**ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY**

**COLLEGE OF BUSINESS AND ECONOMICS SCHOOL OF COMMERCE**

**GRADUATE STUDIES**

Project Thesis Report on:

# Assessment of the 'Beautifying Sheger' (first phase of A.A River and Riverside Development) Project Closeout

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In partial fulfillment of the requirement of the degree of Mastersin Project Management

Advisor: - Wubshet B (Ph.D.)

June 2021

# Declaration

I, **Tewodros Aschalew Deneke** that the work I am submitting for assessment entitled **"Assessment of the 'Beautifying Sheger' (first phase of A.A River and Riverside Development) Project Closeout"** is my original work, and that it has never been presented to any University or Institution for the award of any academic qualification. No section copied in whole or in part from any other source unless explicitly identified in quotation marks and with detailed, complete, and accurate referencing.

*Signature of the Candidate*

_____

Date

_____

## Advisor Approval

This is to certify that this Thesis report has been submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Masters in Project Management at Addis Ababa University with my approval as university Advisor.

**Signature: _____ Date: _____**

**Wubshet B. (PhD) – Advisor**

**Signature: _____ Date: _____**

**Signature of Internal Examiner**

**Signature: _____ Date: _____**

**Signature of External Examiner**

## Dedication

I dedicated this piece of academic work to the brave Ethiopian Soldiers, who always paid the ultimate sacrifice in protecting the country and its unity.

## Acknowledgments

First and foremost I would like to thank almighty **God**.

Secondly, I would like to thank my advisor, **Wubshet B. (Ph.D.)** for spearheading this project in collaboration with Addis Ababa University. This project would not have been possible without his recommendation.

Thirdly, I would like to express my deepest appreciation and thanks to my **family** for their invaluable contributions and support throughout my graduate study attendance and unwavering support.

Additionally, I would like to thank **the instructors** for their invaluable contributions throughout the entire course of this project. I would like to extend my final gratitude to my **colleagues** who generously offered their time to help me in gathering data for which I am very grateful.

I am sincerely thankful for all of your support, patience, and insight.

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## Abstract

*Despite the great number of studies on project management performance in Ethiopia, however, little is known about the assessment of the project closeout stage. Thus, this study aimed to assess one among successfully executed projects in Ethiopia- 'Beautifying Sheger'. The study was conducted using quantitative and qualitative analysis to investigate the project closeout stage with a sample of 15 project employees taken from the population of actively engaged in the process as a sampling frame. Pre-tested questionnaires and emailed questions were used to collect primary data and analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Science SPSS. Contrasting to the common form of project intervention in the country – an effective project acceptance verification practice in the 'Sheger' beautification process was found. Apart from that, the administrative closeout factors show a significant leap. However, the contractual closeout tasks disregarded some of the employees. Finally, in order to enhance the project closeout throughout the country's project interventions, the findings suggested that benchmarking such successful projects and further exploratory studies were viewed as being an effective strategy to solve the closeout problem.*



***Keywords:*** *Beautifying Sheger, Project closeout, Project life cycle*

# I. Chapter One: Introduction

## 1.1. Background of the Study

Successful Project Management is becoming increasingly important for any organization to remain competitive in today's dynamic world. According to Salleh (2009), the study of project success or failure and critical success factors is a means of understanding and improving the project management process.

A project has a lifecycle. But no one lifecycle model can be applied to allprojects (Field & Keller, 2007). The project lifecycle might vary for projects because in real life the projects tend to differ from each other (Lock, 2003). A typical full project life cycle consists of the following phases – conceptualization, planning and design, implementation, handing over, operation and maintenance, and termination of the project (Lock, 2003) & (PMI, 2010) lists the traditional project development stages as –initiation, planning, and design, executing, monitoring and controlling and closing.

Among the many projects in which the Government of Ethiopia is executing, the 'Beautifying Sheger' project is perceived as a prominent leap in the area of project management. Therefore, the goal of this research is to assess the performance of this undertaking particularly on the first phase closeout performance based on the project management principles and procedures.

