4.5 SUSTAINING OUTCOMES AND MOVING ON

Moving on communication guidelines

USE IT
To plan communication, inside and outside the partnership, as it transitions or closes

WHEN
Built in from the partnering agreement; essential during moving on

WHO
Partners together, ideally with a nominated facilitator

Communication during moving on matters both for good internal management and for external reputation. Partnering is a human activity built on relationships and conversations, and communication about it should be too: what most people want is something genuine rather than slick.

Who outside the partnership needs to know what?

Who	What they need to know	How, and who tells them
Project staff and beneficiaries		
External donors		
Other external supporters		
Partners' own networks		
Policy makers and government officials		
Wider public		
Other		

Who should communicate?

Share communication responsibilities between partners as appropriate. For each task, check whether the person:

- will be seen as speaking for the partnership, not their own organisation
- can give the task the time and attention it needs
- has the communication skills to do it well

Choosing how

Match the method to the audience's preferences. Donors may want a report of activities and impact; communities may prefer a site visit and a story, or exactly the opposite. Check what people want before assuming, and lean towards face-to-face and personal rather than written and impersonal.

What a good strategy ensures

Build a communication strategy into the partnering agreement from the start, and refine it over time. It should cover:

- what should be public, and when
- respect for partners' need to keep some information confidential
- who might need or want to know what, and why
- the value of communicating well to the right people
- that not communicating is also communication: it is likely to be read as a lack of transparency or exclusiveness

Tips for partners

- Open questions, active listening and lively conversation
- Records: written, oral and visual
- Sharing information, written and spoken
- Managing anxiety, as in any change process
- Acknowledging and celebrating achievements, effort and contributions

Tips for a facilitator or broker

- Persuade partners to agree and carry out an external communication strategy
- Help partners stay constructive and communicate well
- Be transparent, and encourage transparency between partners
- Capture and share knowledge appropriately
- Help partners identify and celebrate achievements
- Make time to debrief partners and stakeholders

Consider nominating someone to facilitate, since partners may be too busy with their own moving on plans to give communication enough attention.

Sharing the lessons

Every moving on situation is fertile ground for learning, and partners' experience, good or bad, is valuable to others. Beyond media coverage, which reaches widely but tends to be superficial, consider commissioning a learning case study (tool 3.3) or publishing a well-illustrated story of the partnership, without breaching trust or confidentiality.

Adapted from The Moving On Toolbook (Tool 5). © The Partnering Initiative. More tools at thepartneringinitiative.org/resources/type/tool/