
| 204. Sustainable lifestyles among rural families in Zimbabwe | 220. The Food Foundation | 239. Which Pesticide? |
| 205. Sustainable Nutrition Research for Africa in the Years to come | 221. The Global Forum on Agricultural Research and Innovation | 240. World Banana Forum |
| | 222. The Guild of European Research-Intensive Universities | 241. World Food Programme |
| | 223. The National Information Platforms for Nutrition | 242. Yieldwise Food Loss |
| | 224. The Nordic Cities EAT Initiative | |

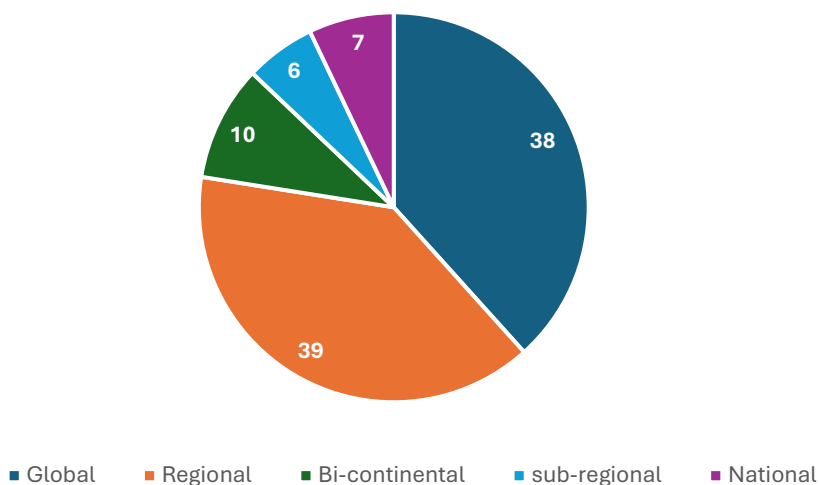
These MSIs encompass a wide array of thematic, geographic, and institutional orientations, reflecting the diversity and complexity of collaborative approaches in global governance and development efforts. The detailed mapping is presented in the attached Excel file. The following sections present the results of the data analysis.

Geographic Scope of MSIs

The distribution of the MSIs by geographic focus reveals a predominance of initiatives with a broader, international reach:

- **Global Scope:** 38% of the MSIs were classified as having a global focus, engaging actors and issues that transcend regional boundaries.
- **Regional Focus:** 39% of the initiatives were oriented around specific regions (i.e. Europe OR Africa), underlining the importance of regionally tailored multistakeholder collaboration.
- **Bi-continental Initiatives:** A smaller portion (10%) operated across two continents (i.e. Europe AND Africa), suggesting more limited but strategic inter-regional partnerships.
- **Sub-regional Focus:** Only 6% of MSIs had a sub-regional scope, typically involving geographically or politically contiguous countries. (e.g. West Africa, East Africa, Mediterranean etc.)
- **National Scope:** Another 7% focused primarily on national-level collaboration.

Geographic focus of mapped MSIs (%)



Additionally, in terms of specific geographic orientation:

- **21% of the MSIs had a targeted focus on Europe**, engaging in activities directly relevant to European priorities and frameworks.
- **10% focused specifically on Africa**, indicating a notable but comparatively smaller emphasis on African-led or Africa-centered multistakeholder collaboration.

- The geographic scope of the remaining 69% mapped MSIs were not defined or at another level (i.e. Global, Sub-regional, or National).

Status and Continuity of Initiatives

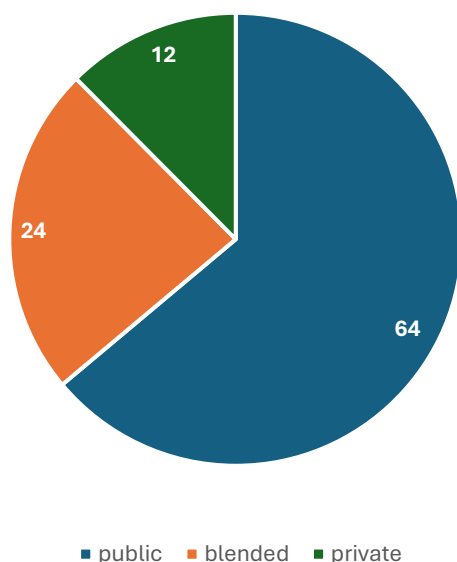
Of the 242 MSIs mapped, a significant proportion—**62%**—were identified as ongoing, reflecting that a large fraction is running concurrently. That means that at least 150 MSIs related to R&I in FNSSA and relevant to Africa and/or Europe are currently active in parallel. The latter is considerably high, and pointing towards a fragmentation of consolidation and coordination efforts via MSIs.

