EUWI Finance Guide Website Review

Review of the Finance Guide Website of the European Water Initiative

WELL Task 2689

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1. Summary

1.1. Key findings on the development of the website

1.1.1. Quality principles for the website

The discussion closing phase 1 of the project paved the way by means of eight key findings about the purpose of the website and its opportunities (See paragraph 2.1.1):

- The quality of information is key;
- The added value of the website is to help make informed choices on financing mechanisms;
- The site is expected to provide highly interactive features;
- The site should become a 'one stop' source of information on finance in the W & S sector;
- The site is intended to be used by three types of users:
- The name and image matter;
- The use of the website should be monitored to take corrective action;
- There is a balance to find between human and automated knowledge.

These findings should guide the development and maintenance of the good quality website in the short and long run. Additionally, the content should be of equally good quality

1.1.2. What is quality content?

Quality follows a number of principles (See 3.4.2):

- Accuracy – the information should be factually correct;
- Completeness – no important bit should be missing;
- Timeliness – content has to be up-to-date;
- Relevance – quality content is tailored to the needs of its audience;
- Readability – the medium determines the layouts;
- Availability – users should find content easily;
- Accessibility – the level of language (jargon etc.) is in line with the audience;
- Appeal – content should be written in a compelling way to attract its audience.

1.1.3. Collecting quality content

Based on the above, one has to organise the collection and preparation of quality content. A number of sources are already available (See sections 4.1 and 4.9) and they ought to be tapped from. This collection depends however on the availability of this content in an existing data repository (does the organisation have a website to publicise its financing mechanisms?) and on the willingness to share that information. From the questionnaire, it seems both conditions are checked (see 4.2.1 and 4.2.2)

1.1.4. Entering quality content on the website

Aside from the content providers, the process of entering content on the finance website matters. It depends on either a manual or semi-automatic input and on whether it is entered by an external contributor or by the team running the EUWI finance website (See 3.2.). These options are basically pointing at a centralised or decentralised management (and maintenance) of the website.

1.2. Key findings on the maintenance of the website

1.2.1 Content quality process

One thing is to enter quality content on the website once, but the trick is to keep the website an essential reference for quality content in the long run, which relies on a content quality process. This aspect is actually applicable for the development as well as the maintenance of the website and it consists of a number of processes: trust-based quality control process (see 3.5.2), editorial management (see 3.5.3 to 3.5.8), classification structure (see 3.6) as well as a number of other tasks that are not primordial but would nonetheless improve the quality of the website (see 3.12 and 3.13).

Bearing all aspects in mind, the WELL team came up with two polar approaches for content quality process (see 3.7): free format or strictly controlled.

- The free format approach (see 3.8) invites any organisation to post information on their financing mechanisms and to maintain that information themselves. This option keeps costs and maintenance at a fairly low level, though it is more susceptible to lead to poor content quality, inconsistencies and potential damage to the website.
- The strictly controlled approach (see 3.9), on the other hand, is potentially a lot costlier and technical management may prove cumbersome, but it is more likely to end up in a well managed, up-to-date and relevant finance website.

1.2.2 Management and cooperation possibilities

Two organisations have shown interest in hosting and managing the finance website: the World Water Council (see 5.6.2) and IRC (see 5.6.3). The questionnaire sent to key finance stakeholders suggests however that a handful of organisations (GWP and IRC, see 4.6.2) would be keen on closely supporting the WWC, while a number of crucial organisations and their networks (see 4.2.1 and 4.4.4) have already indicated their interest in sharing and posting information on what is increasingly likely to be named the *Water Finance Guide* (see 3.15).

1.2.3 Next steps and issues

Some key issues are yet to be resolved: organisations partnering on this endeavour have to define a good working mode together; technical hosting of the website comes with a few concrete issues to solve and, last but not least, the budget issue will determine everything. Cost estimates (see 3.14) vary from Euro 117.780 in the most economical (yet decent) scenario to over Euro 330.000 in a realistic best-case scenario. Additionally, expected running costs on a yearly basis should be around Euro 30.000 (see 4.14.2).

We welcome comments and suggestions for improvements during the meeting of 27 February in Brussels, where this report will be presented and hopefully lead to a quick decision to implement and maintain the website as it ought to be.

2. Introduction

2.1. Background

2.1.1. In 2003 the EU Water Initiative (EUWI) established a Finance Work Group (FWG), which performed several studies around financial mechanisms in the water sector. The FWG is made up of representatives from a variety of organisations from different sectors, including the EU, EU member states, government departments, private sector funders, private sector operators, NGOs, donors, and multinational and bilateral funders. These organisations have significant experience using financial mechanisms in developing countries.

2.1.2. Through the FWG's exploration of finance mechanisms for the water sector, it became apparent that an information gap exists about how finance mechanisms work, and how they are used. Whilst some donors and IFIs (International Financing Institutions) provide information about their financial products online, there are no comprehensive sources of information about the universe of products on offer and how they work, particularly in relationship to the water sector (which includes water governance). Information about finance mechanisms from a demand-led perspective is patchy and often anecdotal, rather than organised in any systematic way.

2.1.3. A website has been setup by ERM (Environmental Resources Management) and Punkt.NetServices as a first response to the identified gap. The objective is to provide users of finance, typically in developing countries, with a means to identify different types of finance mechanisms that are available for the water sector, how they work (broadly), and provide linkages to other sites on the Internet, which can provide additional details and information. This website is a first step towards creating a "one-stop" source of information about the range of finance mechanisms available for the water and sanitation sector, to increase knowledge and capacity for accessing finance.

2.2. Objectives of the revision

2.2.1. The Department for International Development, on behalf of the EU Water Initiative Finance working group, has asked WELL to conduct a content and technical analysis of the current website to assess its usefulness (task 1), develop a gap analysis and review other sources of useful information (task 2). The IRC (International Water and Sanitation Centre) has been the Resource Centre identified within WELL to conduct the work.

2.2.2. The first phase of the peer review have been completed: Task 1: Assessment of site usefulness and Task 2: Gap analysis. A report has been submitted in August 2005. On September 28th 2005, the FWG, EUWI-CIS, WWC and the consultants met to discuss the first phase of the peer review (Tasks 1 and 2) and the next steps required to make the website on-line in early 2006.

2.3. Tasks as stated in the TOR

2.3.1. In order to develop the site further, and allow for a period of stakeholder consultation on the final structure and content of the "Finance Guide" the FWG required the following work to be completed, referred to as Tasks 3 and 4.

Task 3: Define an appropriate approach for website development

2.3.2. The consultant shall develop options for further development of the website, along with their benefits and drawbacks, based on the findings in Tasks 1 and 2. This shall include possible partnerships for information sharing (e.g. the World Water Council, the Global Water Partnership, or others) and processes for sequencing development. Task 1 and 2 also identified the current content is limited; in its final form the guide should include NGO/Charity Fund e.g. Ford Foundation, Millennium Development Corporation under Agencies criteria.

2.3.3. Specific outputs should include:

- Study to provide 2/3 options for management of the “Finance Guide”. Including advantages and disadvantages and cost estimates.
- Include costs on quality and feedback processes.
- Include options on the name of the guide (which will produce good web search results).

