



Intermediary Synthesis Report of Lessons Learned from Training Interventions

Deliverable 2.2

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List of Abbreviations

AKIS	Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation System
ASP	Advisory Service Providers
CSA	Climate Smart Advisor
CFD	Climate Farm Demo
CoDIE	Co-Design Innovation Experiment
CSA	Climate Smart Advisor
CSC	Climate Smart Coach
CSF	Climate Smart Farming
CoP	Community of Practice
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FFC	Farming For Climate (platform)
GA	General Assembly
GHG	Greenhouse Gases
TTT	Train the Trainer
ME&L	Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning
MS	Milestone
NC	National Coordinator
PDF	Pilot Demonstration Farm
QR	Quick Response
TEAGASC	The Irish Agriculture and Food Development Authority
WP	Work Package

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Table of Contents

1	Abstract.....	7
2	Introduction.....	8
3	Training within CSA.....	9
3.1	Training Strategy and Structure.....	9
3.2	Definition of a CSA Training Event.....	10
3.3	Monitoring, Evaluation & Learning approach for the training program	11
4	Lessons learnt from training interventions M1-M24	12
4.1	First Train-the-Trainer Program.....	12
4.1.1	Selection and Preparation of Climate Smart Coaches	12
4.1.2	TTT objectives.....	12
4.1.3	Evaluation tools and methods 1 st TTT.....	13
4.1.4	Evaluation results	13
4.1.5	Lessons learnt & recommendations for future TTT programs.....	15
4.2	CoP Training Events	16
4.2.1	Objectives and Implementation.....	16
4.2.2	Evaluation Tools and Methods.....	16
4.2.3	Evaluation Results and Reflections	17
4.2.4	Lessons Learned and Recommendations.....	18
4.3	Cross-Cutting Challenges.....	19
4.4	National Training Events (Planned)	19
4.4.1	Objectives and Preparatory Actions.....	19
4.4.2	Lessons from CoP Training Events.....	20
4.4.3	Evaluation and Monitoring Strategy	20
4.5	Training for Future Advisors	21
4.5.1	Objectives.....	21
4.5.2	Planned Activities and Design Considerations	21
4.5.3	Evaluation and Monitoring Strategy	22
4.6	E-Learning Modules.....	22
4.6.1	Overview and Objectives	22
4.6.2	Planned Modules and Content Themes.....	23
4.6.3	Development Considerations and Next Steps	24
5	Conclusion	25

List of Tables and Figures

Table 1: Overview of the five training formats delivered under Work Package 2 of the CSA project. (based on CSA Training Overview_v1 internal document, WP2 draft, 2024).....	9
Table 2: Adapted from CSA Training Evaluation Framework.....	11
Table 3: The TTT-specific component of evaluation.....	13
Table 4: Recommendations for Upcoming TTT Waves.....	16
Table 5: The CoP Training Event-specific component of evaluation	17
Table 6: Lessons learned from CSC feedback	19
Figure 1: Average Topic Relevance Scores – TTT Participant Evaluation.....	14
Figure 2: Evaluation of Overall Training Quality – Summary of Participant Feedback	15
Figure 3: Main challenges faced by CSCs when organising CoP training events (n=67, GA 2025 feedback survey).....	18

1 Abstract

This intermediary report (D2.2) captures the key lessons learned from training interventions conducted under the ClimateSmartAdvisors (CSA) project during the first wave of implementation. It focuses on three main formats of training: (1) the Train-the-Trainer (TTT) programme, (2) training events delivered within Communities of Practice (CoPs), and (3) the preparatory phase for national training events. The purpose of this report is to synthesise findings from these interventions in order to strengthen future training cycles and provide evidence-based recommendations to improve the performance of Climate Smart Coaches (CSCs) and Climate Smart Advisors (CSAs).

The TTT event, held in early 2024, was designed to equip newly recruited CSCs with the knowledge, skills, and confidence needed to lead CoPs and support CSF (climate-smart farming) practices in their national contexts. Using a hybrid model of virtual and in-person meetings, the TTT covered facilitation techniques, soft advisory skills, technical CSF content, and planning tools. Evaluation data revealed high levels of satisfaction and learning, while also identifying needs for more technical content, real-life examples, and clearer post-training planning tools.

The second training format focused on CoP-based sessions led by CSCs across 20 EU countries. By March 2025, over 50 CoP training events had been delivered or planned. These events varied in style and approach but generally included more directive, expert-led formats. Feedback from CSCs shows that in-person formats, peer exchange, and applied examples were especially valued.

Lastly, the deliverable captures early planning and insights related to the upcoming national training events, set to launch from M36 onward. These seminars will target the wider advisory community outside of the CoPs (Task 2.4), while **junior advisors and students are specifically addressed under Task 2.5**. Their design will draw on lessons from CoP experience to shape format and content. This report draws from a mixed-methods approach that includes pre- and post-training surveys, on-site evaluations, reflection sessions at General Assemblies, and interviews. Lessons learned from all training types will inform the design of the next TTT cycle, CoP wave, and national training activities. The report also reflects the importance of aligning CSA training efforts with Work Packages, in particular WP4 on Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning, as well as the overarching objective of strengthening the EU advisory landscape for climate action.

2 Introduction

In ClimateSmartAdvisors, advisors are recognised as being in a key position in developing and sharing climate smart (CS) innovations and good practices between peers and with farmers. Therefore, ClimateSmartAdvisors works on improving the opportunities, knowledge, and skills of agricultural advisors to support farmers in the implementation of climate change mitigation and adaptation actions across Europe. The project aims to boost the role of agricultural advisors and advisory service providers (ASP) by strengthening their capacity in providing targeted advice on climate mitigation and adaptation approaches, and by sharing solutions for impactful advisory methods. By boosting the role of the EU agricultural advisory community, we aim to contribute to an acceleration of the adoption of climate smart farming (CSF) practices by the wider farming community within and across EU Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation Systems (AKIS).