Funding Structures

The analysis of funding sources revealed varied models of financial support:

- **Public Funding:** A majority of MSIs (64%) relied primarily on public funding, indicating the central role of governments and publicly mandated institutions in supporting multistakeholder collaboration.
- **Blended Finance:** 24% of initiatives were funded through blended resources, combining public, private, and possibly philanthropic sources, reflecting innovative financing approaches.
- **Private Funding:** A smaller share (12%) operated with funding exclusively from private sources, which may indicate more market-driven or industry-led initiatives.

Percentage of funding source of mapped MSIs (%)



Notably, **the European Union (EU) emerged as a key funder, with 49% of the initiatives receiving financial support from EU programs or institutions.** This underlines the EU’s strategic commitment to fostering multistakeholder collaboration across different sectors and regions.

Institutional Participation

The institutional landscape of the Research and Innovation MSIs is marked by the prominent involvement of academia and public authorities:

- **Academic Institutions** were involved in ca. **48% of the initiatives**, highlighting their central role in providing research, innovation, and evidence-based decision-making within the MSI framework.
- **Governmental Actors** participated in ca. **41% of the initiatives**, playing a vital role in policy alignment, regulatory support, and implementation.

These figures demonstrate the critical importance of knowledge-based and policy-oriented institutions in driving and sustaining multistakeholder initiatives.

3.2 Interpretations and discussion

Geographic Focus of mapped MSIs

The geographic distribution of the mapped MSIs reflects a **dominant emphasis on global and regional collaboration**, with 38% of initiatives operating at a global scale and 39% focused on specific regions, such as Europe or Africa. This underscores a dual trend: the recognition of transboundary challenges that require broad international cooperation, and the importance of regionally adapted responses that align with local policy contexts, institutional capacities, and socio-economic conditions. Global MSIs facilitate broad consensus-building and knowledge exchange, while regional MSIs tend to support more focused, policy-relevant interventions.

In contrast, **bi-continental, sub-regional, and national MSIs remain relatively limited**—each representing just 6–10% of the total. Bi-continental initiatives, particularly those bridging Europe and Africa, are few but strategically important, offering platforms for inter-regional dialogue and partnership. Sub-regional and national MSIs, though fewer in number, may provide greater contextual relevance and operational agility, especially in addressing localized challenges. The relatively small share of these categories suggests a need to **strengthen multi-scale coherence** and explore opportunities for **greater interconnectivity across geographic levels**, particularly to leverage synergies between global frameworks and local realities.

Focus on Africa vs. Europe

The findings reveal a **significant geographical and institutional imbalance** in the focus and origins of multistakeholder initiatives (MSIs), particularly when viewed through the lens of African engagement. With **21% of MSIs targeting Europe** and only **10% focusing on Africa**, there is a clear disparity in regional attention—one that is further amplified by the **dominant role of the European Union (EU) as a funder**,

supporting nearly **48% of all identified initiatives**. While this highlights the EU's strong commitment to multistakeholder collaboration, it also suggests that **many initiatives may be driven by European agendas, priorities, and institutional frameworks**, even when operating in African contexts. For Africa, this underscores a critical need to **strengthen the design, leadership, and ownership of MSIs that are rooted in African priorities, knowledge systems, and governance cultures**. The current landscape points to an over-reliance on external funding and frameworks, which may risk marginalizing African voices or limiting long-term sustainability. Therefore, the data should be interpreted as a call to action—to **invest in and scale African-origin MSIs**, foster homegrown networks, and ensure that African actors play a more central role in shaping the agendas, operations, and impact pathways of these collaborative platforms.

Private sector dominance not confirmed

In recent literature, it was stated that multistakeholder approaches increasingly invite nonstate actors into decision-making spaces at national and global level, and it is therefore increasingly relevant to understand how power relations, perspectives and solutions are reflected in, enabled through or challenged by multistakeholder governance approaches and what this might mean for their potential to drive food system transformation (van den Akker et al., 2024).

One of the key criticisms levelled against MSIs is that they may be susceptible to capture by commercial actors and that this might jeopardize their ability to drive systemic change (McKeon, 2017). Indeed, one of the most high-profile global multistakeholder platforms, the 2021 United Nations Food Systems Summit (UNFSS) faced significant criticism over its central inclusion of transnational corporations.