Task 4: Define an appropriate approach for maintaining the website in the long-term.

2.3.4. The consultant shall identify specific approaches for long-term maintenance of the website, along with specific organizations interested in maintaining and housing the site. Through this, the consultant shall develop recommendations on how to approach adding new mechanisms and sources of finance, and how to update existing information (e.g. whether agencies or a third party should be responsible for updating the information and keeping it current), as well as the benefits and drawbacks of different approaches.

2.3.5. Specific inputs should include:

- Discuss with different organisations their interests in providing information and the options to do this. Who will have an interest in taking it further?
- Discuss issues of ownership and orientation.
- Discuss technical issues of sharing content, harmonizing search engines, etc.
- Include option for providing examples from the energy and health sectors.

3. Items from the discussion on Tasks 1 and 2

3.1.1. During the discussion on the report of Tasks 1 and 2 on September 28, 2005, the following points were raised. Some of these points are addressed in this Chapter, while other points will be dealt with in Chapter 4.

1. ***Quality of information is key***
   This topic will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 4.

2. ***The added value of the site is to help make informed choices on financing mechanisms***
   During the discussion it was mentioned that the site should provide both objective and subjective information. Objective information can be provided by doing research on the use of different financing mechanisms and making the outputs of these research efforts available on the site. This research could be on case studies about the financing mechanisms but also the quality of the suppliers, their mechanisms, their websites and their procedures. Subjective information can be equally valuable for users through the availability of feedback from other users, a more detailed description of their usage of certain financing mechanisms and their individual experiences with both suppliers and their mechanisms. Although this double objective might seem paradoxical, it is possible to do, as long as it is crystal clear to the user what type of information he/she is accessing. This is called the distinction between reflective and remembered knowledge and will be described in more detail later in the report.

3. ***The site is expected to provide highly interactive features***
   The possibility for feedback is important. This will allow users to contribute in their own way, stating their experiences and raising issues that are important to them. Users should also be able to ask questions and have the possibility to 'discuss' and learn from each other.

   It is equally important that these questions are responded to and that comments and contributions on the site are reviewed and acted upon if necessary. This will increase the level of trust that users will place in the website and its content. Another form of interactivity could be a form of (sponsored or paid) support with submitting the application for a financing mechanism itself. This seems more a long term opportunity at this moment. Yet other forms of interactivity are discussion forums, E-conferences and/or newsletters with readers' input.

4. ***The site should become a 'one stop' source of information on finance in the W&S sector***
   The site is intended to synergize rather than duplicate information in the sector. This means that the collaboration and partnership with suppliers of finance for the sector should be supported by providing appropriate technological and procedural solutions to accommodate the various modalities of collaboration that suppliers may prefer. Only then will the suppliers of information contribute and share their information without restrictions.

5. ***The site is intended to be used by three types of users:***
   a. Users who do not know or have very limited knowledge about finance and who want to learn more about the various instruments and their application. For these users a glossary will be provided.

b. Users who want to access concrete examples from applications elsewhere and who want to find out exactly how some of the mechanisms are being used in the sector. For these users cases will be provided.

c. Users who want to offer finance mechanisms and users who want to identify and apply for finance mechanisms for their own use. For these users a marketplace-function will be provided.

6. ***The name and image/reputation of the site is important***
Branding is considered to be important and the site should rank high within search engines like Google. Ranking by Google and other search engines depends on the system or 'build in logic' that these search engines use to rank the results of their own inventory of web sites on the Internet. Google for instance rates web sites partly on a proprietary system they use, called PageRank, which measures how many other sites provide a link to the site at hand and how well respected these sites are (for more information, see http://www.akamarketing.com/google-ranking-tips.html).

   It was also mentioned that the site should not be limited to users and providers of finance from EU member states and should not be considered a website of the European Union Water Initiative, but supported by the EUWI. An organisation with recognised leadership in the sector should host and manage the website.

7. ***Monitoring the usage is important***
The site should have functionality to collect statistics on usage and aggregate these into meaningful management information. These statistics and management reports serve two purposes. First, measurement of the usage is considered a sign for the relevance of the site and a valuable indicator for assessing the 'return on investment'. Second, usage statistics help to identify where the site might be improved, either content-wise or user-wise – for instance making the site better accessible to certain regions in the world.

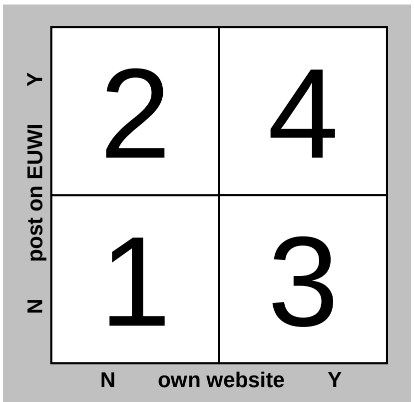
8. ***Trade off between human and automated knowledge***
The site will never be able to answer all questions that might be asked by the users. To a certain extent it will be possible to document available information and knowledge and let users follow a 'do it yourself' approach. This will allow users to benefit from the site in the way that they prefer and at a time they prefer. However, not all knowledge can be converted into documented knowledge. Neither is it wise to try to do this. Human support will therefore be inevitable, presumably through some form of a helpdesk. This will be elaborated more upon in the report.

4. Alternative scenarios for operation of the EUWI FWG website

4.1. Options for 'one stop' source of information

4.1.1. As mentioned under point 4 in Chapter 3.1.1, the sponsors of the site have the intention to make the site a 'one stop' source of information on finance mechanisms in the water and sanitation sector. This means that the site will have to accommodate different types of contributors. The following scenarios can be identified:

- ***C-quadrant*[1] *1***: Contributors who do not maintain their own website and who do not want to post their information on the EUWI FWG website;
- ***C-quadrant 2***: Contributors who do not maintain their own website and who prefer to post their information on the EUWI FWG website;
- ***C-quadrant 3***: Contributors who do maintain their own website and do not want their information to be duplicated or otherwise multiplied;
- ***C-quadrant 4***: Contributors who do maintain their own website and who have no objection to have their content be hosted on the EUWI FWG website as well.



Contribution quadrants

4.1.2. C-quadrant 1 is a rather special circumstance. A supplier of finance mechanisms does not have a website to provide more detailed information or receive applications. Neither does it want to provide such information through the EUWI FWG website. There could be several valid reasons for this, which are beyond the scope of this report. The question is what this supplier of information would be willing to make available to the public domain. At least, the EUWI FWG website operator should try to obtain the consent of the supplier to make the Name and Contact details of this supplier available through the EUWI FWG website, if only for completeness purposes.

4.1.3. C-quadrant 3 is another challenge. Although these suppliers have their own website on which they make the information on their finance mechanisms available to the public domain, they do not want duplication of this information on the EUWI FWG website. This seems more a matter of how much information will be multiplied and who takes ownership and responsibility for the reliability of the information on the EUWI FWG website. The information is already accessible on the contributors' own website to the users who visit the EUWI FWG website as well. Therefore, as a bare minimum, the EUWI FWG website operator should try to obtain the consent of the supplier to make the Name and Contact details of this supplier available through the EUWI FWG website, if only for completeness purposes. These could be extended with a web link to the website of the supplier.

