Glossary of Terms

Access: Refers to the ability of the user to connect to a database, or Internet service.

Browsing: Interactive task in which the user explores the document collection rather than retrieving documents which satisfy a specific information need.

Case Studies: Are used to collect in depth information about the experiences of a programme on a single participant or site. A case study can simply be the story of one person’s experience related to a programme.

CD-ROM: Compact Disk Read Only Memory, a type of laser disk used for storing and distributing text, images, video, animation and/or sound clips.

Collection: In libraries the term represents all the materials selected according to a collection management plan.

Communications Network: A Group of interconnected computers and communications devices that can send data back and forth. Examples are local area networks (LANs) and wide area networks (WANs).

Database: A collection of data organized in such a way that discrete data elements can be retrieved quickly on demand.

E-mail or Electronic mail: A communications tool used to send messages to and from computers, or the messages themselves.

Electronic library: A library that makes use of ICT to create, collect, consolidates and communicates digital information. It may also be called a digital library.

Electronic Resources: Any information material that is stored in digital format in any of the secondary storage devices such as hard disk, floppy disk, CD-ROM, etc.

Evaluation: A systematic process which assesses the efficiency and effectiveness of certain activities of dofters a value judgment of their value in terms of some criteria (such as goals and objectives). The process of identifying and collecting data about an organization or its specific programmes, operations and / or services.
**Information**: Data that has been organized so as to give it meaning; that which causes a change in one’s knowledge status.

**Information Need**: What the user really wants to know.

**Information Retrieval (IR)**: The study of systems for representing, searching and finding information. A part of information science that studies the retrieval of information from a collection of documents.

**Internet**: A worldwide computer network which connects many smaller networks worldwide.

**Intranet**: An Internet-type network built for use within an organization, which may or may not be connected to the Internet itself.

**Network**: A communication system that relies on hardware and software.

**Online or on-line**: Refers to the connectivity of a computer to a network.

**Online Access**: Pertaining to the interactive access of a computer during the information processing cycle as differentiated from non-interactive off-line access.

**Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC)**: A computerized catalogue of a library’s holdings. It is typically an automated version of the card catalogue.

**OPAC**: (Online Public Access Catalog) An electronic version of a library’s collection catalogue, accessible to the public via a PC or terminal. Software that provides user access to information contained in a library collection.

**Search Engine**: A programme which permits users to do keyboard searching on the Internet.

**User**: The individual providing input or using output from the computer – may be an information professional acting on behalf of a client, or the actual client (also called an end user).

**User Information Need**: A natural language declaration of the informational need of a user. The need must be converted into a query to search for it on information retrieval system.

**Users Satisfaction**: The reaction to users subjective assessment of the degree to which the organization’s performance met or exceeded some standard internalized by the user.
Uniform Resource Locator (URL): Protocol used to specify the location of an object or site on the Internet. Now, commonly referred as a 'Web address'.


World Wide Web (WWW): A client-server application which is part of the Internet. Relies on hypertext to provide access to documents and to navigate between documents. It also includes audio and video capabilities as well as ability to transmit images.