NIEM Engagement Process: *Data Collection Tool*

Overview

This Data Collection Tool is intended to guide the facilitator in researching the organization's information sharing and exchange activities and conducting stakeholder interviews. Interview and research response and results are used to complete the other NEP tools, **NIEM Readiness Assessment** and **NIEM Cost Model**.

Information Exchange Activity Title:

Brief Description:

Other Exchange Details	
Exchange Frequency	
Involves Cross-Domain Exchanges?	
Estimated Number of Exchange Partners?	
Data Elements Already Exist in NIEM?	
Exchange Turnaround Time?	
Exchange Automation?	

1 Business Need

The business need of an organization can be defined as its information sharing imperative. An organization's awareness of its current state of information sharing, understanding of the need for change, and a common agreement as to the desired end state are necessary to determine if NIEM can help to achieve information sharing and exchange goals and objectives.

1.1 - Vision	A clear understanding of the organization's information sharing objectives that is shared across all relevant stakeholders, both internal and external to that organization. The vision establishes the overarching purpose of the initiative.

- What does the organization/program hope to achieve by establishing this information exchange?
- Is there a clearly defined vision?
- Are all stakeholders on board with this vision?

Response	
Source(s)	

1.2 - Value	A shared understanding of the benefits of the information sharing activities to the organization and relevant stakeholders. This may include both qualitative and quantitative metrics that support the business case for the initiative.

- What are the specific benefits the organization/program hopes to achieve by establishing this information exchange?
- Are there clearly defined metrics including goals, targets, and baselines? What are they?
- Are these benefits inclusive of all the stakeholders?

Response	
Source(s)	

1.3 - Strategic Priority Alignment	Rules, memoranda or guidelines that govern or influence the information sharing and exchange activities of an organization. Existing policies and standards should be understood by stakeholders and considered as information sharing and exchange activities are conducted. This may include standards or guidelines developed internally to an organization or externally (domain specific).

- How strongly aligned is this exchange initiative in relation to the organization/program's mission objectives and strategic priorities?
- How is this further evidenced by funding priorities and system/exchange visibility?

Response	
Source(s)	

1.4 - Policies and Standards	Rules, memoranda or guidelines that govern or influence the information sharing and exchange activities of an organization. Existing policies and standards should be understood by stakeholders and considered as information sharing and exchange activities are conducted. This may include standards or guidelines developed internally to an organization or externally (domain specific).

- What are the policies/standards/regulations surrounding this information exchange?
- How are they conducive to this information exchange?

Response	
Source(s)	

2 Stakeholder Community

Stakeholder community refers to the internal and external stakeholders involved in an information sharing and exchange initiative. Internal stakeholders may include program leadership, technical architects, business owners, project managers and implementers. External stakeholders may include information sharing partners and other organizations with a common mission interest. Establishing clear roles and responsibilities and engaging these stakeholders in an effective and timely manner will facilitate NIEM adoption.

Who/what groups comprise the stakeholder community?

2.1 - Executive Support	Strong executive support demonstrates that there is political goodwill to foster the success of the initiative.

- What is the level of executive support for this information exchange?
- How knowledgeable are senior executives about the details of this specific exchange?

Response	
Source(s)	

2.2 - Program Champion	An established leader who can offer direction, coordination, and facilitation among the stakeholder groups in the information exchange initiative. Program champions help establish credibility and authority throughout the initiative, including conflict resolution.

- Has there been an established program champion among the stakeholders for this initiative?
- How effective is the program champion in directing, coordinating, and facilitation among the relevant stakeholders?

Response	
Source(s)	

2.3 - Personnel Skills and Training	Availability of skilled personnel and accessibility of relevant training to support the information sharing and exchange initiative.

- Have relevant skills and personnel been identified to accomplish the information exchange?
  - ○ ***Business skills*** *may include project planning, communication/outreach, etc.*
  - ○ ***Technical skills*** *may include service-oriented architecture (SOA), XML, enterprise architecture, etc.*
- Is there training available to help accomplish this information exchange and is it available to those who may need it to carry out the initiative? For example: NIEM Technical Implementers Course, NIEM Business Owners Course, etc.

Response	
Source(s)	

2.4 - Community Engagement and Ownership	Information sharing partners and stakeholders may be involved in the initiative by providing feedback, input, and updates to the initiative as needed. A high degree of involvement shows that stakeholders are interested in the purpose and success of the initiative

- Has the stakeholder community around this information exchange been completely identified?
- How are they engaged in this information sharing initiative? Do they provide feedback, input, and updates to it?
- What is the sense of ownership among the different stakeholder groups? Are they very active in providing feedback and show a strong interest in the success of the initiative?

Response	
Source(s)	

2.5 - Communication	Regular communication between stakeholders and formalized structures for communication will increase stakeholder awareness of initiative activities and facilitate community engagement.

- What communication structure is in place to support the information exchange initiative?
- Is there a formal structure whereby stakeholders can communicate across the stakeholder groups at a regular interval?
- Does the information exchange owner provide regular updates to the different stakeholder groups or is it more ad-hoc?

Response	
Source(s)	

2.6 - Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)/Memorandum of Agreement (MOA)	A documented structure, scope, and purpose of the information sharing and exchange initiative. The MOA/MOU is a legally binding agreement that may include usage agreements, sharing agreements, and minimum security requirements.