4.1.4. By excluding the content on finance mechanisms from the EUWI FWG website, both C-quadrant 1 and 3 contributors should be aware that these mechanisms will not be searchable, nor will there be availability for feedback or any other form of interactivity that

[1] These are called C-quadrants – from contribution quadrants – to distinguish these from other types of quadrants later in the report

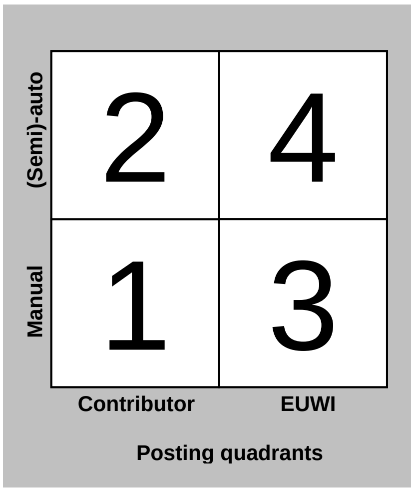
the EUWI FWG website might provide in the future. This might prove an extra motivation for these contributors to re-think their participation in the initiative.

Most of the answers to the questionnaire (see Chapter 5) indicate that key organisations in the sector have their own web pages but are willing to share the content via the Water Finance Guide website as well.

4.2. Options for posting information

4.2.1. C-quadrant 2 and 4 contributors are willing to post the information relating to their finance mechanisms on the EUWI FWG website. Again, there are several ways in which this can be accomplished (P-quadrants for posting-quadrants):

- ***P-quadrant 1***: The contributor posts the information himself manually on the EUWI FWG website;
- ***P-quadrant 2***: The contributor posts the information himself on the EUWI FWG website through some sort of (semi)-automated procedure;
- ***P-quadrant 3***: The information is submitted by the contributor to a core team of the EUWI FWG website and posted manually by this group;
- ***P-quadrant 4***: The information is submitted by the contributor to a core team of the EUWI FWG website and posted by this group through some sort of (semi)-automated procedure.



4.2.2. (Semi)-automated procedures, P-quadrants 2 and 4, refer to any form of automated input of the data from the supplier into the EUWI FWG website system. This can have many different modalities, hence the word semi. Input can be read and stored in the EUWI FWG website database completely automated, in which case no real human intervention is needed. Alternatively, some time consuming manual steps can be automated to create an efficient input process. This is also the main benefit from automation, efficiency, besides the reduction of a dependency on human resources.

4.2.3. There are drawbacks as well, and these are often significant. The exchange of data between two or more computerized systems is called Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) and as a concept it exists already since the early 70-ties of the 20th century. Experiences have shown that EDI is often cumbersome and capital intensive to develop. The main challenge is standardization and the ability and willingness of all parties to agree on a common interchange format. This format not only refers to the syntactical format of the data-fields, it also encompasses the semantical issue. Does the content of a field in one system have the same meaning as the content of a field in the other system? Negotiations to agree on a common denominator and the development of 'translation'-steps to 'bridge' the differences often take a long time and in many cases require considerable investments. Once standardization has been agreed upon, parties regularly experience that this standardization limits their flexibility, making the systems and procedures less adaptable.

4.2.4. In summary, EDI should not be dismissed upfront completely, but its application should be evaluated really critically and thorough analysis or the development of a business case should clearly demonstrate that the benefits – i.e. efficiency – outweigh the drawbacks – i.e. investment and reduction of flexibility.

4.2.5. For the remainder of this report and the advice within, EDI will not be taken into account and data entry will be assumed to be done manually – P-quadrants 1 and 3.

4.3. Options for manual input

4.3.1. Within the realm of manual input, there are two options as demonstrated by P-quadrants 1 and 3. For P-quadrant 1 it is assumed that a user-friendly entry system will be available, allowing the contributor to easily enter the necessary data. Such a data-entry system should have a short learning curve, enabling the contributor to use the system rapidly and effectively without much instruction. This can be accomplished by providing a data-entry system which clearly indicates what should be entered where and which also checks the data entered. P-quadrant 3 might also use such a data-entry system, although the EUWI FWG website team has access to more trained resources and technically skilled people.

4.3.2. In essence, there is a correlation between centralization versus decentralization and the level of ease, intuitiveness and certain aspects of quality control the system must provide. Before this continuum and the various alternative scenarios are developed into more detail, the report will first describe some issues on quality and quality control.

4.4. Quality content

4.4.1. A process of content review has to be established and executed to generate quality content. Quality content assures that users of the website perceive its information as relevant and visit the site regularly. What makes content quality content?

4.4.2. People search for information in order to inform themselves and reduce the uncertainty associated with decisions they have to make. They are faced with situations in which they need to decide upon alternatives and actions. Making choices always involves uncertainty. They gather information to reduce this. Information therefore needs to comply with their needs to reduce it. There are many aspects of information that determine whether the information for a user is ‘fit for purpose’ or ‘quality content. The most important quality aspects are:

- ***Accurate***
  Accuracy means that the information is factual correct. It contains no errors and the statements made are true and reliable.
- ***Complete***
  Completeness guarantees that the information contains no omissions. All the information needed is provided in the content item and no topics are left out or unmentioned. This sometimes means that it is clearly stated in the content item what the item will not deal with.
- ***Timely***
  Timeliness deals with the fact that the information is up to date. A very simple first step is to always provide a date with any piece of content. This can be either the creation date or a review date.
- ***Relevant***
  Relevancy means that the information is appropriate for the purpose of the user. It is hard to achieve if you do not know your audience well enough. In other words, know what your audience wants to learn and know and provide that. This

sounds simple, but practice proves that this is a hard nut to crack. User feedback can be very valuable in this context and regular consultation of users should be contemplated strongly.

- ***Readable***
  Readability means that the style and lay out of the content item are appropriate for the medium through which it is presented. Reading from a book or a magazine is different from reading from the web. Part of this quality aspect also refers to lay-out and navigation of the web site.
- ***Available***
  Available simply means that users can get access to the content and that they do not have to take unnecessary steps in order to get there.
- ***Accessible***
  Accessibility deals with the complexity of the content in relation to the comprehension level of the audience. In other words, acronyms, metaphors and jargon should only be used for audiences who are familiar with it. Also sentences should not be too long or contain too many nested sub-sentences.
- ***Appealing***
  Content should be nicely formatted and attractive for a user to spend time on it. Remember that we are bombarded every day with many messages that draw our attention and we must constantly choose what to spend time on. A nice lay out helps a user to find the information quickly and stay interested.

4.4.3. In summary, the information must be reliable, trustworthy and enhancing the users' learning experience. The last mentioned item is an important one to keep in mind – enhancing the users' learning experience. Information should be provided with the user in mind, what information does he/she need and what for?

4.5. Quality control process

4.5.1. The quality aspects of the information must be addressed by the contributors of the information and the supporting editorial process. The level of effort put into this is a matter of choice.

