Number of KM approaches/methods/tools used, by type

Indicator Number:
13

Logic Model Component:
Processes

Data Type(s):
Count, qualitative

Short Definition:
Captures the number of KM approaches, methods, and tools used that can facilitate knowledge sharing and use

Definition and Explanation (Long):
This indicator refers to the number of KM approaches, methods, and tools used that can facilitate and support learning, knowledge exchange, decision making, and action within an organization.

Data Requirements:
Self-report of number of KM approaches/methods/tools used, by type

Data Sources:
Survey of staff, in-depth interviews with staff members, notes from after-action reviews, administrative records

Frequency of Data Collection:
Semiannually

Purpose:
In KM initiatives, it is important to use proven techniques to promote learning, facilitate knowledge transfer, and encourage collaboration. These processes sometimes require facilitation and/or specific tools. The choice of such tools will depend on the goals; intended users; available technology; facilitator availability/skills, if relevant; and the timeline of the KM project or activity. For example, if KM practitioners use an organizational approach to implementing KM, they may focus on how an organization can be structured or designed in order to maximize knowledge creation and exchange. KM practitioners may use research methods to capture data on a specific project or purpose. Some KM tools may be related to information technology, such as intranet or content management systems, while others may
be less technology-based, such as collaborative tools like knowledge cafés or Open Space, which provide informal, creative spaces for groups of colleagues to interact and share ideas. (For more on Open Space, see http://www.openspaceworld.org).

Issues and Challenges:

There are a wide range of KM techniques and tools that organizations and projects can use, including after-action reviews, world cafés, Open Space sessions, graphic facilitation, podcasts, twinning, role plays, simulation, storytelling, peer assists, mentoring, knowledge fairs, “fail fairs,” blogging, and online discussions (Lambe & Tan, 2008; World Bank, 2011; Ramalingam, 2006). Some KM methods—such as after-action reviews and mentoring—can be institutionalized and made part of the organizational culture.

Related Indicators:

This indicator refers to techniques and tools that projects can use in their KM initiatives. In contrast, indicator 8 refers to the activities of collaborative groups/structures for knowledge sharing. These are related. For example, a community of practice (measured in indicator 8) may use the world café method of exchanging information, and that method would be counted under this indicator. Nonetheless, the method/tool is distinct from the activity and, thus, they are listed under two separate indicators. As methods may be used repeatedly and in different situations, the number recorded by this indicator is likely to be smaller than that recorded by indicator 8. Information gathered for this indicator may also offer some qualitative indication of KM capacity strengthened, which may also feed into indicator 12.

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