That said, it is noteworthy that the often-expected dominance of the private sector is not reflected in the Research and Innovation MSIs mapped through this exercise. The funding landscape of mapped MSIs is largely dominated by **public sources (64%)**, underscoring the pivotal role of governments and public institutions in enabling collaborative governance. While **blended finance (24%)** reflects emerging efforts to diversify funding streams through innovative partnerships, the **relatively low share of privately funded initiatives (12%)** suggests limited private sector leadership in this space. The prominence of the **European Union as a funder (48%)** further highlights its strategic influence in shaping multistakeholder collaboration but also points to potential dependencies on European priorities and funding mechanisms.

This absence of private sector investments may point to a continued underrepresentation of private sector actors and funders within the research and innovation ecosystem, particularly in the context of cooperation between the European Union (EU) and the African Union (AU). The data suggests that, despite the critical role the private sector can play in driving innovation, its involvement in these collaborative, multistakeholder frameworks remains limited. This observation underscores a potential gap—and an opportunity—for increased private sector engagement and investment in MSIs, especially those oriented toward transcontinental cooperation and sustainable development goals.

Fragmentation of MSIs

The existence of approximately **150 ongoing MSIs (ca. 62%) focusing on food and agriculture** raises important questions regarding the **efficiency, coherence, and strategic alignment** of these initiatives. While the high number reflects a strong and sustained interest in addressing food systems challenges

through multistakeholder collaboration, it may also point to a **risk of duplication, overlap, or fragmentation of efforts** across actors and geographies. Multiple initiatives working in parallel—often with similar objectives, target regions, or stakeholder groups—can lead to **resource inefficiencies**, diluted impacts, and potentially **competing agendas**. This situation highlights the **need for greater coordination, knowledge sharing, and consolidation**, particularly to ensure that investments and interventions are complementary rather than redundant. Developing mechanisms for **mapping synergies, fostering interoperability**, and encouraging joint planning among MSIs could enhance their collective impact and better support the transformation of food and agriculture systems at both regional and global scales.

Need for social network analyses

Platforms driven by consumer and public demands have increasingly shaped the governance of agri-food sustainability (Herens et al., 2022). However, despite the growing interest in MSIs as mechanisms for collaborative governance, **there remains a notable gap in research that adopts a network-based approach** to understanding their dynamics. There is an urgent need for improved tools to assess the performance and impact of multistakeholder platforms (Thorpe et al., 2022; UNEP, 2023). The majority of existing studies continue to rely on **case study methodologies**, often focusing on individual MSIs in isolation. While these case-based analyses provide valuable insights into specific contexts, actor constellations, and internal governance mechanisms, they **fall short of capturing the broader systemic relationships and interdependencies** that exist across the MSI landscape.

A network approach—one that systematically maps and analyses the **interactions, overlaps, and flows of influence among multiple MSIs and their stakeholders**—could offer a more comprehensive understanding of how power, knowledge, and resources are distributed and exercised within and across these initiatives. Such an approach would be particularly valuable in identifying **central actors, bridging organizations, and potential bottlenecks or blind spots** in the global governance of complex issues such as food systems, climate resilience, or digital transformation. Moreover, by illuminating the **structural positioning and relational influence** of different stakeholders (e.g., governments, NGOs, private sector, academia), a network lens could enhance efforts to foster coherence, reduce fragmentation, and strategically align initiatives toward common goals.

In summary, advancing research on MSIs through a network perspective is not only timely but essential for improving the **effectiveness, inclusivity, and accountability** of multistakeholder collaboration in addressing global challenges.

What is needed for MSI continuation?

For MSIs to continue effectively and sustainably, they require strong and balanced governance structures, stable and diversified funding sources, and genuine inclusivity of all relevant actors, including local communities, civil society, academia, governments, and the private sector. Long-term success hinges on building trust, transparency, and accountability among partners, alongside clearly defined roles, shared objectives, and mechanisms for joint decision-making. Importantly, MSIs must invest in capacity-building and knowledge-sharing, particularly for underrepresented groups, to ensure equitable participation and ownership. Additionally, fostering policy alignment and integration with national and regional priorities—especially in contexts like Africa—will be key to their relevance and impact. To avoid fragmentation and

duplication, coordination platforms and networks that facilitate synergy across initiatives are also essential.

A common challenge in the multistakeholder landscape is the proliferation of **short-term projects that brand themselves as partnerships or initiatives**, yet lack mechanisms for long-term sustainability once initial funding ends. These time-bound efforts often generate valuable outputs and mobilize diverse actors, but their **impact tends to dissipate** without continued coordination, institutional anchoring, or follow-up investment. The tendency to label temporary collaborations as MSIs risks **diluting the meaning and effectiveness** of true multistakeholder engagement, which requires sustained commitment and evolving cooperation over time. To address this, it is crucial to ensure **continuation of funding beyond initial project cycles**, including strategies for resource mobilization, integration into existing governance frameworks, and building long-term ownership among participating stakeholders.