4.5.2. Content can be offered to audiences solely by the contributor, who takes full responsibility for the quality aspects. Contributions to discussion groups are an example of this. Blogs are another example as are many personal websites. The author of the content is responsible for the quality aspects and users trust the information based on their trust in that particular person. The extent to which the user knows the author in this case, including previous experiences with content from this author, determines the expectation of the user with respect to usability and reliability. Positive experiences add to the trustworthiness and will lead to more frequent use, whereas negative experiences will decrease this.

4.5.3. Alternatively, content can be offered to audiences after a careful editorial process, which safeguards the compliance with the quality aspects. Take for example a scientific journal or books. The initial author writes a piece of content, which is then peer-reviewed and formatted by others in order to address all quality aspects. This process is illustrated by figure 1.

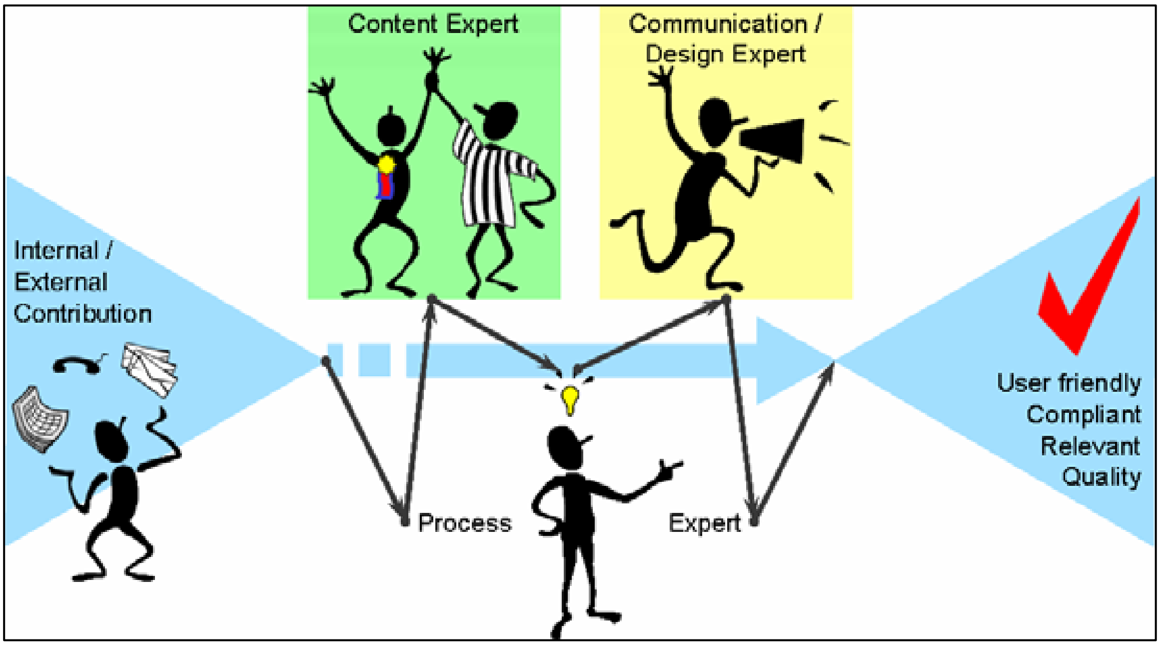


Figure 1: Editorial process

4.5.4. The editorial process consists of the following steps:

- An author creates a piece of content and contributes it to the editorial process
- The Process Expert or Editorial Manager receives the contribution and sends it to a Content Expert
- The Content Expert reviews the contribution and takes responsibility for the following quality aspects:
    a. Accuracy
    b. Completeness
    c. Timeliness
    d. Relevancy
    e. To some extent accessibility
- After reviewing the content is sent back to the Editorial Manager who may send it to the Format Expert
- The Format Experts does not review the content but focuses primarily on the following quality aspects:
    a. Readability
    b. Accessibility
    c. Appeal
- Finally, the Editorial Manager takes responsibility for the publication of the content item through the appropriate channels and also determines the timing of this

4.5.5. During each step of the review process the content item might be send back to the original author for adaptation or additions. After this the process might start anew or continue at the point where it was left. The process might also be extended by involving other experts when necessary or desirable. This all depends on the competency of the actors involved and the level of thoroughness demanded.

4.5.6. In Chapter 3 a short comment was made about the distinction between reflective and remembered knowledge. This is an important distinction that will be explained into more detail here. As mentioned above, users place a certain amount of trust in the information they find and use in their decision processes. This trust is based on their expectation of and experiences in the past with the quality of the content. As can be seen from the previous paragraphs, quality can vary in relation to the quality review process applied. In reflective settings, the quality of the information is directly related to the individual quality of the author of the content. For instance, contributions in forums, blogs and personal websites. In remembered settings, the quality of the information is directly related to the process of editorial review. Examples include a knowledge bank with consolidated information, a scientific journal, the result of research. One could say that in the latter case, the information has been cleansed and converted into a piece of really explicit information.

4.5.7. What matters here is that it is absolutely crystal clear to a user what the nature of the information is that he is using. Is it a personal opinion of an individual author, and hence trust of the information should be based on the personal experience with the original author, or is it a reviewed and scrutinised piece of content, upon which trust can be placed as being almost a hundred percent reliable? The consequence of ambiguity in this respect is that users may trust information as being totally reliable while it is only a personal opinion which could be wrong. If trust is placed on such a piece of content and it proves to be wrong, the level of trust of the user will decrease, potentially for all the content on the web site. Contrary, if the user is aware of the personal nature of the content, and it proves to be wrong, the damage to the image of reliability only concerns the author, not all the content in the site. Distinction between these two types of knowledge or information or content can be made clear in a web site by means of separate sub-environments within the overall navigation of the web site.

4.5.8. Content can be contributed by internal and external sources. Depending on its origin, the purpose of the content and the target audience it may receive a more elaborate review process. Again, compare the difference between content provided by employees on an Intranet for other colleagues versus a top tier scientific publication for external audiences.

4.6. Classification structure

4.6.1. There is one more activity which has to be looked into which is rather hidden in the process. It is an important step in organising the content of the site and making it easier for the user to access it.

4.6.2. Every larger collection of data needs some structure in order to enable a user to find what he needs. This structure is often referred to as a classification scheme. Other words used are taxonomy, thesaurus or ontology[2]. It is a layer of meta-data, consisting of keywords, describing the organisation of the content. These keywords group the information into larger collections of similar information. As such, these keywords

[2] There are differences between these concepts, which go beyond the scope of this report. For the purpose of this report, a simple classification system will be assumed to be sufficient for the user to retrieve what he is looking for.

describe the universe of the topic. Some of these categories have already been identified for the EUWI FWG website, like categories of finance, agency and region/country.

4.6.3. The creation and application of a classification structure needs careful consideration. First, because it is important to adequately reflect the syntax and semantics of the user when he is searching for information on the website. If the selection and meaning of the keywords used throughout the site is different from the keywords chosen by the user, the user will have a hard time finding the relevant information he is looking for. Second, because once a classification structure is adopted and applied it may be hard and time consuming to change it. Obviously, changes and adaptation to the classification structure can be made, but the content of the website will have to be re-evaluated and re-tagged against the new classification system.

