

PROJECT MANAGEMENT – IMPLEMENTATION: Stage 4



“Coming together is a beginning. Keeping together is progress. Working together is success”
(Henry Ford).

Now that you have designed your project, identified the activities, budgeted and found funding for this project, the implementation starts. This is about using the information you have already (stakeholder analysis, project plan with resources, including human, material and financial) to make the project happen in a successful, time bound, resourced, accountable and transparent way. It's about putting your plan into action!

From the design stage, you should have a clear idea of what needs to be done – ie a list of activities. From this, you should have a clear idea of who will implement project activities, including monitoring and evaluation. Your GANTT chart is a good tool to start with in your implementation, as it can be scheduled according to weeks, months or quarters, depending on the timeframe for your activities. A similar way to represent a GANTT chart is through a Critical Path Analysis diagram (see <http://www.mindtools.com/critpath.html> for an example).

It is important to recognise the activities that need to be undertaken, by whom and to include these in staff and volunteer work plans. Clear communication about the project with all people involved in the initial start-up phase of the project (staff, volunteers, beneficiaries, external and internal stakeholders) is key to kicking off project in the right way. This includes discussion and inclusion of the project in any work planning with relevant staff/volunteers). Aside from the hardware, the software of developing relationships and working in a trusting and effective environment is just as important as planning. As the quote above suggests, working together is success. This requires good relationships with your staff, volunteers, stakeholders and funders, as well as some tools that will help to keep your project on time. The implementation stage of your project is the humanistic side of working as a community organisation – the success of your project will depend on many contextual variables within your organisation, such as an empathetic approach in working with people, creation of trust within and external to the organisation, the organisational values and culture.

Some of the key principles that help the successful implementation of projects might include:

- shared vision and values amongst staff and partners
- clearly defined roles and responsibilities for each staff member, volunteer (and organisation if you are working in partnership)
- an ongoing, constructively critical, reciprocal dialogue about goals, models of change, strategy and outcomes
- working together to accomplish agreed results and accepting joint responsibility for achieving them
- willingness to learn from each other
- mutual accountability, respect and trust

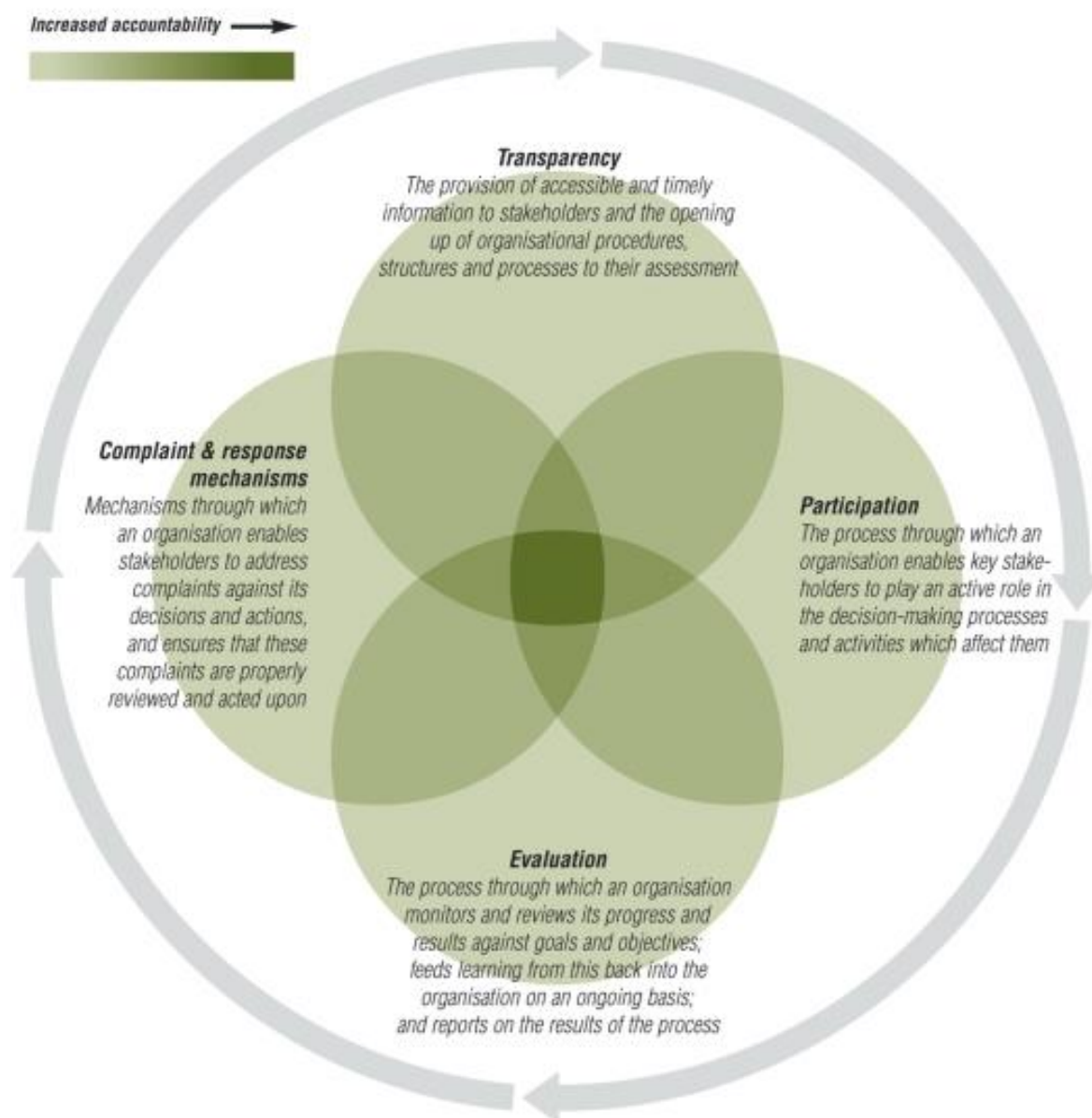


A key aspect of working in the voluntary sector is accountability, not only for finances when using public funds for public benefit, but also other 'softer' issues related to accountability which will make your community development project an excellent and successful one.

Accountability

There are four main dimensions of accountability: transparency (including financial), participation, learning and evaluation, and complaint and response mechanisms. These allow your organisation to be held accountable by stakeholders including users and funders. The following diagram represents the intersection of these four components.

The Four Main Components of Accountability¹



Ensuring the basic conditions in place for accountability, mutual respect and trust will go a long way to ensuring the success of your project.

¹ Oxfam Australia Project Management Manual v.4 (2009)