ClimateSmartAdvisors Work Package 2 (WP2) focuses on strengthening the capacity of current and future agricultural advisors to support the uptake of CSF practices through well-designed, practice-oriented training formats. WP2 aims to build a skilled, confident network of advisors who are equipped to deliver technically sound, participatory, and locally relevant advice that supports farmers in managing climate risks and opportunities. The work package is also responsible for designing and piloting scalable training tools and methods that can be used beyond the project lifetime. The two primary implementation streams include the Train-the-Trainer (TTT) programme for Climate Smart Coaches (CSCs), and follow-on CoP training activities delivered by CSCs to their advisor peers (CSAs). WP2 also supports the rollout of national CSA training events, the development and testing of CSA e-learning modules, and training for students and junior professionals, which may include classroom-based sessions as well as more practical, interactive formats.

WP2 works in close collaboration with other work packages, including WP1 on CoP structure and facilitation; WP4 on Monitoring, Evaluation & Learning (ME&L); WP5 on CSA advisory tools and knowledge repositories; WP6 on AKIS alignment and policy integration; and WP8 on dissemination and the CSA e-learning platform.

This deliverable, D2.2 – Intermediary Synthesis Report of Lessons Learned from Training Intervention, presents a synthesis of early lessons learned from the implementation of CSA's first training cycle. It draws on the Train-the-Trainer (TTT) program, the rollout of Community of Practice (CoP) training events, and the preparatory planning phase for national trainings and future advisor training programs. The goal of this deliverable is to identify successes, challenges, and practical recommendations to improve future training cycles, support better coordination between work packages, and strengthen CSA's overall training strategy.

The deliverable builds on results from WP2 activities and integrates evaluation inputs, feedback from project milestones, and reflection sessions held during consortium meetings. It is based on a mixed-methods approach, including surveys and event evaluations, qualitative feedback gathered during General Assemblies (January and May 2025), and insights from milestones such as MS13, MS17, and MS21. Its findings directly inform upcoming deliverables (notably D2.3 – Final Training Synthesis Report) and support alignment with related efforts under WP4 (Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning), WP5 (advisory tools), and WP8 (dissemination and e-learning).

3 Training within CSA

3.1 Training Strategy and Structure

To build a resilient and skilled advisory network, CSA implements a five-tiered training strategy under Work Package 2 (WP2). This strategy recognizes the importance of reaching both current and future advisors through a mix of in-person, expert-led, and digital/online learning formats:

- **Train-the-Trainer (TTT) Programs:** Hybrid courses to prepare CSCs to lead CoPs.
- **CoP Training Events:** Structured sessions within each Community of Practice (CoP), with at least two formal training courses focused on pre-agreed expert topics. Delivered through presentations, expert input, and practical exercises
- **National CSA Training Seminars:** Open to all advisors outside the CoPs, with a focus on expanding reach to the wider advisory community. These seminars are designed to include both experienced and early-career advisors, in line with national AKIS contexts and CSA’s inclusive training strategy. Each country is expected to organize between 2 and 8 events (depending on country size and partner capacity), with responsibility led by CSCs and supported by National Coordinators.
- **Future Advisor Training:** Includes between 2 and 8 standalone training events per country, delivered by CSCs for students, trainees, and junior advisors (depending on country size and partner capacity). In parallel, CSA materials are designed for reuse and embedding in university and vocational training curricula to support long-term advisor development.
- **CSA Online E-Learning Platform:** Self-paced, modular training platform under development, with a pilot planned for 2027 and full launch by project end in 2029/2030.

This structure links directly to Deliverables D2.1 (training module), D2.2 (interim synthesis), and D2.3 (final lessons learned). Outputs of this deliverable will inform future CoP training events, national trainings, and future TTT events.

Table 1: Overview of the five training formats delivered under Work Package 2 of the CSA project. (based on CSA Training Overview_v1 internal document, WP2 draft, 2024).

Training type	Delivered by	Target Group	Format	Key Requirements
TTT	WP2 team with inputs from other WPs and thematic leaders	Climate Smart Coaches (CSCs)	Hybrid (in-person / online)	Structured curriculum, evaluated
CoP Training Events	CSCs	Climate Smart Advisors (CSAs)	Hybrid (in-person / online)	Clear learning objectives, evaluation
National Training Events	CSC’s, supported by NCs	Open to all advisors outside the CoPs, with a focus on expanding reach to the wider advisory community.	Hybrid (in-person / online)	Linked to national AKIS context
Training for Future Advisors	CSCs, in collaboration with ASPs, universities, and NCs	Students, trainees, junior advisors (future advisors)	Classroom / Hybrid (in-person / online)	Two dedicated training events per country; Curriculum-aligned, interactive
E-Learning Modules	WP8, WP2	All advisors	Online self-paced	Modular, microlearning, tracked engagement

3.2 Definition of a CSA Training Event

A CSA Training Event is a structured, purpose-driven session focused on building participants' knowledge or skills in climate-smart advisory practices. It must include:

- A designated trainer (internal or external, with an optional facilitator),
- Clearly defined training objectives or learning outcomes,
- A structured format with planned content, and
- An evaluation of learning, such as feedback, reflection, or assessment*.

*Feedback is provided by training participants to the training organizer (such as in form of a feedback survey after training completion); reflection is completed by training organizer on the CSA Backoffice using the Evaluation Form provided; and assessment (such as in form of a quiz or a test) can be implemented to measure participants' newly acquired knowledge or skills.

While training events may incorporate interactive elements or peer exchange (such as group discussions and exercises), the defining feature is that they are trainer- or expert-led, with an intentional focus on learning and measurable knowledge or skill development. CSA training events may take different forms — in-person, online, or hybrid — but the four main criteria outlined above apply consistently across all CSA training formats: Train-the-Trainer (TTT), CoP training events, National training events, Future advisor training, and the CSA online/e-learning platform.

Examples of Qualifying Training Events

- CoP training: A training event led by a specialist (trainer) on carbon sequestration techniques, with a feedback survey.
- CoP training: A training event where a CSC (CSC acts as trainer or expert) trains CSAs to use CSA/CFD tools, with a follow-up reflection task.
- National training event: A training event for CoPs and the wider advisory community on the use of farm carbon accounting tools.
- Future Advisors training: A classroom session for students on climate mitigation practices using CSA materials complete with a quiz.

Examples That Would *Not* Typically Qualify

- Informal CoP planning meetings or progress reviews.
- Knowledge exchange without a designated trainer or planned learning content.
- Peer discussion lacking specific learning outcomes or evaluation.

A short checklist to support CSCs in tagging training events correctly (based on the four defining criteria outlined above) is foreseen as part of the broader CSA Training Evaluation Framework. While this framework document is still under development and will not be annexed to D2.2, a simple version of the checklist will be prepared and shared with CSCs in future training cycles as a practical tool.

3.3 Monitoring, Evaluation & Learning approach for the training program

Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (ME&L) are central to the CSA training strategy. They help ensure that training activities are consistent, high-quality, and aligned with learning objectives.

ME&L activities are designed to:

- Monitor delivery, participation and engagement across training formats,
- Capture learner satisfaction and gain knowledge,
- Inform the iterative improvement of training tools and formats, and
- Provide evidence for strategic decisions across the project.

The approach is informed by the **CSA Training Evaluation Framework**, which is currently under development. While this framework is not yet final, its draft principles are already guiding practice and are reflected in Table 2 of this deliverable. A simple checklist version (based on the four defining criteria for training events) will also be prepared to support CSCs in reporting and tagging events correctly.

ME&L in CSA is based on a collaborative structure:

- WP4 oversees the design of the evaluation framework (Table 2), data templates, and learning synthesis across all training streams.
- WP2 leads the implementation and supports the overall process — from pre-event registration through delivery and post-event evaluation — for TTT and other WP2-led training formats.
- CSCs are responsible for conducting evaluations of CoP, national & future advisor training events, and entering key data necessary for monitoring into the CSA Backoffice.

Table 2: Adapted from CSA Training Evaluation Framework

Training Format	Purpose	Timing	Data Collection Lead	Evaluation Tools	Use of Feedback
Train-the-Trainer (TTT)	Assess CSC preparedness, engagement, and content effectiveness	End of each day, post-training + end of Cop wave	WP2	Menti reflections, daily feedback forms, final online survey	To adjust next day's content and improve future TTT and CoP waves
CoP Training Events	Measure impact on CSA skills, capacity, and knowledge exchange	After each event	CSCs	CSA Backoffice Evaluation Form, CoP Reflection Template, optional CSC feedback form	To improve CoP methods, document lessons, and monitor advisor development
National Training Events	Measure outcomes for CSAs and wider advisory community	After each event	CSCs / National Coordinators	CSA Backoffice Evaluation Form, CSC feedback forms, CoP Reflection Template	To refine national training format and inform Deliverable D2.3
Future Advisors Training Event	Gauge training value and engagement among students and junior advisors	Pre/post training + trainer debrief	CSCs	Pre/post quiz, Participant Feedback Survey, Trainer Log	To adapt training materials and improve delivery methods for future advisors
E-Learning Modules	Track usage, engagement, and effectiveness of online training	Upon module completion	WP8	Module analytics, post-module quiz, optional comments	To enhance platform content, track learning outcomes, and support user experience

4 Lessons learnt from training interventions M1-M24

4.1 First Train-the-Trainer Program

The TTT course was co-designed and delivered by WP2 in collaboration with key input from WP1, WP4, WP5 and WP8. This included: CoP facilitation tools and templates (WP1), ME&L framework and methods (WP4), advisory tools from the knowledge repository (WP5), and dissemination support (WP8). This inter-WP cooperation ensured that the TTT programme was aligned with broader project goals and integrated multiple CSA outputs.

The TTT was delivered in a hybrid format, including:

- 2 virtual sessions: held on 20 February and 8 March 2024
- 4 in-person days: held in Dublin, Ireland, from 19–22 March 2024, hosted by TEAGASC

4.1.1 Selection and Preparation of Climate Smart Coaches

The Climate Smart Coaches (CSCs) to be trained in the first Train-the-Trainer (TTT) program were selected during 2023 following a structured selection process (Milestone 13). Candidates were drawn from advisory organizations across 26 EU countries, ensuring a balanced representation across gender, age, and technical backgrounds.

A Training Needs Analysis conducted at the end of 2023 (Milestone 12) informed the design of the Train-the-Trainer (TTT) program. The survey results indicated a strong need for capacity building in:

- Climate-smart advisory methods,
- Facilitation techniques for Communities of Practice (CoPs),
- Technical knowledge related to soil health, carbon measurement, and GHG mitigation strategies.

In response, the TTT curriculum (Deliverable D2.1) was developed using participatory adult learning methods such as role-play exercises, world café discussions, case study analysis, field visits, and practical facilitation workshops. These methods ensured that learning remained interactive, grounded in real-life practice, and closely aligned with the future responsibilities of CSCs in leading CoPs and training advisors.

4.1.2 TTT objectives

The first TTT programme under ClimateSmartAdvisors was implemented as part of the launch of CoP Wave 1. It was designed to empower the selected Climate Smart Coaches (CSCs) with the knowledge, confidence, and facilitation skills needed to establish and lead national Communities of Practice (CoPs). The TTT served both as an onboarding and capacity-building instrument, forming the basis for subsequent CoP activities, including CSA training events.

General objectives were:

- To build the competence and confidence of CSCs to lead CoPs and train other advisors
- To equip CSCs with practical skills to support CSF transitions in local farming systems
- To pilot and improve CSA training materials, methodologies, and support resources

The course design responded to a training needs analysis (MS12) that revealed gaps in knowledge and facilitation experience. While most CSCs demonstrated a general understanding of CSF practices, many expressed uncertainties about how to translate that knowledge into effective, participatory advisory delivery.

Specific learning objectives included:

- Understanding and communicating CSF practices.
- Facilitating CoP discussions using participatory methods.
- Motivating and engaging CSAs and farmers.
- Using CSA tools, templates, and evaluation methods.

4.1.3 Evaluation tools and methods 1st TTT

The Train-the-Trainer (TTT) programme used a structured evaluation framework to assess CSC preparedness, training quality, and participant engagement. The evaluation combined quantitative and qualitative methods, and was carried out in three main phases:

- **Daily Menti-based reflections:** These captured participants’ immediate reactions, emotional responses, and key learnings after each training day. They also included open-ended prompts to surface emerging questions and feedback in real time.
- **End-of-day feedback forms:** Separate from Menti, these provided structured ratings and qualitative comments about each training block, supporting more formal session-level analysis by WP2.
- **Final post-training online survey:** This comprehensive evaluation was completed by approximately 75% of participants and captured overall impressions, topic relevance scores, and suggestions for improvement.

The evaluation approach applied during the TTT followed the overarching structure outlined in Section 3.3 – Evaluation Framework by Training Type, which details the purpose, timing, methods, tools, and use of feedback across all CSA training formats. The TTT-specific components are summarized again below:

Aspect	Details
Purpose	Assess CSC preparedness, engagement, and training effectiveness
Timing	End of each training day + post-program
Methods	Quantitative scores + open-ended questions
Tools Used	Menti reflections, structured feedback forms, final online survey
Use of Feedback	Immediate content adjustments; informed planning for future TTT waves

Table 3: The TTT-specific component of evaluation

The evaluation approach aimed to ensure that feedback was actionable both in the short term (e.g., refining the next day’s activities) and long term (e.g., shaping the structure of the next TTT cycle).

4.1.4 Evaluation results

As part of the evaluation of the initial TTT programme, participants were asked to rate the relevance of individual training topics on a scale from 1 to 7. The aggregated results (see Figure 1) offer important insights into which components were most valued and where there may be room for improvement.

The highest-rated topic, with an overall score of 5.2, was “Content on climate smart advice methods”, indicating that participants particularly appreciated practical guidance on delivering CSA-related advice. This aligns closely with the TTT’s objective of enhancing CSCs' competence in advisory delivery. Similarly, “Content on facilitation skills” (5.0) and “Exchange with other CSC and regions” (4.9) also scored highly, reflecting the value of peer learning and interactive engagement formats, which were a core element of the TTT design.

Mid-level scores were observed for “Information about the CoPs” and “Content on climate smart farming” (both 4.3). While these topics were still rated positively, they may benefit from deeper exploration or more contextualised examples in future trainings. Notably, the lowest relevance scores were given to “Information about the CSA project” (3.3) and “Content on climate change” (2.9). This suggests that general or high-level background information was perceived as less immediately useful, likely because participants were already familiar with the project context or expected more actionable content.

These findings underscore a clear preference among participants for applied, practice-oriented, and interactive content. Future iterations of the training may wish to reduce the emphasis on generic project overviews and instead allocate more time to deep dives into advisory tools, technical topics (e.g. GHG assessments), and case-based peer exchange. Moreover, differentiated learning tracks could help tailor the training to diverse knowledge levels, ensuring that all CSCs—regardless of prior experience—benefit fully from the TTT program.

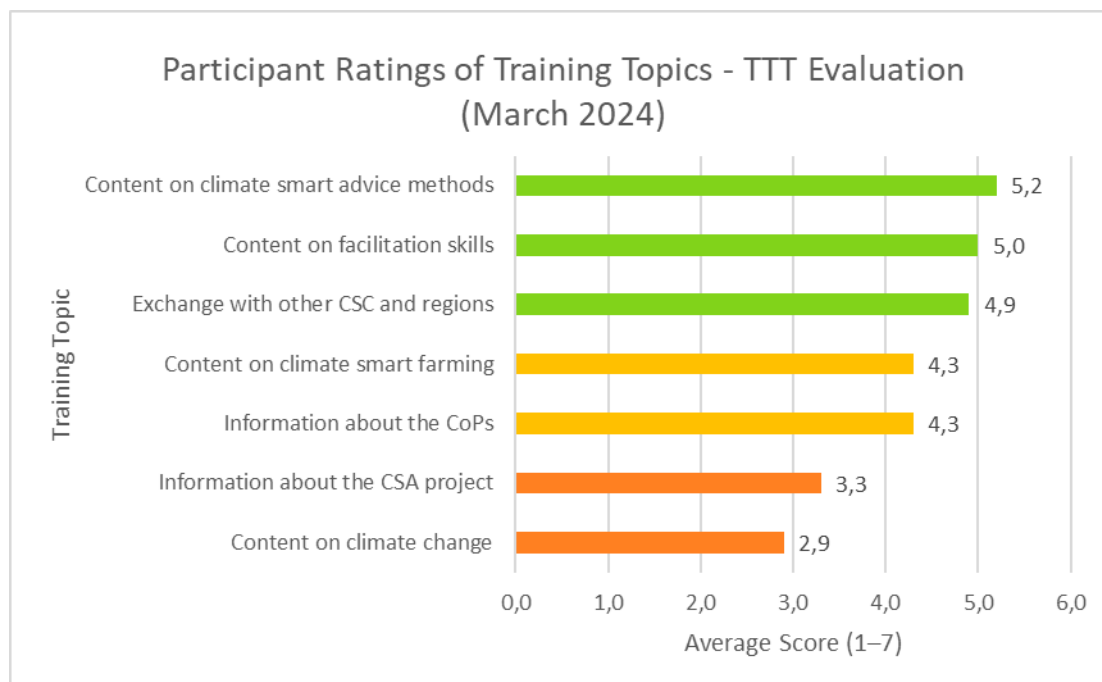


Figure 1: Average Topic Relevance Scores – TTT Participant Evaluation

In addition, participants were asked to evaluate several key aspects of the training using a 5-point scale. The highest-rated category was Overall satisfaction (4.7/5), followed by Relevance of content (4.6), Usefulness of facilitation methods and Balance of focus (4.5 each), and Usefulness of thematic content (4.4).

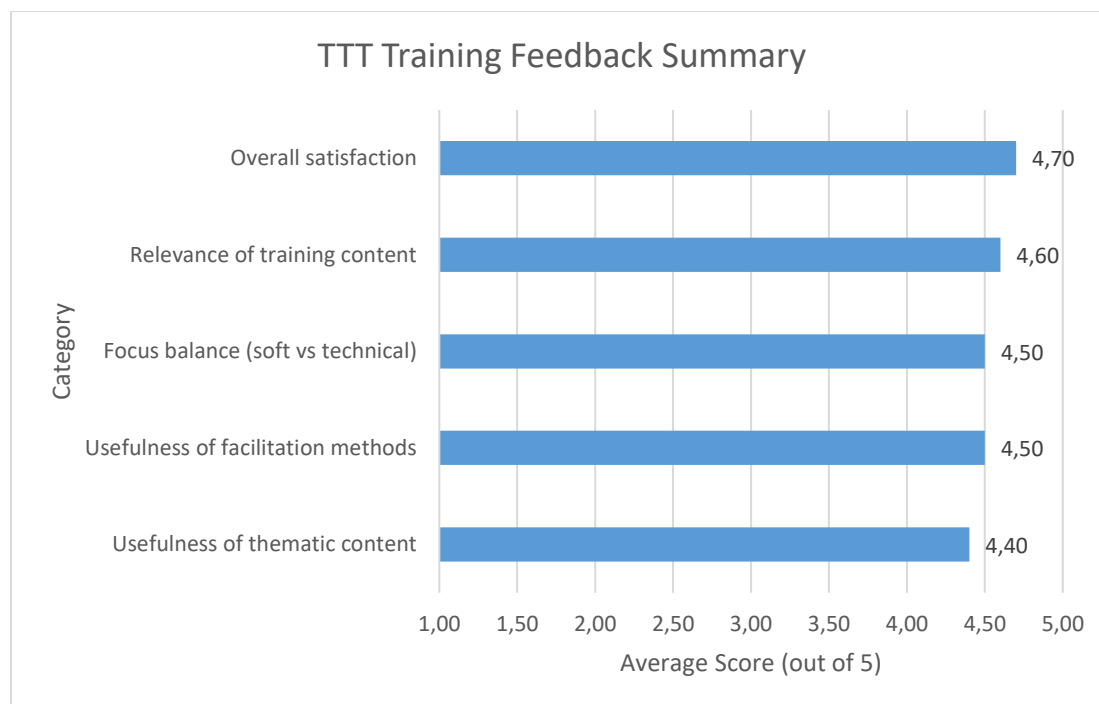


Figure 2: Evaluation of Overall Training Quality – Summary of Participant Feedback

4.1.5 Lessons learnt and recommendations for future TTT programs

The initial Train-the-Trainer (TTT) revealed several important insights into participant expectations, learning outcomes, and areas for improvement. These insights were gathered through structured evaluation methods (see Section 4.2.3) and follow-up discussions with participants and core WP teams (notably WP1, WP2, WP4, WP5, and WP8). Additional inputs were derived from project milestone documents 17 (CSA Train the Trainer courses delivered CoP wave 1) and 21 (Guidelines for CSA Training Seminars).

Key Findings from the First TTT:

- **Improved Advisory Skills:** Participants reported enhanced abilities to deliver climate-smart advice, especially using facilitation and engagement strategies.
- **Boosted Confidence:** CSCs felt more prepared for their roles as CoP leaders and trainers.
- **Effective Learning Methods:** The blended format (including peer learning, world cafés, role plays, and energizers) was well received and seen as a strength.
- **CoP Leadership Readiness:** CSCs demonstrated a solid understanding of their responsibilities and felt equipped to initiate and manage CoPs.

Recommendations for Upcoming TTT Waves:

Table 4: Recommendations for Upcoming TTT Waves

Area	Recommendation	Notes
Training Content	Provide deeper technical content on CSF (GHG tools, soil health, mitigation).	Addressed in TTT feedback and MS17.
Practical Relevance	Include real-life examples and case studies; offer farm-based learning.	Requested in open feedback responses.
Post-TTT Planning	Allocate structured time for CSCs to design their CoP activities.	Participants highlighted this need.
TTT–CoP Coordination	Avoid scheduling CoPs too soon after the TTT; allow reflection and planning.	While the first TTT–CoP gap was ~1 month, feedback indicated this was still tight.
Training Materials	Develop a modular toolkit (slides, videos, facilitator guides).	Ongoing under WP2.
Peer Mentoring	Involve Wave 1 CSCs as mentors for future waves.	Encouraged for experience-sharing.
Adaptive Learning Tracks	Trainers should consider CSCs' varying expertise; offer differentiated group exercises or tasks.	Full "tracks" may be unrealistic, but tailoring is feasible.
Evaluation	Continue using simple tools (Menti, daily surveys) to gather real-time and final feedback.	Emphasis on practical feasibility.
AKIS Alignment	Better link CSA content to national AKIS realities and WP6 strategies.	Supported during in-person discussions.

4.2 CoP Training Events

This section synthesizes key lessons from the first year of Community of Practice (CoP) training events implemented by Climate Smart Coaches (CSCs) across the CSA project between April 2024 and March 2025. These events represented a direct continuation of the Train-the-Trainer (TTT) program, allowing CSCs to apply their facilitation and technical skills in real-world advisory settings.

4.2.1 Objectives and Implementation

According to CSA design, each CSC was responsible for organizing at least eight CoP meetings over the course of Wave 1, with a minimum of two classified as training events. These sessions aimed to deepen Climate-Smart Farming (CSF) knowledge, support peer exchange, and build advisory capacity through hands-on, context-relevant learning. A total of 52 training events were registered in the CSA Backoffice by March 2025, with 46 having been delivered at the time of reporting.

4.2.2 Evaluation Tools and Methods

The evaluation of CoP training events relied on the approach outlined in Section 3.3 (Evaluation Framework by Training Type). Evaluation data was submitted by CSCs via the CSA Backoffice system using structured forms. These forms captured information on learning objectives, delivery formats, and event reflections. While the system allows entry of participant feedback, this was not required nor consistently collected.

Table 5: The CoP Training Event-specific component of evaluation

Aspect	Details
Purpose	Measure impact on CSA skills, capacity, and knowledge exchange; capture event objectives and outcomes
Timing	After each CoP training event
Methods	Structured event reporting by CSCs; optional participant feedback
Tools Used	CSA Backoffice Evaluation Form; CoP Reflection Template; optional CSC feedback survey
Use of Feedback	Inform refinement of CoP methods; document lessons learned; support monitoring of advisor development across waves

In addition to these post-event forms, qualitative insights were gathered through CSC reflections during the May 2025 General Assembly workshop in Almería. These discussions provided a broader understanding of implementation challenges and learning outcomes

Of the 46 delivered training events, 19 included a completed evaluation in the Backoffice (41%). While evaluation was mandatory, practical limitations, confusion about classification, and administrative burdens likely contributed to the low compliance rate. This issue is being addressed through actions described later in this deliverable (see Cross-Cutting Challenges), including simplified evaluation forms, a classification checklist, improved onboarding during TTT, and technical updates to the Backoffice.

4.2.3 Evaluation Results and Reflections

Despite the low number of submissions, the available data offers useful insights. CSCs rated the question “To what extent did the event meet its objectives?” with an average score of 4.7 out of 5, indicating strong perceived effectiveness where evaluations were submitted.

Qualitative reflections from CSCs highlighted appreciation for participatory formats, practical demonstrations, and farm-based learning, while challenges included identifying expert speakers, managing logistics, and uncertainty around what qualifies as a “training event.”

GA Feedback (Almería 2025)

As part of the evaluation, CSCs and stakeholders shared reflections during breakout sessions at the May 2025 General Assembly in Almería. Their feedback provided further qualitative insights into practical challenges faced when organizing CoP training events.

The main issues identified included:

- Finding suitable dates for events,
- The time required to prepare training materials,
- Difficulty in selecting appropriate technical themes,
- Identifying and engaging expert speakers, and
- Defining the appropriate level of complexity for mixed-experience groups.



Figure 3: Main challenges faced by CSCs when organising CoP training events (n=67, GA 2025 feedback survey)

CSCs also expressed strong interest in:

- Learning from Wave 1 case studies.
- Tips and mentorship from experienced peers.
- Better integration of CSA/CFD tools into training.
- Stronger links to national policy contexts.

These insights confirm the need for integrated support that balances structure with flexibility, and technical depth with practical coordination support. The Farming for Climate platform, updated training materials, and more deliberate peer learning strategies can all play a role in strengthening Wave 2 delivery.

Clear objectives, preparation, and skilled facilitation were highlighted as success factors. These outcomes confirm the survey results and reinforce the importance of combining clear planning with adequate support for CSCs.

4.2.4 Lessons Learned and Recommendations

Building on feedback from evaluations, GA reflections, and WP discussions (see also MS17 and MS21), the following recommendations are proposed to strengthen future CoP training implementation:

Table 6: Lessons learned from CSC feedback

Area	Recommendation	Notes
Training Clarity	Reinforce the definition of CSA training events using MS21's 9-step methodology.	Consider embedding a summary diagram of the methodology in future guidance materials.
Templates and Checklists	Provide CSCs with editable tools for session planning (e.g. agendas, sign-in sheets).	Keep these materials simple and lightweight to reduce admin burden.
Speaker Support	Encourage use of CSA network (e.g. NCs, thematic leaders) to identify experts.	Consider developing a shared database or speaker pool.
Joint Training Opportunities	Promote CoP clustering and cross-border sessions.	This will become easier as more CoPs are formed.
Evaluation Process	Review and modify the CoP Training Event evaluation form to improve clarity, usability, and alignment with reporting needs.	Builds on Wave 1 feedback where confusion about classification and form complexity was noted.
Repository Navigation	Improve accessibility of WP5 tools on the Farming for Climate platform.	Also consider short videos or step-by-step tool application guides.
Peer Learning	Encourage mentoring across waves and CoPs.	Could include storytelling, paired coaching, or short videos.