'Beautifying Sheger' Project is an initiative aimed at elevating the city to a site of urban tourism leveraging on rehabilitation of the water bodies. It mainly involves the construction of a central square including a science and technology museum, a children's amusement park, a sports center, a waterfront, auxiliary buildings, and a domed theatre as well as supporting facilities such as roads, pavement, ornamental lighting, and landscaping, among others.

The project is also expected to enhance the well-being of city dwellers by putting river flooding in check and creating public spaces, parks, bicycle river banks, paths, and walkways along the rivers. The first phase of the project runs from 'Entoto' to 'Bambis' Bridge and will feature open space for recreation, an artificial lake, and a wedding venue around the area in front of the Sheraton Addis hotel.

Following the launching of 'Entoto' Park and 'Friendship Square,' many have witnessed that this project has been completed successfully. However, for this particular study, the researcher will assess its project closeout stage. The project closeout is the process for successfully closing a project and/or phase in a timely efficient manner.

Project closeout is often the most neglected phase of the project life cycle. Once the project is over, it's easy to pack things up, throw some files in a drawer, and start moving right into the initiation phase of the next project. But, the whole point of the project is to deliver what you promised. By delivering everything you said you would, you make sure that all stakeholders are satisfied and all acceptance criteria have been met. Once that happens, the project can end.

The purpose of project closeout was to assess the project, ensure completion, and derive any lessons learned and best practices to be applied to future projects. However, in multi-phase projects, the close-out practice may be applied at various stages of the project; upon deliverable completion, upon phase completion, upon iteration completion, at designated times during the project's life, or at whatever other stage represents a completed segment of project work.

To this end, the success of a project is typically assessed when the project has reached its goal or objective, and it is usually measured in terms of the conventional criteria of cost, time, and quality/performance, defined during the scoping stage of the project. However, in order to draw the lessons learned, the project closeout needs to be considered as it is often thelast major process of a project's life.

## 1.2. Statement of the problem

The last major phase of a project's life cycle is then the closeout. It is the formal completion of all contracts related to the project. It takes place after fulfilling all obligations and executing required documents. Project closeout represents the most difficult time for the project manager because of the challenges being faced to bring the project to a successfulend.

There are very few projects which meet completion deadlines with the desired efficiency all the way up to final completion. (Kaul, 2014). However, any project success is measured not just by completion of the scope of work to time, cost, and quality, but also by the performance of the project's outputs, outcomes, and impacts, and thereby the achievement of the desired

business objectives, as assessed by different stakeholders over different timescales (Turner and Zolin, 2012, pp. 87-88). Even though the project is completed as planned in terms of the scope of work to time, cost, and quality, it is important that the project might not be accepted by final users due to improper project closeout activities.

Project closeout should be anticipated and planned as early as possible in the project lifecycle albeit it is often the last major process of a project's life. Thus, the researcher would like to assess key elements of the project closeout stage of 'Beautifying Sheger' in terms of acceptance of final project deliverables, if there was any post-project assessment and lessons learned, post-project review and evaluation, recognize and celebrate outstanding project work, disburse project resources; staff, facilities and automated systems, knowledge transfer and archive final product records.

Furthermore, the researcher explored whether the 'Beautifying Sheger' Project Office has gone through the administrative closure process which includes integrated activities to collect project records, analyze project success or failure, gather lessons learned, transfer the project products or services to production and/or operations and archive project information for future use. As many projects failed due to improper performance of the closeout stage, it would be wise to investigate and provide insight for future project managers. Thus, this paper will assess one of the successfully completed projects, 'Beautifying Sheger', an accomplishment of its closeout stage.

The examination of knowledge gaps yielded the unknown gap. There appears to be a significant disconnect between closing ideals and practice. The behaviors may be owing to a financer's requirement rather than principles. It's likely that the project team lacks the necessary expertise, experience, and resources. Furthermore, because most project teams are unaware of the importance of capturing and transferring lessons learned, valuing the importance of timely transferring deliverables, interest on delayed payment contracts, and knowledge gaps on the difference between contract and administrative closure, and every element of step, particularly in both types of closure, it may be necessary to teach project teams about the details of closure as one key requirements.

