Number of KM coordinating/collaborating activities, by type

Indicator Number:
8

Logic Model Component:
Processes

Data Type(s):
Count, qualitative

Short Definition:
Captures the coordinating/collaborating activities used to share knowledge, both within and among organizations

Definition and Explanation (Long):
This indicator captures the activities of coordinating/collaborative group structures used to share knowledge, both within and among organizations. This indicator counts a variety of knowledge sharing activities and can cover both virtual communication, such as online communities of practice (COPs), and face-to-face communication.

Data Requirements:
Self-report of number of activities, by type

Data Sources:
Administrative records

Frequency of Data Collection:
Semiannually

Purpose:
The purpose of this indicator is to capture the number of activities conducted that allow colleagues—either within organizations or from different organizations working on similar topics—to connect, share experiences and lessons learned, develop common guidelines, or exchange ideas and research findings. A possible benefit of such activities is the opportunity to come to consensus on issues, chart the course of a particular effort, and provide a forum for prioritizing activities.

Issues and Challenges:
The number of activities can sometimes be difficult to define. For example, an online forum might be one activity or a series of activities. However the organization or COP chooses to define these events, it is important to consistently count across the organization and across different activities. Professional contacts, such as those measured by this indicator, can help transfer tacit knowledge, which otherwise can be difficult to record and share with others. The sharing of tacit knowledge, which is based on direct experience, usually occurs person-to-person and, therefore, depends greatly on the interaction of individual human beings (Alajmi, 2008). Through storytelling and similar methods, professional groups and COPs are often the forums for sharing tacit knowledge within and across organizations (Schubach, 2008). The social nature and shared context of some of these groups promotes common understanding and encourages active engagement—that is, people’s openness and willingness to share their own experiences and to respond to those of others—and continual learning (Athanassiou, Maznevski, & Athanassiou, 2007; Schubach, 2008).

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