4.3 Cross-Cutting Challenges

Some of the challenges highlighted in the CoP evaluation results — such as low evaluation compliance, difficulties with reporting workflows in the CSA Backoffice, and uncertainty around what qualifies as a training event — are not unique to CoPs. These issues are expected to affect other training formats as well, including national seminars, future advisor training, and E-learning. They are being addressed through the measures outlined in Section 4.2.4 and in coordination with WP4.

4.4 National Training Events (Planned)

4.4.1 Objectives and Preparatory Actions

The National CSA Training Events are envisioned to begin in Year 6 (From April 2028), with flexible timing based on national readiness and partner capacity. These seminars are intended to extend the reach of Climate Smart Advisors (CSA) training beyond the Communities of Practice (CoPs) by targeting the broader advisory community. They form part of Task 2.4, which covers both the CoP trainings (delivered by CSCs to CSAs) and additional national seminars delivered by teams of CSCs for advisors outside the CoPs.

The events are expected to:

- Equip a broader group of advisors with CSF-related knowledge and practices.
- Foster alignment between CSA training and national Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation Systems (AKIS).
- Encourage collaboration among advisory bodies, universities, policymakers, and CSA stakeholders.

While implementation is expected from Year 6 onward, preparatory steps have included:

- Introducing the MS21 guidance note outlining a suggested 9-step methodology during the March 2024 Train-the-Trainer (TTT) in Dublin.
- Early coordination with Climate Smart Coaches (CSCs) and National Coordinators to explore training options suitable for national contexts.

Each seminar may:

- Involve approximately 15–50 participants depending on scope and resources.
- Be delivered in local languages.
- Use a combination of delivery methods, including in-person, online, and hybrid formats.
- Be informed—but not rigidly structured—by TTT and CoP learnings, with flexibility for national tailoring.

CSCs will lead the design and delivery of these trainings, with support from National Coordinators where appropriate. Participation in field visits or other immersive formats is encouraged but not mandatory. The use of pre-developed templates and materials (from MS21 or CoP practices) is recommended to streamline organization; however, materials should remain adaptable to national needs. Any development of a consolidated “CSA Seminar Toolkit” should be explored collaboratively and framed as a potential support mechanism rather than a mandatory product.

4.4.2 Lessons from CoP Training Events

Although national seminars have not yet been delivered, early learnings from Wave 1 CoP training events provide guidance for planning:

- **Blended Learning Formats:** A mix of peer-to-peer learning, expert input, and interactive exercises improves engagement.
- **Clear Roles:** Clearly distinguishing between trainers, facilitators, and participants helps streamline delivery.
- **Practical Content Demand:** Attendees appreciate technical depth and country-relevant examples (e.g. GHG measurement, biodiversity strategies).
- **Helpful Templates:** Standard materials (e.g. agendas, sign-in sheets) helped CoPs deliver events more efficiently. These could be adapted for national use where helpful.

These points are offered as recommendations to guide local adaptations, rather than as fixed requirements.

4.4.3 Evaluation and Monitoring Strategy

National training seminars will be evaluated within the overall CSA Training Evaluation Framework (see Section 3.3). Preliminary suggestions for suitable tools and methods have already been made, and these will be further refined in consultation with WP4 closer to implementation. CSCs will remain responsible for collecting core data, with NCs supporting facilitation.

- Partners may choose to link these events to existing national gatherings (e.g. CS-AKIS events).
- Evaluation templates, reminders, and other logistics may be developed pending technical feasibility and team capacity.

The overall scope and complexity of national training events will remain modest, in line with available time and budget. Further details on monitoring and evaluation will be refined collaboratively between WP2 and WP4

4.5 Training for Future Advisors

4.5.1 Objectives

The trainings for future advisors are aimed at enhancing the long-term capacity of European advisory systems by equipping students, trainees, and early-career professionals with the knowledge and skills to support climate-smart farming (CSF). These future advisors form a critical audience for advancing sustainable practices at farm level across diverse contexts.

These trainings are expected to be organized by Climate Smart Coaches (CSCs) in their respective countries, in collaboration with universities, vocational institutions, advisory service providers (ASPs), and relevant stakeholders. National Coordinators may provide logistical support.

The overarching objectives are to:

- Equip future advisors with a systemic understanding of climate change, its impacts on agriculture, and mitigation/adaptation strategies.
- Strengthen advisory methodologies and communication skills for promoting CSF practices.
- Promote understanding of EU climate policies and carbon auditing tools.
- Encourage peer learning and interactive engagement with real-world cases.

4.5.2 Planned Activities and Design Considerations

Training delivery is planned flexibly between now and the end of Year 7 (March 2030), with the recommendation that 50% of events be completed by the end of Year 5. Each country is expected to deliver between 2 and 8 events, depending on size and partner capacity.

The sessions may combine online self-learning and in-person training, following a modular and practice-oriented structure. Formats and components may include:

- **Online Self-Study (Pre-Session):** Short introductory videos, technical microlearning (e.g. soil health, carbon audits), quizzes, and curated reading lists (e.g. FAO and the Farming for Climate platform).
- **In-Person Training:**
 - Guest lectures by CSCs or external experts
 - Role-playing exercises (e.g. introducing CSF to skeptical farmers)
 - Advisory plan development and peer review
 - Use of local case studies and FarmDemo Training Kit
 - Group discussions and feedback sessions

The trainings should be designed to be interactive, participatory, and highly contextualized. While they may align with national strategies (Task 2.4) and build on CoP experiences, they are not expected to follow a fixed format.

4.5.3 Evaluation and Monitoring Strategy

Evaluation tools and formats for the Future Advisor trainings are still under development and will be finalized in coordination with WP4. To maintain feasibility and avoid excessive administrative burden, a light-touch, flexible evaluation approach is recommended.