## 1.3. Research questions

The key activities in project completion are gathering project records; disseminating information to formalize acceptance of the product, service; and performing project closure. To this end, the researcher is interested in answering the following research questions in relation to the Project Office closeout stage activities: -

1. How effective is the project acceptance verification practice in 'Sheger' beautification Projects?
2. What is the level of effectiveness of the post-project review and evaluation?
3. How did the lesson learn practices look like in Sheger beautification Projects?
4. Does it recognize and celebrate outstanding project work?
5. How efficient are the resource disbursement practices during closeout?
6. Does it complete and archive final product records?
7. Does it ensure the transfer of knowledge?

## 1.4. Research Objective

### 1.4.1. General Objective

The main objective of this research paper was to assess the 'Beautifying Sheger' (first phase of

A.A River and Riverside Development) Project Closeout accomplishment;

### 1.4.2. Specific objectives

This paper specifically assesses the following project closeout activities:-

1. To assess how effective is the project acceptance verification practice and post-project review and evaluation.
2. Assessing the administrative closure – in terms of the lesson learned practices, recognize and celebrate outstanding project work, Knowledge transfer, and archive final product records.
3. Assessing the contract closure – in terms of completing and settling the terms of the contracts let for the project and resource disbursement practices

## 1.5. Significance of the Study

The study contributes to future project managers in distinguishing how the project closeout stage should be executed and it will also add to the literature in the area. Project Managers and expertise in this stream can also take it as a reference for their proper project completion or closure. Apart from that, by fulfilling the aims, this study will be helpful for otherresearchers who may be focusing on understanding the concept of a firm's project accomplishment, which results in drawing and utilizing the lessons learned as an outcome of the project closeout.

The notable significance of this study is the possibility that other researchers may be able to use the findings in this study for future studies that will create an impact on project management. Furthermore, this study's findings can be used for other findings that might prove to be helpful in the successful completion of a project.

## 1.6. Scope of the Study

With the exception of the researcher's time and finance limitations, There was resistance from PMO staff and other stakeholders to disclose their project closeout documentation.

To compensate, a recommendation for future study is provided so as to promote the continuous investigation of the issue. In this way, a continuum of learning through investigation on this issue could be promoted. Since every project has its own character, lessons as well as project closeout procedures, it will not be practical to generalize this information to all projects.

## 1.7. Limitations of the Study

In view of the fact that project closeout cover worldwide but the scope of this study is limited to the boundary of the project closeout processes of the 'Beautifying Sheger' project. Those projects which are engaged in another method of building projects will not be covered in the study. In addition to researcher's time and finance constraints, there was resistance from PMO staff to disclose their project closeout documentation which makes secondary data acquisition difficult.

## 1.8. Definition of terms

i. **Project management** – is the application of knowledge, skills, and techniques to execute projects effectively and efficiently. It's a strategic competency for organizations, enabling them to tie project results to business goals and thus, better compete in their markets (PMI, 2010, chapter 1).

ii. **Project manager** – The project manager is the leader of the project team (PMI, 2010, chapter 2)

iii. **Project life cycle** – is the series of phases that a project passes through from its initiation to its closure (PMI, 2010, chapter 2)

## 1.9. Organization of the study

The thesis is divided into five chapters in order to provide clarity and coherence on the discussion of the assessment of project management stages, particularly on the closeout stage. The first part of the paper is discussing the background, problem statement, research questions, and objectives, and significance and limitations. The second chapter discussed the relevance of the study in the existing literature. It shall provide studies on the assessment of project closeout. After the presentation of the existing related literature, the researcher shall provide a synthesis of the whole chapter in relation to the study.

The third part of the study discussed the methods and procedures used in the study. The chapter is comprised of the presentation of the utilized techniques for data collection and research methodology. Similarly, it contained a discussion on the used techniques in data analysis as well as the tools used to acquire the said data.

The fourth chapter discussed the results of the study. Data to be presented were statistically treated in order to uncover the activities and importance of the project closeout stages. Therefore, the chapter seeks to address the statement of the problem distinguished in the first chapter.

The last chapter comprised of two sections: the conclusions of the study, and the recommendations. This chapter shall be able to address the problem stated in the initial chapter of the study.

# II. Chapter Two: Literature Review

In literature, there are different types of Project management processes. For basic form, every project has an initiating, executing, and closing process. In this chapter, a literature review related to the project closeout stage has been presented.

## 2.1. