



Session 2: Scaling Up & Securing Funding for Agroforestry Projects (11:15–12:45)

Objective

Explore strategies to expand successful agroforestry initiatives and navigate the funding landscape at local, regional, national and European scales. Participants will learn about major funding sources (EU and others) and practice pitching a project idea convincingly to potential funders.

Key Topics

Scaling Strategies

When a project demonstrates positive results on a small scale, how can it grow? Discuss different dimensions of scaling:

- *Scaling Out*: Replicating the project in new locations or with more participants (e.g., from 5 pilot farms to 50 farms). This may require creating toolkits or manuals (like this one!) so others can adopt the model, and training additional facilitators.
- *Scaling Up*: Integrating the project approach into broader programs or policy. For example, after a successful pilot, working with government to include agroforestry in national extension packages or grant schemes. Another angle is reaching higher levels of institutions – turning a local project into a regional or national initiative.
- *Scaling Deep*: Increasing impact by changing mindsets or social norms (harder to quantify, but e.g., making agroforestry an accepted standard practice in a community). Often involves education and policy advocacy.
- Emphasize that not all projects need to become huge; sometimes integrating into existing frameworks (like a co-op or a school curriculum) ensures longevity and growth in impact.
- **Case of AFINET, AGFORWARD or AF4EU (EU projects)**: Briefly mention that EU networks like AFINET (agroecosystems) and AF4EU (value chains) connected agroforestry pilots across countries, effectively scaling out by sharing knowledge, and scaling up by informing EU policy recommendations. This shows advisors they are part of a bigger movement and can leverage European networks.

Funding Landscape in Europe:

Give an overview of key funding sources for agroforestry projects:

- **CAP (Common Agricultural Policy) – Pillar I (ecoschemes) and Pillar II (Rural Development Programs)**: Many countries have measures supporting agroforestry (e.g., grants for planting trees on farms, eco-scheme payments, agri-environment payments, operational groups). Advisors should check their national/regional RDP for measures that can be used to implement agroforestry in a direct or indirect way. CAP funding linked to the development of operational groups often requires writing a proposal to the local managing authority or helping farmers apply for support, those associated with agri-environment or eco-scheme payments need to fill an application form **EU LIFE Programme**: Focused on environment and climate. Agroforestry fits LIFE projects because of biodiversity and climate adaptation benefits. These are competitive but can fund demonstration projects and capacity building with substantial budgets. If applicable, mention a successful LIFE agroforestry project (like LIFE Montado-Adapt, LIFE-SILFORE, LIFE-VAIA in Spain/Portugal/Italy/France) that got EU support.
- **Horizon Europe**: Research and innovation funding. Agroforestry projects can be part of multi-actor research consortia (e.g., a Horizon project may pilot new agroforestry techniques in living labs). These involve

international partnerships and typically a research institution lead; advisors can partner or benefit via case study sites or as stakeholders.

- **EIP-AGRI Operational Groups:** At country level, funding for innovative on-farm projects (often shorter term) linked to the Rural Development programmes. Agroforestry fits well if farmers and researchers team up.
- **National/Regional Grants:** Some governments or NGOs have climate action funds, landscape restoration grants, or innovation prizes that agroforestry could access.
- **Private Sector & Carbon Finance:** Emerging opportunities where companies fund tree planting for carbon offsets or CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility). Standards like the **Gold Standard** or **Verra** have methodologies for agroforestry to earn carbon credits (though the process can be complex). Impact investors or social enterprises might fund agroforestry if a revenue model is present (e.g., selling high-value fruits or timber).

List these on a slide or flipchart for visibility. Encourage participants to share if they know of specific grants in their country. For instance, maybe “Ireland has a climate farm fund that supported me” etc.

