Identifying information needs

The purpose of a management information system is to provide appropriate, relevant and timely data for informed policy making and programme management.

The identification of what information is required by each type of user must be undertaken.

A crucial step in the development of a NFE-MIS is the identification of information needs.

One of the outcomes of the Diagnostic Study will be the identification of information needs.
Information needs are different
- according to the level at which information users are operating (national or sub-national) and
- the type of decision they take (planning and strategic, management and supervision, operational, recipients of programmes etc)
- macro level (policy, planning, strategy development),
- intermediate level (management and control), and
- micro level (operations and recipients of programmes).

Educational policy makers and planners
- Information needs for an accurate analysis of the current situation and past trends
  - to define and quantify possible future developments
  - to set development objectives
  - to define policies to be pursued to achieve these objectives
Programme managers require information for
- for the planning, monitoring and evaluation of activities,
- resource allocations, and
- management of human resources.

The actual project/course manager requires
- more detailed information on inputs, process and outputs of programmes,
- detailed budgetary information,
- impact of the programmes etc.

Moreover, there are other information users.
Communities, and learners, which require information on the kind of NFE opportunities offered, whether they match current learning needs and how to access these NFE activities.

Educators would require information on educational and pedagogical issues.
**Types of Users**

- Policy makers at national level (government level);
- Planners at national level (government level);
- Administrators at national and sub-national level (government level);
- Providers and Sponsors at national and sub-national level;
- Programme managers at organisational level of the providing institution/agency;
- NFE Course managers/coordinators at the implementation level;
- Community;
- Educators;
- Learners.

**Information they ask**

- What are the targets and objectives set for the NFE sub-sector?
- What is the current situation in comparison to targets?
- What are existing problems and issues?
- What are the levels of demand for different types of NFE opportunities?
- Who and where are the potential learners?
- Where and what are existing NFE opportunities?
- Does supply match demand? What are the gaps, problems and possible solutions?
- What are the levels and patterns of participation? Who participates?
Information they ask

- What are the past and current levels of resource inputs into NFE activities?
- How efficiently and effectively have resource inputs been utilised?
- What was the learning and training impact in terms of personal growth and well-being, employment, and general socio-economic-cultural development?
- What measures and actions could be taken in order to solve the problems, coordinate the NFE activities, promote support to them, increase participation, and improve their relevance and impact on overall development?

Process toward better decision making

- Policy Objectives
- Research Questions
- Data collection
- Production of data outputs (raw data)
- Data analysis and interpretation
- Indicators
Fulfilling information needs

- There is a great diversity of information needs.
- Not all information needs can be answered by NFE-MIS.
- Other data sources to obtain all the data.
- Not all data that you will have identified as an information need can be obtained.
- It is recommended to restrict the information you collect to the most important and relevant data required.
- Draw up a priority list of information needs.

Information needs vs. data needs

- Should not confuse information needs which relate to policy and programme objectives and
- the information or data required to calculate each indicator.

- Policy and programme objective
- Information needs
- Indicators
- Data needs
There are 4 diagnostic study tools have been developed to identify the information need:

- **TOOL 1**: Outline of a study on the national NFE policy framework.
- **TOOL 2**: Survey to review the national conceptual framework for NFE.
- **TOOL 3**: Guide for in-depth interviews to identify information needs per information user and to establish an inventory of existing data and data sources as well as to identify existing NFE information systems at sub-national level.
- **TOOL 4**: Focus Group Discussion Guide to review the NFE-MIS questionnaires.

**Identifying Information needs per information user**

- What are the main information needs at the level of policy makers?
- What are the main information needs at the level of planners?
- What are the main information needs at the level of providers and sponsors?
- What are the main information needs at the level of programme managers and NFE course managers/coordinators?
- What are the main information needs at the level of the community?
- What are the main information needs at the level of educators?
- What are the main information needs at the level of learners?
- Establish a priority list of information needs per information user

*Let discuss in your country context*
Seven prototype questionnaires have been developed based on extensive pilot work in several countries (Module 5 of the handbook).

Still crucial to go through the process of identifying information needs per information user.

Need to review these prototype questionnaires and evaluate if they correspond to the specific information needs of country (national/sub-national) context.

Adapt the prototype questionnaires to suit the need.