

# PROJECT MANAGEMENT –

## CLOSURE: Stage 6



In order to effectively end a project, or finalise a partnership project, detailed research, planning and consultation is required.

- **Planning:** As you approach the deadline for ending a project, tasks will tend to pile up and things that you had not considered will suddenly appear. This is known as the 'funnel effect'. Be as rigorous and detailed as possible with planning and definitely plan for a 'mopping up' period after the final deadline to address any unfinished business.
- **Funder or government requirements:** Ensure that there is clarity around any reporting, auditing or other requirements that the funders or local governments/councils might need before you close up the project.

### Projects

Planning is required to ensure the various issues that will arise around project closure and continuation can be dealt with effectively. Other issues around project sustainability and evaluation will also need to be clarified.

### Planning for closure, transfer or extension of projects:

Existing commitments should be mapped. It is critically important that staff understand that no new 'unplanned' commitments, verbal or otherwise, should be entered into if you are going to close or finish a project. Beneficiaries and others might put pressure on to you to extend projects and commitments. This can in part be managed by clear and consistent communication with stakeholders about project timelines as well as finishing dates. This should also include clear and consistent information to any staff you have employed for the project, taking into account any legal human resource procedures.

- Research whether there are options for continuation of the project, either by your own organisation, or a partner organisation (this goes back to stages 1 and 2 in the project worksheets around identification and design – perhaps the needs or issues have changed and therefore justify a continuation of the project in a different form?). You might also have learnt from your initial project (see monitoring, evaluation and learning) and thus now ask yourself in the next project, what could we change to achieve a better outcome?
- If you are not continuing the project, then you will need to research the methods for contract ends for staff and volunteers, the financial and programme reporting to funders (which should be checked against your original proposal), the information that you have gathered along the way, and any administrative and financial transactions that you might need to undertake in order to finish the project.
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**Timing for reporting and evaluations:** In the closing of your project, you will need to ensure that there is sufficient time for the final evaluation so that this can be included in the final report to funders or local government. This should have already been planned in your design stage – don't leave this to the last minute!

### Leave with a bang, not a whimper!

Wherever possible, the end of the project or partnership should be an opportunity for celebration of the achievements of the project together with your stakeholders, staff, volunteers, beneficiaries, other organisations, funders and possibly the local council.