Crafting a Funding Pitch

Securing funding is part substance (having a good project) and part communication. Share tips on how to **pitch an agroforestry project**:

- **Align with Funder Priorities:** Research what the funder cares about and use their language. E.g., if pitching to an environmental fund, emphasize biodiversity and carbon benefits; if to a rural development fund, emphasize farmer incomes and community benefits. *“Align proposals with donor priorities to increase success”* (Tip).
- **Problem and Solution:** Clearly state the problem or challenge (e.g., “degraded soils and low farm income in region X”) and how agroforestry provides a solution, backed by a simple theory of change.
- **What’s innovative or impactful:** Funders hear many proposals; highlight what’s special: e.g., “first demonstration of agroforestry in this region,” or “unique coalition of farmers and scientists,” or “leverages new carbon finance mechanism.”
- **Plan & Team credibility:** Mention key elements of your plan (timeline, how you will manage it – they will like hearing you use professional PM methods). Also why your team/organisation is capable (experience, partnerships, farmer support).
- **Budget ask and value:** State how much funding is needed and what impact it will buy (for example: “With €200,000 we will establish 100 ha of agroforestry, train 50 farmers, and increase farm income by 15% while sequestering 500 tons CO₂ per year.”). Having numbers like these shows that you have done homework.
- Use a simple **pitch template**: *Problem* → *Solution (your project)* → *Impact* → *Ask (funding needed & what for)*. For a short pitch, this structure works well.

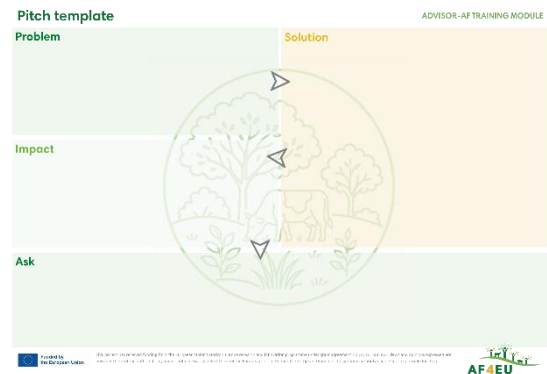


Activity – Funding Pitch Challenge (45 min):

Participants now practice pitching a project, honing both content and presentation:

1. **Form Teams:** Keep the same project teams or mix new ones for variety. Each team will prepare a **5-minute pitch** for a hypothetical funder of their choice. If teams have their project from Day 1, they can use that as the basis. If not, give a prompt (e.g., “an agroforestry youth training project” or let them invent).

2. **Choose a Funder:** Each team should decide who they are pitching to, as this will shape their angle. For example- *an EU LIFE program committee, a panel of local government officials, a private impact investor, or a community bank*. This can be fictional but should be plausible.
3. **Prepare the Pitch:** Give teams approximately 20 minutes to outline their pitch. Recommend they allocate roles if multiple people will speak (e.g., one does introduction/problem, one does solution, etc.). They can write bullet points or a mini script. If materials are available, they could even draw one illustrative slide or poster (but not required, template available). Key is to cover the basics: **What, Why, How, How much, and Impact**. Remind them to integrate at least one thing learned in training (like mention a risk plan, or stakeholder support, to show funders they are well prepared).
4. **Pitch Presentations:** Each team gets up to 5 minutes to present as if the trainers/audience are the funders. To keep it fun and interactive, the training facilitators or a selected jury of participants can act as the "funding panel". Encourage pitchers to be clear and passionate. After each pitch, allow 2 minutes of **Q&A** from the "funders" – typical questions could be "How will you maintain this after our funding ends?" or "What if farmers are not interested?" etc. (The trainers can pose these to ensure crucial points are addressed.)
5. **Feedback:** Applaud each team. Provide constructive feedback focusing on content (Did they align with priorities? Was the objective clear and compelling? Did they quantify benefits?) and delivery (Were they convincing? Did they stay within time?). Peer feedback is welcome too.



Learning Points: Conclude that **packaging the project for funders is as important as the project idea itself**. Advisors often help farmers or local groups write proposals; using these pitching skills and the tools from Day 1 (clear goals, risk management plans, etc.) can significantly improve funding success rates.

Tip for Success: *“Use a logic model to communicate impact to funders.”* (Recommendation). In proposals or pitches, a simple diagram or table that links *inputs → activities → outputs → outcomes → impact* shows the funder exactly how their money will create change. It is essentially a condensed theory of change, and funders appreciate that clarity.