4.6.4. Reaching consensus on a classification structure may need a larger group to think about, in order to safeguard that sufficient viewpoints are taken into account and to ensure that the contributors and users of the site agree on a common language for tagging the content. Once the classification structure has been developed, it should be made available on the website for both contributors and users to reference. A good example is given by the FIELD-website, see http://www.gm-unccd.org/English/Field/more.htm#Classification.

4.7. Two options for managing the content of the EUWI FWG website

4.7.1. Management of the content of the EUWI FWG website is the main driver in identifying the different options for the future operation. Various scenarios form a continuum that ranges from a 'free format' approach to a 'strictly controlled' approach.

4.8. Scenario 1 - Free format approach

4.8.1. In the free format approach, a platform is hosted on which individual organizations can contribute and maintain their own content. This means that the contributing organizations are responsible for their own content management.

4.8.2. The main advantages of this approach are:

- Low central costs
- Minimal maintenance by a central organization
- Content remains the responsibility of the individual owning organizations

4.8.3. The main disadvantages of this approach are:

- Content quality may become low and diverse
- Content may easily become outdated
- Different formats and information content, making search and comparisons more difficult for the user
- Development, maintenance and adherence to a central classification system more difficult
- Strong dependence on the individual willingness of the contributing organisations, potentially low number of participating organisations

- Brand and image may become damaged by poor performance of suppliers in response to user demands
- The “market place” would potentially be invalidated since a search function would give such diverse results.

4.9. Scenario 2 - Strictly controlled approach

4.9.1. In the strictly controlled approach, a central governing body or editorial team takes full responsibility for the editorial management of the site and its content. This means that a central staff

- Scans potential organizations for relevant content
- Approaches these organizations to get their content
- Quality reviews the content
- Makes the content available in a comparable format
- Ensures the development, maintenance and adherence to a central classification scheme
- Reviews and updates the content on a regular basis
- Potentially acts as a helpdesk for users of the website

4.9.2. In summary, an editorial group ensures a relevant and up to date website that stimulates usage and interactivity. This in turn will enhance the regular return of users to the website, making it an integral part of their work as a resource for them. This can be extended with a central helpdesk that users of the site can contact to get help in individual cases. This helpdesk can also create FAQ’s.

4.9.3. The main advantages of this approach are:

- A well managed site
- Relevant and up to date content from a potentially large group of contributors
- Maximizes the learning opportunity of the users

4.9.4. The main disadvantages of this approach are:

- In absolute terms, requires more investment
- Content harmonization process can be cumbersome

4.10. Maintenance of the content

4.10.1. So far the description of the process has been focused on the contribution of content. However, once the content is posted on the website, it needs to be regularly reviewed in order to assess that the quality aspects of the content are still adhered to. Information may become outdated or incorrect due to changing circumstances. Therefore a regular review-interval has to be set to assure that the content is kept up to date. Nothing is more damaging to the image of the website as when a user thinks to have found an interesting opportunity only to find out that it does not apply anymore. Such a user might lose his trust and confidence in the content of the site and probably tell others about it.

4.10.2. There are several ways that content can be reviewed periodically. Either the contributor or a central editorial team can schedule dates in a calendar to review all or parts of the content of the website for which it carries ownership. When the date comes up, the content is reviewed using the same or elements of the process that is used for contribution. A more sophisticated way of managing the maintenance of the content of the website is when the system itself notifies the owner of the content that he should review whether the content is still up to date, accurate and relevant. If it is completely outdated, inaccurate or irrelevant, it should be discarded and removed from the system.

4.10.3. Today, many systems provide some form of notification system that can be configured on a content by content basis, depending on the expected ‘life time’ of the content item. Once the notification date for the content is up, the system sends a signal to the content owner who has a certain amount of time to review the content. After this time, when nothing has been done, it is a matter of choice what should happen. Either the content remains on the website with the danger of being outdated, inaccurate and irrelevant, leading potentially to disappointed users. Or the content may be automatically ‘taken off’ the website, by making it hidden, so it does not appear on the website again, until it has been formally reviewed and re-approved.

4.11. A central editorial team

4.11.1. Managing a website, if done properly, is like running a magazine. It needs regular new content, to keep the site attractive for users to return. It needs a consistent format and lay-out, which the user can recognise and will help his navigation through the site and its content. It needs a firm quality control to ensure that users can trust the information provided and not become disappointed by experiencing that they can not rely on it.

4.11.2. These activities can not be left to the contributors. They need a dedicated team to manage on a regular basis. Similar to a magazine publisher, the website needs an editor in charge, often supported by an editorial team. This editor manages the process of content quality review, making sure that new contributions are reviewed content wise and format wise, and seeing to it that existing content is regularly reviewed or removed.

4.11.3. Depending on the nature of the site, the editorial team will have less or more work to manage. A relatively static website with a lot of factual information needs less editorial involvement than a highly dynamic news site.

4.12. Other tasks that could be performed by the editorial team

4.12.1. Obviously, the editorial team can do much more than only running the quality assurance process of the content. Some of these tasks are:

- ***Contribute new content***
  The editorial team can contribute new content themselves, either from a content expertise role or by posting relevant and interesting information found elsewhere.
- ***Manage the classification structure***
  The importance of a good classification structure and its maintenance have already been advocated and the editorial team can play an important role in managing this process.
- ***Perform research***
  The editorial team can do research on selected topics or questions from the field and contribute the outcome of this to the content of the website.

- ***Schedule topics and special content***
  One of the things that keeps a magazine interesting for users and also gives it a certain image or recognisable format is to have thematic issues. A topic is viewed from various perspectives by several authors to provide the reader with a broad overview. These thematic issues need strong planning and coordination to assure that all contributions are available on time and mutually coherent. They need the input from various authors who must be invited to contribute their piece of content.

- ***Polls***
  Polls are a way of soliciting user input. They give insight into what interests people. As such they can be used to improve the experience of users by acting upon the outcomes of it. The editorial team can set up polls regularly on specific topics to get this input from the users of the site.

- ***E-conferences***
  Electronic conferences can be hosted on websites, when the necessary software is installed to make it work. During an E-conference, a group of people discusses a topic, preferably facilitated by one or more facilitators. The editorial team can act as the facilitators of an E-conference. For instance on the question how to measure the impact of donor financing or ways to capture lessons learned from the field. The outcomes of an E-conference can be posted on the web site again, for other visitors to read and learn from.

- ***Newsletters***
  The central editorial team can send out regular newsletters to subscribed members of the web site. A newsletter can contain a variety of information, ranging from a simple digest of latest additions to the web site to selected materials and articles on specific topics, vacancy overviews, other relevant websites and more. The use of a newsletter is a great way to keep in a regular communication with interested users. It may trigger them to visit the web site again, supply their own information, share their knowledge with wider audiences, or forward the newsletter to other interested people who might join the web site as well.

