2h 00m | **PLENUM**

DESCRIPTION

An exit strategy is commonly used when humanitarian aid ends. It has two main components: stopping program or project activities (e.g. because goals have been achieved, funding is unavailable, initiative failure, priorities change, or the risks to staff are too high to continue), and taking measures to ensure that any goals achieved are sustained when the activities cease.

This exercise helps you plan for both expected program closures and worst case scenarios.

SUMMIT   OUTLOOK

RISK AND RESILIENCE

PREPARATION

You may need to involve stakeholders and partner organizations in the creation of your exit strategy. A project's long term success relies on developing a joint exit strategy with local partners who support you. It is necessary to have a clear plan of action for worst case scenarios, project transitions, and program closures in order to avoid putting your target group at risk. Collaborate with local partners when building your exit strategy to increase the chances of your work's sustainability.

In addition, discuss and agree on what your desired outcomes are for your work.

MATERIALS

• Writing Materials

TOOLS

None

STEP 1   **IN PLENUM:**
Brainstorm possible reasons why your organization might (have to) end a project or stop its work all together. Consider the following: **[30 MIN]**
a. Is our organization close to fully achieving its project mission? Is our work on one or more projects no longer necessary? Does it need to be phased out?
b. Do we work in high risk situations that threaten our ability to carry out our work or finish our project (e.g. lack of security, regional instability, lack of financial resources, lack of human resources, internal organizational conflict etc.)?
c. What are the outcomes that we want from our projects or work?
d. Can these outcomes be sustained once our project or work ends?

STEP 2   Identify a list of criteria for either the scenario of 1a or 1b that would signal the need for your organization to stop, end, finish, or phase out a project. Identify the criteria that would signal the need for your organization to cease working entirely. These are your exit criteria. **[30 MIN]**

STEP 3   Design the exit strategy for the scenario you chose. **[60 MIN]**
Discuss which overall outcomes of your work must be continued and sustained even after the program, project, or work ends. What would success mean and how would you measure it?
b. Share expectations as partner organizations, mutual stakeholders, and individual team members. How should each organization or group contribute to the sustainability of the outcomes before and after the work ends? What needs to be done to ensure the sustainability of the outcomes?
c. Define individual exit activities. This should include:
  i. What will be done?
  ii. Who will do it (this can be on both the organizational and the team level)?
  iii. When will it be done?
  iv. What costs there might be financially (if any)?

Further Reading / References:
 - https://ceowatermandate.org/files/iwsi/Tool12.pdf
 - https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/
A02C7B78FB2B408B852570AB006EC7BA-What%20We%20Know%20About%20Exit
%20Strategies%20-%20Sept%202005.pdf