

Organizational knowledge audit conducted in the last five years

Indicator Number:

1

Logic Model Component:

Processes

Data Type(s):

Binary (yes/no), qualitative

Short Definition:

Tracks whether or not an organizational knowledge audit has been conducted to determine an organization's knowledge assets, gaps, and challenges

Definition and Explanation (Long):

This indicator refers to an audit conducted within an organization to determine organizational knowledge assets, gaps, and challenges, and to develop recommendations for addressing them through training, enhanced communication, or other improvements (Asian Development Bank, 2008).

Data Requirements:

Self-report of KM audit within the last five years; evidence of knowledge assessment; KM audit score; documentation of knowledge assets, gaps, challenges, and recommendations

Data Sources:

Administrative/programmatic records, such as a knowledge assessment report)

Frequency of Data Collection:

Periodically (e.g., every 3 to 5 years)

Purpose:

A KM audit allows an organization to assess their existing tacit and explicit knowledge, so they may better tailor and design KM initiatives to meet the needs of the organization and its intended users. The defining feature of a knowledge audit is that it places people at the center of concerns: it aims to find out what people know and what they do with the knowledge they have. It can be described as an investigation of the knowledge needs of an organization and the interconnectivity among leadership, organization, technology, and learning in meeting these. (Asian Development Bank, 2008).

Issues and Challenges:

It may be difficult to know where to begin implementing KM activities. An internal KM audit can help identify the key knowledge needs, sources, strengths, opportunities, and challenges within the organization. The results should enable the staff to create a “knowledge inventory,” which is a directory of the locations of knowledge products and services available to the staff—including details about their purpose, accessibility, and intended audiences—as well as information about which working units or groups of people have specific knowledge that might be useful to others. The inventory will also list knowledge gaps and help staff members to clearly understand their own roles and expectations, and those of the organization, and to determine what improvements should be made to the KM system (Asian Development Bank, 2008). Staff members can then work as a team to strengthen KM capacity and help to shape an organizational environment that supports KM.

Related Indicators:

See indicators 10 to 13. Specifically, indicators 11 and 12 can be used as direct follow-up indicators to indicator 1; they can measure changes in KM capacity after initially identifying knowledge gaps.

Sample Topics and Questions for Data Collection Instruments:

A knowledge audit can be performed by organization staff (i.e., a self-assessment) or by a third party. In either case, information obtained by a KM audit will provide insight and evidence about a number of topics, including:

- The organization's definition of knowledge management
- Tacit and explicit knowledge assets of the organization and where they are located
- Where the organization places KM activities in the organizational structure
- Whether (and how) staff members bring external knowledge back to the organization and use it internally
- Whether staff members think that technology is used appropriately to record, organize, and exchange knowledge
- How much support for KM—financially and in word/deed—exists among senior management
- How knowledge is created, identified, organized, and/or used
- How knowledge flows within the organization
- What barriers obstruct the flow of knowledge
- Where there might be missed opportunities for better knowledge capture, organization, sharing, and use
- What difficulties or challenges project staff face with regard to knowledge creation, access, and use, and, conversely, what support does the organization provide
- What knowledge gaps exist within the organization
- How (and how well) the organization's knowledge (including that of staff members) is transferred to audiences

Resources:

- Where Are You Now? A Knowledge Management Program Self-Assessment. (APQC 2011), [http://www.k4health.org/toolkits/km/where-are-you-now-knowledge-manageme....](http://www.k4health.org/toolkits/km/where-are-you-now-knowledge-manageme...)
- Learning to Fly (Collison and Parcell 2004)
- KM Capacity Assessment Tool (Appendix 2 on p. 79 of the GHKC KM M&E Guide PDF version)

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