

3.1 INFORMATION NEEDS AND PERCEPTIONS

1. Information Needs

- In both groups, participants stated they always need information for 2 main reasons:
 - 1) their markets are in a constant state of flux, and
 - 2) they change markets with varying degrees of frequency.
- In both groups, participants emphasized throughout the discussions that they usually need "specific" information.
 - Francophones and anglophones both talked about information relating to future business: including profiles of potential customers, partners, and providers.
 - Both also wanted information about competitors and competitors' products or services -- to know who is doing what in their particular markets.
 - Other informational needs related to service and support for their exporting endeavors, included information about:
 - banking, transportation, customs, laws related to the tax system, grant information, and any constraints they might have to face, e.g. whether a certain type of equipment was available in a particular market or location.
- While exporters in this study said they need information at all stages of their export activities, the initial planning phases were the most important -- they needed information to help them decide where to export and to help them develop the project.
- Participants in both groups had difficulty identifying the most important information. When the question was asked, it generally drew blank stares. Most couldn't prioritize in this way.
 - However, some francophones mentioned the client's solvency would be essential.