- Are there any MOUs or MOAs in place between stakeholders of the information exchange?
- How are the structure, scope, and purpose of the information exchange defined in the MOU/MOA?

Response	
Source(s)	

3 Planning Process

The planning process for an information sharing and exchange initiative should address timelines, resource requirements, deliverables, and potential risks. An established plan for information sharing and exchange provides direction and enables coordination throughout the development and implementation of the initiative.

3.1 - Information Exchange Definition	A clear definition of the information sharing and exchange initiative that addresses requirements, resources and objectives that will help to carry out the initiative through all phases of implementation (e.g., a charter).
• Is there a clear definition for this information sharing and exchange initiative? • How does it address requirements, resources, and objectives? • Do the stakeholders understand and accept this exchange definition?	
Response	
Source(s)	

3.2 - Standards Adoption	Selection and acceptance of a common standard to support the information sharing and exchange initiative. Effective and efficient information sharing is enabled by the use of standards.
• Is there a selected standard to support this information sharing and exchange initiative or are stakeholders in process of identifying the standard? • Has NIEM been selected or discussed?	
Response	
Source(s)	

3.3 - Risk Management	A plan for identifying risks that could undermine the success of the information sharing and exchange initiative. Creating contingency plans and monitoring risks such as funding cuts, scope creep and staff turnover helps to enable continuity of operations.

- What is the risk management plan for this information exchange?
- How are risks such as funding, scope creep, and staff turnover monitored, tracked, and mitigated?

Response	
Source(s)	

3.4 - Sustainability	Developing a plan that accounts for the human and financial resources needed to support and maintain the information sharing and exchange initiative beyond initial implementation. Long term vision and planning illustrates commitment to the initiative's success.

- Have long-term human and financial resources been identified and secured to support the long-term operation and maintenance of this information exchange?
- What roles have been identified to support this exchange?

Response	
Source(s)	

3.5 - Funding	Developing a plan that accounts for the human and financial resources needed to support and maintain the information sharing and exchange initiative beyond initial implementation. Long term vision and planning illustrates commitment to the initiative's success.

- Have funds been allocated and/or allotted to develop this information exchange?
- Have funds been allocated and/or allotted to maintain this information exchange in the long-term?
- How are these funds spread between human capital versus other operations and maintenance costs (hardware/software)?

Response	
Source(s)	

4 Technical Capabilities

Technical capabilities refer to the current state and desired future state of an organization's information sharing and exchange infrastructure. An organization should first analyze its current technical landscape and ability to support information sharing and exchange before envisioning/planning for their desired future state. Having a clear understanding of the current and future states will enable an organization to determine the steps needed to achieve its desired information sharing and exchange capabilities.

4.1 - Impact Analysis	An assessment of the effects that information sharing and exchange will have on the current system architecture. Additional research and analysis should be conducted to determine how to seamlessly transition to the future state of the system architecture.
• Has any analysis been conducted to identify how the change in the current architecture will be impacted? • How has the transition to a new architecture to handle the adoption of NIEM been discussed within the organization?	
Response	
Source(s)	

4.2 - Target Architecture	A conceptualization of the future state infrastructure supporting the information sharing and exchange initiative. Planning the hardware, software, and network requirements will allow for continuous operations, both during transition and execution.

- Has future state architecture needed for NIEM adoption been discussed and identified?
- What were the effects on hardware, software, and network requirements?
- How is the future architecture going to be accepted throughout the organization and stakeholders involved in the information sharing environment?

Response	
Source(s)	

4.3 - Standards Implementation	Stakeholders have experience or relevant skills with information sharing and exchange standards and execution, particularly using NIEM.

- Is there any experience within the organization and specifically by those supporting this initiative in utilizing information sharing and exchange standards?
- Was there any NIEM-related experience?
- Is the stakeholder community willing to develop NIEM-conformant exchanges?
- How will the community be educated regarding the information sharing and exchange standards used in NIEM?

Response	
Source(s)	

4.4 - Data Storage	The information sharing and exchange data should be stored and formatted in a repository where it can be queried to successfully execute the initiative.

- How is the data required in this information exchange structured and stored?
- Is the data stored in a centrally managed repository?
- How is data quality and accuracy maintained?
- What is the volume of data in your repository?
- What is the growth rate of the data?

Response	
Source(s)	

4.5 - Data Access	Stakeholders should be ready and willing to share their data, making it available and accessible to their approved information sharing and exchange partners.

- How is the data required for this exchange accessed by the stakeholders?
- What are some other data components that would make this exchange more effective and are your stakeholders making that information more accessible?

Response	
Source(s)	

4.6 - Data Transmission	Stakeholders should research the appropriate data transmission method for their technical landscape. The transmission method should be selected based on stakeholders' information sharing and exchange needs and requirements.

- What are the current methods of data transmission for this information exchange?
- Have stakeholders identified/researched the appropriate data transmission method for their technical environment?
- Has it already been implemented? Is there a desire for change?

Response	
Source(s)	

4.7 - Privacy and Security	A knowledge and understanding of the privacy laws and regulations surrounding the information sharing and exchange initiative. Adhering to privacy practices and protecting information against unauthorized access promotes continuous operations and confidence in the initiative.

- What privacy laws and regulations surround the information sharing and exchange initiative?
- Are stakeholders aware of the privacy regulations and protecting information with a security mechanism as necessary?

Response	
Source(s)	