Tentative evaluation components may include:

- Pre-/post-training reflections (knowledge and confidence self-assessments)
- Short digital surveys via QR codes
- Optional feedback from hosting institutions or lecturers
- Simple registration and summary form submitted via the CSA Backoffice

The final evaluation framework will be developed based on partner capacity, technical feasibility, and alignment with broader CSA monitoring efforts. Organizers (CSCs) will be supported by WP2 and WP4 in piloting and adjusting tools as needed.

Note: Given that many participants are not yet active advisors, evaluation will focus on awareness, understanding, and perceived preparedness rather than intention to apply knowledge in the field.

4.6 E-Learning Modules

4.6.1 Overview and Objectives

The CSA e-learning platform, led by FÜAk and Open University in collaboration with all work packages, is currently under development and expected to be completed in 2030 (Month 84). Pilot versions or early modules may become available before this date. This platform is a key pillar of CSA's legacy, providing modular, flexible learning opportunities for advisors who cannot attend in-person events.

Even though the e-learning outputs are due only at the end of the project, the project teams have already organized themselves to understand better the target audience, format and objectives of the e-learning. Meetings have been held in order to define likely appropriate modules. Finally, during the General Assembly in Almeria, Spain in May 2025, a workshop was held to brainstorm further on the format and content of the CSA e-learning modules.

Accordingly, the following preliminary conclusions could be made:

Target audience:

- The wider European advisory community, including both experienced and early-career advisors,
- Advisors and rural professionals seeking flexible access to climate-smart farming knowledge and tools,
- Future advisors (e.g. students, trainees) who may benefit from supplementary digital learning resources.

Format:

- There is a preference for short (10–15 minutes) modules, with a maximum total learning time of 10 hours across all units.

Learning Objectives and Benefits:

Upon completion of the e-learning modules, users will:

- Engage with the principles and value of CSA and CoPs,
- Strengthen their foundational knowledge of CSF, with thematic modules on soil health, biodiversity, GHG reduction, and adaptation practices to be developed
- Improve their advisory and diagnostic skills through interactive exercises and case studies,
- Gain access to downloadable tools and resources for local adaptation,
- Be better prepared to integrate climate-smart practices into their advisory work,
- Build awareness of facilitation methods and peer-learning approaches used in CoPs

Advantages for users include:

- Flexible access (anytime, anywhere)
- Learning in their own language (where translations are available)
- Efficient upskilling with limited time investment
- Motivation through interactive, self-paced design

4.6.2 Planned Modules and Content Themes

The platform will feature two core tracks:

- **Track 1 Improving Your Climate-Smart Advisory Skills**

This track builds on the CSA CoP experience to promote effective, participatory, and farmer-centered advisory approaches. While it introduces the concept of Communities of Practice, it also explores broader facilitation and engagement methods that advisors can use across settings.

Modules include:

- Introduction to CoPs (covering What is a CoP?, How to initiate a CoP?, and Planning and hosting CoP meetings)
- Tools and soft skills for group facilitation,
- Organising field visits and demo-farm events,
- Advisory methods beyond CoPs: approaches for one-on-one advice, awareness raising, and inspiring farmer engagement.

- **Track 2: Climate Smart Farming Knowledge**

This track focuses on core technical themes central to climate-smart agriculture. Each module provides applied knowledge, examples, and practical tools that advisors can use to support farmers.

Modules include:

- Climate change basics for rural advisors
- Calculating on-farm CO₂ emissions
- Mitigation techniques and carbon tools
- Adaptation practices and case studies

- **Each unit will feature interactive elements, such as:**

- Short video explainers
- Knowledge quizzes
- Gamified activities
- Embedded case studies

- Links to the CSA/CFD knowledge repository

4.6.3 Development Considerations and Next Steps

- **Coordination:** WP2 is aligned with WP3, WP5 and WP7 to avoid duplication and enable synergies with PIPs, CoDIES, and technical tools.

Pilot Testing: Pilot versions or early modules are expected to be tested during the project period, with feedback gathered from CSCs and/or General Assembly participants.

- **Hosting Platform:** The e-learning platform will be integrated into the Farming For Climate (FFC) website, ensuring open access for a broader advisory audience beyond CSA project participants
- **Evaluation:** Participant surveys and completion tests will track usage, knowledge gains, and satisfaction.

5 Conclusion

This intermediary synthesis report (D2.2) captures key lessons from a first series of CSA training activities—including the preparation and delivery of the 1st Train-the-Trainer (TTT) program, CoP-based training events during Year 1 of the 1st CoP wave, and the early planning phase for national training events, the future advisors training events, and the e-learning platform. The findings presented here are grounded in participant feedback, structured evaluations, and reflections gathered from across the CSA consortium.

These first training activities have demonstrated the importance of interactive learning formats, clear facilitation tools, and strong technical content on climate-smart farming. Feedback from Climate Smart Coaches (CSCs) has highlighted both the strengths of the current training architecture—such as peer-based learning and adaptability—as well as areas requiring improvement, such as post-training planning tools, alignment with CoP timelines, and clearer definitions of what constitutes a formal training event.

The delivery of over 50 CoP training events in just one year confirms both the capacity and the motivation within the network to build strong CSA communities. However, the variability in evaluation practices and confusion around training classification underline the need for standardization and clearer guidance.

These lessons are already shaping the next wave of activities, including the second TTT in early 2026, the kick-off of national CSA training events in Year 4, and the roll-out of the CSA e-learning platform. The training evaluation framework developed in parallel with this deliverable will help ensure consistent monitoring across all training types, supporting quality improvement and comparability.

Deliverable D2.3 will serve as the final synthesis report, consolidating all findings from CSA's full training implementation. It will offer strategic recommendations to improve CSA's long-term training impact and ensure that the project's legacy—empowered advisors, informed farmers, and effective climate-smart practices—continues beyond its lifetime.



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