- ***Helpdesk***
  Acting as a helpdesk to the users of the web site can be an important activity of an editorial team. Users can have all sorts of questions. These can be related to the content of the web site, requests for further clarification or questions relating to the central topic of the web site, which are not answered by the content provided. Other questions might be related to the structure of the site and its navigation. Finally, the contributors of content may have all sorts of questions, both content wise as well as technical. A central editorial team can provide services to help and assist.

- ***Statistics***
  Good statistics on the usage of the web site take time to develop. Just raw numbers often provide little insight, they need further analysis. The editorial team can take the time to regularly review the statistics and report on them to the main donors and contributors of the web site. Consequently, they can also suggest or make adaptations to the web site in response to the insights gained from the statistics analysis.

4.13. User management

4.13.1. Instead of supplying all information and functionality on the web site for everyone to see and use, the web site might create a separate environment in which certain content and functionality is provided only after a user has passed a login procedure. In most technical architectures, the platform – both hardware and software – is the same for the public free environment and the more restricted environment. Content and functionality is still provided only once in the web site, avoiding duplication which has the hazard of different versions and outdated materials. In order to get access to this restricted environment, the user will have to sign in. During this signing in the user will have to supply some information about himself that the EUWI FWG could use to identify its audience with more adequacy. This feature also provides the opportunity to have the users of the web site agree to a code of conduct and a privacy statement.

4.13.2. In order to assure that a user can be logged in and remain identified once he is logged in, the system will have to use cookies. A cookie is a small file, identifying the specific session in which the user is logged in, which has to be placed on the computer the user is working on at that moment. The use of cookies is generally accepted. However, it is good custom to reference the use of cookies in a disclaimer on the web site, describing also how and for what purpose the cookies are used.

4.13.3. The use of a restricted environment for which the user has to sign in supports the users' perception that he has access to value adding information and services. It can also be used as a 'barrier', for instance by allowing only signed in users to submit questions to the helpdesk. The helpdesk would than be positioned as a premium service. Other services that might be included into this environment are the subscription to a newsletter, the use of a notification system to alert the user when new or updated content is posted on the web site, the participation in E-conferences and discussion forums, and the access to more detailed analysis and research performed by the central editorial team.

4.14. Cost estimates for different scenarios

4.14.1. The costs of the various alternatives can range significantly. There is a strong correlation between the volume of investment used as input, and the output it can generate. In other words, the investment depends on the ambition level of the output, both in quantity and quality. Therefore, the indicated figures in this Chapter should be considered as targets.

4.14.2. The minimum approach consists of only a platform for contributors to manage their content on. The related costs involve hardware, software, backup operation and some networking and maintenance. The total amount of these costs is estimated by Mr Fleischmann at roughly Euro 30.000 per year.

4.14.3. If the FWG prefers some form of editorial management total costs will go up. Besides a platform to host the website, time is required to perform one or more of the tasks outlined before by a central editorial team. Depending on the ambition level, this will require more or less investment.

4.14.4. Table 1 outlines various alternative approaches, called minimum, maximum and desired. The minimum scenario is considered the bare minimum. A certain amount of time is required to provide a minimum level of quality and responsiveness. On the other end, there is no real maximum, but the figures included state a reasonable maximum expected investment which seems sensible within the current context. Over time, as the site would grow even more and attract more users, this figure may increase. The budget is indicative for 1 year. A sheet available in excel format can be requested to the consultants.

4.14.5. Most tasks identified have a regular and recurring nature. They need to be performed on a daily or weekly basis. The actual performance may change over weeks, depending on the materials provided by third parties, but in general it should be taken as a rule of thumb that content management needs continuous attention and work. This explains the column Units, which indicates some form of regular time spend on the activity per time interval of either a week (w), month (m) or quarter (q).

Table 1: Cost estimates for different scenarios

Activity	Units (min) Type	Min	Max	Desired Suggested	Cost/unit Euro	Total Min	Euro Max	Desired
Total costs						117780	330360	231560
Content Management	Time					29000	91800	55000
Manage contributions	0,5 d/w	24	48	36	500	12000	24000	18000
Manage out-of-date materials	0,5 d/m	6	12	6	500	3000	6000	3000
Find new information	1 d/m	12	24	24	500	6000	12000	12000
Review websites	1 d/q	4	8	6	500	2000	4000	3000
Write/review/quality assure content		0	40	20	650	0	26000	13000
Write reviews (websites, mechanisms etc)		0	12	0	650	0	7800	0
Editorial calendaring / thematic management		0	12	0	500	0	6000	0
Publish news information	0,5 d/w	24	48	36	500	12000	24000	18000
Publish events information	0,5 d/2w	12	12	12	500	6000	6000	6000
Case Studies / Best Practices	Cost / Case					18000	54000	36000
Identification / review / qa		6	18	12	3000	18000	54000	36000
Discussion forum	Time					12000	24000	0
Moderation	0,5 d/w	24	48	0	500	12000	24000	0
Classification system	Time					8000	8000	8000
Building		12	12	12	500	6000	6000	6000
Maintenance		4	4	4	500	2000	2000	2000
Promotion / dissemination	Out of pocket					21500	34000	26000
Brochure		1	1	1	5000	5000	5000	5000
Flyers		1	1	1	5000	5000	5000	5000
E-Newsletter	4 per yr - time	4	12	4	1000	4000	12000	4000
CD-Roms	1 per yr	1	1	1	3000	3000	3000	3000
Visit events and meetings	Travel excl time	3	6	6	1500	4500	9000	9000
Helpdesk	Time					6000	30000	18000
Answer questions	0,5 d/2w	12	24	12	500	6000	12000	6000
Match demand and supply		0	12	6	500	0	6000	3000
Find information in response to questions		0	12	12	500	0	6000	6000
Support applications		0	12	6	500	0	6000	3000
Functionality						0	42000	42000
Maintenance		0	20	20	700	0	14000	14000
Enhancements		0	40	40	700	0	28000	28000
Daily operation technical						23280	46560	46560
Hardware and software	Licenses	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Operation and backups etc	lump-sum/q	4	8	8	1500	6000	12000	12000
Networking	1d/m	12	24	24	760	9120	18240	18240
Conversion of received information	1d/m	12	24	24	680	8160	16320	16320

4.15. Name of the website

4.15.1. Choosing a name for the website comprises two elements. There is the overall name with which the web site is branded, for instance by appearing in the top of the browser screen. Another name is the url of the web site. This is the web address and can be shorter than the actual name of the web site. For instance, the website may be called Water Finance Guide, while its url is something like www.waterfunds.eu.

4.15.2. A short research demonstrated that there are still many names available, of which waterfunds appears to be one. Only www.waterfunds.com seems registered, but all other options are still available, including www.waterfunds.eu, www.waterfunds.org, www.waterfunds.net, www.waterfunds.info and a whole suite of country specific occurrences.

4.15.3. There is no name that can be suggested at this moment that would automatically generate high raking results in search engines. As touched upon before in Chapter 3 this is because of the ranking mechanisms of the search engines and it hardly depends on the name. Therefore, any name will do, as long as it is easily remembered and thus rather short but descriptive. Generating high ranking results in search engines is much more the work of technicians who have to tweak and add the metadata and other relevant items on an HTML page to 'serve' the ranking mechanisms of the search engines. The name www.waterfunds.eu is suggested as url and the name of the website could be Water Finance Guide which has been accepted by all the respondents of the questionnaire mentioned in section 5.

5. Cooperation possibilities

5.1. The questionnaire

5.1.1. The questionnaire (see annex 1 and 2) was sent to about 110 key finance and water sector organisations, of which seventeen responded. While 15.5% seems a low response rate, it is actually a fairly average response rate for questionnaires. It was a challenge to get the contact information of the right persons within large organisations. Furthermore, some key organisations did respond: UNDP, IADB, DGIS, GWP, WWC, PIDG.

5.1.2. The following organisations responded to the questionnaire:

Cities Alliance*, Development Bank of Japan, DGIS/Netherlands Water Partnership (NWP)*, Fondation Ecosite et Développement Durable, Ford Foundation, Global Water Partnership (GWP)*, InterAmerican Development Bank (IADB)*, INCA*, Nederlandse Waterschapsbank NV, Private Infrastructure Development Group (PIDG)*, SNS Asset Management, Triodos International Fund Management BV, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)*, WaterAid, Women for Water Partnership*, Water Partners International* and World Water Council (WWC)*.

* stands for the organisations interested in collaborating on the finance guide. The other organisations would not because they do not provide financing mechanisms or do so in their own country only.

5.1.3. The questionnaires returned provided interesting insights on the four issues highlighted: 1) general questions 2) content management on finance mechanisms 3) helpdesk and interactivity and 4) technology.

5.2. General questions

5.2.1. Most respondents reacted very positively on the idea of sharing and publishing information on the financing mechanisms they provide. They are equally keen on participating to the establishment of the finance guide, even though the questionnaire did not allow to further assess the kind of assistance these organisations are ready to provide.

5.2.2. In terms of content available on the financing mechanisms, most of them mention the geographic focus and the types of projects and activities eligible for funding. Some have additional features such as applicant eligibility criteria, assistance for complying with donor criteria, glossary etc.

5.2.3. Respondents of this questionnaire took the efforts to respond, implying that they were in principle interested in this guide. In this respect, results may not be quite representative, but for the sake of forming a group of interest around the guide, the responding organisations are natural allies.

5.3. Content management on finance mechanisms

5.3.1. Most respondents belonging to large organisations have a dedicated team / officer in charge of updating the content on finance mechanisms, though the time spent on updating information seems to vary from very little time (DGIS, PIDG) to constant upkeep (Cities Alliance, WWC).

5.3.2. Likewise, most organisations rely on the willingness of their workforce to update information on financing mechanisms. Only in the case of Cities Alliance, IADB and

WWC is the function standardised. As a result, information is updated rather occasionally (once or twice a year) when it is not a permanent function.

5.3.3. Only three organisations (IADB, Women for Water Partnership and WWC) mentioned that they use a classification system to sort information on financing mechanisms.

5.4. Helpdesk and interactivity

5.4.1. Of all respondents, only PIDG, Women for Water Partnership and WWC have a regular helpdesk. The latter usually is accessible at office hours, even though one organisation mentioned that, outside of working hours, its staff would respond to emails, but only on a voluntary basis. In the case of the World Water Council, there is quite a team working on this helpdesk, combining expertise in communication, web management and finance.

5.4.2. Most organisations keep their audience / customers informed by means of newsletter (yet, the newsletter usually focuses on quite a few other issues). Within UNDP, information is spread through communities of practice, reaching a potential audience of over 3000 people.

5.4.3. In spite of these information-sharing platforms, there seems to be no regular process to keep the audience informed. Postings happen on a fairly random basis, or according to the publishing frequency of the newsletter (monthly or quarterly in most cases).

5.4.4. As for cooperation with other organisations, most respondents are indeed in contact with other stakeholders to keep track of financing opportunities. They all work with typical funding organisations (bilateral donors, UN agencies, Embassies, Governments but also NGOs).

5.5. Technology

5.5.1. All organisations mentioned manage their own website. Hosting is as frequently outsourced as it is managed in-house.

5.5.2. Respondents did not provide many details as to the applications running on their website but two could indicate that the data are exportable in XML.

5.6. Possible organisations to host and manage the website

5.6.1. Two organisations have thus far expressed an interest to discuss in further detail hosting and managing the web site for the EUWI FWG. These organisations are the WWC and IRC.

5.6.2. The World Water Council has expressed a clear interest in hosting and managing the Finance Guide website provided associated costs will be covered. The EUWI Financing Guide is a good complement to their own website 'financing water for all' which has been done jointly with the Global Water Partnership (GWP). The WWC network may also facilitate the updating of information. GWP has been working closely with the WWC on financing issues and GWP thus supports the WWC in managing the website and would rather see themselves as an active partner of WWC.

5.6.3. IRC has equally expressed a keen interest in hosting and managing the Finance Guide website provided associated costs will be covered. Costs for the infrastructure can be relatively low, because the web site could use the shared architecture that IRC has created for the water and sanitation sector to host web sites. IRC is internationally recognised as a centre of excellence in knowledge sharing. It has a good number of partners in the South with whom it collaborates closely, of which some use the same architecture for their own website and classification structure. IRC has recently updated the InterWATER thesaurus, providing a good addition to the Finance classification structure. It's newsletters like Source and its publications reach a substantial number of people in the sector. Finally, IRC has great experience with managing editorial processes.

5.7. Content sharing and search harmonization

5.7.1. The topic of sharing content through electronic means was already touched upon in Chapter 4.2, where the origin of EDI was described. It was concluded that for now, EDI should not be of prime concern or importance. The success of the FWG web site will, certainly at the start, depend on good advocacy, a good glossary and a limited, quality controlled dataset. Here the adagio 'less is more' counts. Once the foundation is solid, the process of updating the content collection is organised and volatility volumes become clearer, technical solutions to share content between the guide and organisations offering mechanisms seem more meaningful. Also, because both parties can than better judge the potential efficiency gain in relation to the running operating costs of the existing situation.

5.7.2. Harmonising search engines is an ambiguous topic. It has its relevance and in the long run, good listings can help, but quality content management drives usage much more than good rankings. Furthermore, search engine optimization is a rather technical topic, to be left to the webmasters of a web site. There is no 'single shot' approach to this topic. Search engines vary in the way they come up with results and present them to the users. There are so called Directory Services, Crawlers and Paid Listings. For more information: http://searchenginewatch.com/webmasters/.

5.7.3. Initially, the web site of the FWG should be linked to from various important key players in the sector, advocated through news media like Source (IRC) and Access (WSP) and promoted on a more individual basis. The target group of the web site is not that big or diverse and an effective and targeted campaign will render much more effect than a 'fight' for high rankings in a generic, global search engine.

5.8. Examples from the energy and health sectors

5.8.1. A thorough investigation of financing guides from other sectors revealed that the energy and health sectors have not yet put emphasis on providing a compact guide to information on financing opportunities yet or managed to do so. At the time of completing this report, the Energy House (www.energyhouse.com/) had found around 80 good websites on financing the energy sector and was compiling a guide for access to those websites.

