

# Exit Strategies

Should we stay or should we go?

Gaining commitment from donors and from IFC to implement an advisory project on corporate governance is a challenge, it's true. The bigger challenge, though, is that the need for on-going support for corporate governance improvements in the markets where we work extends well beyond the two-to-five year timeframe of a typical project. The needs will continue long after IFC and donors have exited the project.

Because of this, devising a viable exit strategy at the outset of any project is critical. The exit plan will define the sustainability of the work done during the lifetime of the project. It also will provide some comfort to partners and donors, so they see that once project funding is depleted,

there is a plan to ensure continuing capacity to keep the work going.

Planning when and how to exit a corporate governance advisory services project is a delicate business. With so many projects through the years, we've had a range of experiences related to exiting—or not exiting when we should have.

Considerations might include the level of capacity already in the market and how quickly it may be developing, the level of resources committed, and the market viability of the exit. Bottom line: there must be a business case for any exit strategy.

The SmartLessons in this section provide a frank look at our exit strategy experience.