# General Guidelines for Developing a Knowledge Bank

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Farmers require access to credible relevant knowledge. The following steps outline the process to develop an online Knowledge Bank to provide such knowledge.

**Goal of a knowledge bank project**: Provide credible, relevant information to those helping farmers.

**Key Characteristics (See Figure)**
1. **Quality content.** How will you ensure that materials are credible and relevant (both in terms of format and content)?
2. **Sustainable delivery.** How will you ensure that both the content and the online resource are maintained, updated and sustained?
3. **Used resource (Application).** How will you link with end-users to get feedback for improvement of both the content and the delivery mechanisms?

**Example site**: e-Afghan Ag http://eafghanag.ucdavis.edu

**Project implementation requirements**

**Project Driver**. Identify someone passionate about the project who is committed to making sure it succeeds with support from their institute or organization management.

**Sustainability.** How will the project be maintained, updated and sustained? What happens if the project driver leaves?

**Key Characteristics (**See the following pages for more detail.)
1. **Content** – Must provide credible, relevant, demand-driven content
2. **Delivery** – Need appropriate material delivered in an appropriate form through an easily accessible channel.
   **Note**: While we use the term delivery, this is meant as a two way communication process.
3. **Application** – The process must include linkages to the end users for feedback on emerging needs plus feedback on content usefulness and delivery efficiency.
   **Why?** Always ask, "Why someone would use my site? Why would they do what I suggest? Why is this site needed?"

# 1. Content – ensuring quality

| Element | Consideration | Who responsible |
|---|---|---|
| Audience | **Focus.** Clearly identify who is the audience and what is the information they need.<br>Start with the audience in mind.  Have an understanding of both the system users and the ones they are serving.<br>What are the needs and circumstances and what is the access to the tool? | |
| Needs driven | What is the information the audience needs and can use? How are needs of both the intermediaries and the target audience identified? | |
| Credible and relevant solutions | Is the information from a credible tested source?<br>Are solutions proven under the expected farmer conditions? | |
| Material development | Ensure each message is clear, simple, practical and doable.<br>What is the appropriate level of material for the audience (in terms of language used and content)?<br>Have a clear naming system for files. | |
| Acknowledgement | Acknowledge all those contributing – builds support and willingness to contribute. | |
| Material form | What forms of materials are best developed to reach the audience (PPT, FS, video, etc.)? | |
| Material – value addition | What extra does your product add to the information already available – how does it make it easier for people to access and apply information?<br>What are the incentives to use the system – are there other (better) options out there? | |
| Material review | What is the process to ensure materials are credible, relevant, and easily understood by users? | |
| Sign-off | Who has the final say in terms of material being approved?<br>Identify subject matter experts. | |

## 2. Delivery – building two-way communication

| Element | Consideration | Who responsible |
|---|---|---|
| User conditions | Does the delivery technology match with the access options of the users? Do you need material available in different forms – written, CD/DVD and/or web? | |
| Building trust in source | How will beneficiaries and intermediaries learn of the resource and why or how will they learn to trust it? | |
| Interface development | You need to develop and maintain an intuitive easy to navigate (with search option) interface. **Simplicity.** Keep site simple and intuitive – include a search option. | |
| Server management | Who will manage the server? | |
| File management (naming, uploading) | Who will manage the files, including different formats, backup, naming, and uploading? | |
| Accuracy | Have a mechanism to ensure links are active and information is correct. Broken links quickly reduce site credibility. | |
| Linkage to other ICT options (radio, cell, video…) | Material delivery has to consider both new and traditional delivery channels. Materials have to be suitable for all approaches. | |
| Promotion | How will the site be promoted and advertised (keeping in mind the need to build trust)? | |

### 3. Application – ensuring relevance and use

| Element | Consideration | Who responsible |
|---|---|---|
| Linked to users | Make sure the project is linked to those who are using the information and that they provide feedback on content, format, and ease of use. | |
| Feedback | You'll need a mechanism to collect and respond to feedback on:<br>• Content (Message and form)<br>• Interface<br>• Emerging needs | |
| **Be open to criticism** | Listen openly to feedback. You do not have to accept all suggestions, but evaluate if there is a valid point to be made.  If so, use it to improve your system. | |