3.3 Limitation and continuous updates of the initiative mapping

This mapping exercise followed the methodology outlined in Section 2. While some MSIs may have been omitted (especially formal or informal national, regional MSIs less represented online), the IRC remains open to including additional initiatives suggested by its partner-beneficiaries. In several cases, gathering data for all variables proved challenging and may require direct engagement with the respective MSIs to obtain further information. The development of this database is a continuous and evolving process. The current list will serve as a foundation for engaging participants in upcoming stakeholder events aimed at expanding IRC membership. It will also facilitate direct outreach to MSIs, inviting them to complete or update their information via an online form at registration. While we aimed to provide an exhaustive list of the current situation, maintaining an up-to-date mapping of multi-stakeholder initiatives (MSIs) is essential to ensure the relevance, responsiveness, and strategic utility of such data within the framework of the International Research Consortium (IRC). Given the dynamic nature of the research and innovation landscape—where new initiatives continually emerge, others evolve or wind down, and actors shift roles—static mappings risk quickly becoming outdated. This can limit the IRC’s ability to effectively coordinate and leverage synergies across the AU-EU research ecosystem, identify emerging opportunities, or avoid duplication of efforts. Continuous updates are particularly important for fostering long-term partnerships, informing policy dialogues, and ensuring that the IRC remains a central hub for inclusive and strategic collaboration.

To support the continuous updating of this MSI mapping, several methodologies can be adopted. First, an automated digital repository or interactive online platform could be developed and integrated within the IRC’s digital infrastructure. This platform would allow authorized stakeholders to submit new initiatives or updates in real-time, subject to moderation or validation protocols to ensure data quality. Submission of information on MSIs should also be enabled during IRC registration through an updated online form. Second, the IRC could establish a biannual stakeholder-driven update cycle, whereby CEAFIRST and partner institutions are invited to review and revise entries, fill in new information, and provide feedback on gaps or inaccuracies. This process could be facilitated through structured data templates and complemented by short capacity-building sessions on how to use the update tools

effectively. Third, strategic partnerships with key networks, such as regional research alliances, thematic platforms, or international donors, could help ensure the IRC is regularly fed with updates through mutual data-sharing agreements. Lastly, embedding MSI tracking into existing monitoring and evaluation mechanisms—particularly those tied to Horizon Europe and AU-EU R&I platforms—would institutionalize the process and align it with broader accountability and learning objectives. By embedding such mechanisms within the operational structure of the IRC, continuous MSI mapping can become a living, participatory process that keeps pace with the evolving landscape of food systems and research collaboration and reduce fragmentation.

4. Conclusions

This mapping exercise offers a comprehensive overview of the current landscape of multistakeholder initiatives (MSIs) operating within the EU-AU research and innovation (R&I) ecosystem for Food and Nutrition Security and Sustainable Agriculture (FNSSA). The analysis reveals a diverse yet fragmented field, with 242 identified MSIs varying in scope, duration, funding sources, and actor composition. Notably, public institutions—particularly the European Union—play a dominant role in funding, while academic institutions emerge as the primary actors in R&I-focused MSIs.

Despite global concerns about private sector dominance in MSIs, this mapping indicates limited private sector engagement in EU-AU R&I partnerships. This underrepresentation, while reassuring from a governance integrity perspective, suggests untapped potential for innovation, investment, and long-term sustainability. Similarly, the strong EU-driven focus—reflected both in funding and initiative origins—highlights the urgent need for more Africa-led and Africa-anchored MSIs that reflect local priorities and knowledge systems.

A major concern is the high number of short-term MSIs that often dissolve once initial funding ends. Ensuring continuity requires long-term financing mechanisms, policy alignment, and institutional integration to avoid redundancy and foster durable impact. Additionally, there is a clear need to move beyond isolated case studies and adopt network-based approaches that describes the interconnections, influence flows, and structural dynamics across MSIs.

Looking ahead, the International Research Consortium (IRC) can serve as a strategic coordination hub to reduce fragmentation, amplify synergies, and engage relevant MSIs through structured entry points such as thematic working groups and shared governance platforms. Strengthening African leadership, fostering inclusive collaboration, and ensuring dynamic updates to this MSI mapping will be key to building a coherent, resilient, and equitable FNSSA R&I ecosystem across Europe and Africa.

For the IRC, the next step is to invite the mapped MSIs to the relevant stakeholder engagement webinars planned to start in 2025 and targeting respectively public and private institutions involved in funding, implementing, or applying R&I, with the aim to enlarge the IRC membership.

The complete database of MSIs mapped is available in the attached Excel file.

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