5.8.2. The study team has investigated other sectors and came up with the following interesting list of financing guides:

- Cities Alliance: Financing for Cities and the Urban poor / municipal finance task force – www.mftf.org
- Community Development Finance Association (UK trade association for Community Development Finance Institutions) - Finding Finance Directory - http://www.cdfa.org.uk/cmframe.php?prmid=4100

- Dutch Foreign Affairs Ministry (MinBuZa): Subsidies - http://www.minbuza.nl/default.asp?CMS_ITEM=0F5A196F00E34CD5A5BA454EB0832B74X1X48590X36&CMS_NOCOOKIES=YES
- EU / DG Environment: Handbook for environmental project funding - http://europa.eu.int/comm/environment/funding/pdf/handbook_funding.pdf
- EU Development Finance / EUFORIC - www.euforic.org/detail_page.phtml?page=actors_eufinance
- FIELD (Financing Information Engine on Land Degradation) - http://www.epa.gov/epaoswer/non-hw/recycle/finguide/
- IADF (International Association of Development Funds) - www.developmentfunds.org/pubs.htm
- RUAF (Resource centres on Urban Agriculture and Food security): Donor database - http://www2.database.ruaf.org/donordb/appflow/step_01.asp
- Wastes: Financing guide for recycling businesses. Investment forums, meetings and networks - http://www.epa.gov/epaoswer/non-hw/recycle/finguide/
- World Water Council: Action cases Financing water for all - http://www.worldwatercouncil.org/index.php?id=452&L=0

These examples proved that not one sector has managed to provide useful, up-to-date information on funding opportunities for its stakeholders. The most comprehensive and user-friendly guides in the selection above are the EU handbook for environmental project funding, the FIELD marketplace and RUAF's donor database.

5.9. About the EU Handbook for environmental project funding

5.9.1. Contrary to the FIELD website, this EU guide is not a web-based service but indeed a handbook, available as PDF from the European Commission website.

5.9.2. Pros of this handbook are: a very clear overview of over 30 EU funding channels, with extensive information on the objectives, activities financed, eligibility criteria, contact details etc. for each of the overview sheets and some basic information on the guide, its intended audience, its structure etc.

5.9.3. On the downside, the guide is a printable handout therefore it is not interactive, and it only contains information on EU funding mechanisms.

5.10. About FIELD

5.10.1. The FIELD website has a unique functionality: a marketplace where funding organisations and project implementers can look for each other. The search functionality is extremely clear and provides specialised sub-menus, depending on the type of information sought (search by funder / project / analysis / other data).

5.10.2. Another excellent point of the FIELD guide lies in its interactive features: users can post their comments or add information themselves, thereby improving the quality and accuracy of its data. FIELD further provides information on the funding organisations too, making it easier to understand the funding logic of each donor.

5.10.3. Finally, the FIELD guide also provides information in different languages (though not the search engine) and all of the above through a very clear and clean web interface making it by far the most user-friendly of all guides investigated.

5.11. About RUAF's donor database

5.11.1. RUAF targets urban agriculture and food safety stakeholders but is not limited to these. A real database, RUAF invites users to select a keyword (out of a list of 212 such as 'capacity building', 'agroforestry', 'education' etc.) and a region (out of 16 choices) and returns a list of applicable funding mechanisms.

5.11.2. The search system is fairly simple and clean and the results' page is also encouraging. Furthermore, the RUAF database has an extensive overview sheet containing information on the donor organisation and the (funding) programme or sub-programme to which the mechanism belongs, the target group, contact details, examples of projects, application procedures and criteria. This makes it the most complete overview sheet of all guides analysed.

5.11.3. On the other hand, however complete the overview sheet template may be, more often than not it contains little information. Among other drawbacks, the text in the overview sheet is sometimes displayed as one large unreadable text block. Furthermore, the list of keywords for the search engine is interesting but no glossary provides explanations on what is meant by each of these terms, making the search prone to focus errors. And finally, the navigation on the website leads to opening several new windows, a not-so-user-friendly feature.

5.12. About the other financing guides

- The Cities Alliance guide features a long list of mechanisms and provides accuracy ratings for the results of its search engine and sorting options for the search. However, the financial jargon makes this site slightly user-unfriendly. The search by topic could be improved.
- The Community Development Finance Association has a number of search options (by region, by member type, by alphabetical order etc. Layouts are excellent and really help focus on the search for funding mechanisms. Nonetheless, the website contains very little information on each of the mechanisms featured.
- The Dutch Foreign Affairs Ministry website could be improved to a great extend: existing layouts are confusing, very little information about financing is available and it is only available in Dutch.
- The EU Development Finance / EUFORIC website has basic features (some background information, resources and news) but it is displayed in very compact text blocks making for awkward reading. Moreover, no search option is available.
- IADF (International Association of Development Funds) provides information on financing in general but not really on mechanisms. There is no clear overview on this website.
- The Wastes financing guide for recycling business lists organisations managing funding mechanisms and it offers help to identify sources of capital and to strengthen one's profile to attract funds. In spite of the wealth of information featured, the lack of overview does not make the selection of funds a straightforward process.
- Finally, the World Water Council (WWC) proposes case studies and some information about the framework from which it tackles financing. It also provides a

useful glossary. The case studies summaries are well written, but the website does not offer any specific search functionality.

5.12.1. Looking at the financing guides above, here is a selection of good ideas to keep in mind for this Water Finance Guide:

- Interactive features: comment, submit new data, discussion forums;
- Possibilities to access other versions of the guide (print, CD-Rom etc.) + helpdesk;
- A search engine with accurate/relevant results;
- Search by topic, by most recent, in alphabetical order;
- Availability in different languages;
- Information on the organisation behind the funding mechanism. In particular the funding strategy of these organisations would help to understand to what extent their funding programmes are sustainable and what other priorities these organisations may have;
- Time span of the funding mechanism, if available;
- Case studies.

5.13. Improving the information available in the Water Financing Guide

5.13.1. Concerning the improvement of the content of the Water Financing Guide, the study team has made an extensive search on grants and other aid-based funds. Some sources of funds have been included that might provide a combination of grants and soft loans. However, some of the grants require co-financing by the applicant, which can be as high as 50%. Annex 3 provides a summary of the information requested.

5.13.2. This additional information has been collected in the context of a Finance Guide for the Water Resources Coordination Unit, ECOWAS in Burkina Faso who has requested IRC – International Water and Sanitation Centre – to compile a document with “fact-sheets” of possible programmes and funds available to the water sector. This document has the financial support of The Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA) and authorisation for sharing the information with the EUWI has been granted. ECOWAS and DANIDA should be acknowledged as contributors to the content available in the website.

5.13.3. The guide is aimed at, but it is not exclusive to West African-based organisations looking for grants and/or soft loans to finance projects and programmes focusing on domestic water and sanitation, Integrated Water Resource Management (IWRM), wastewater management and/or irrigation. Overview sheets of these additional financing mechanisms are available in annex 3.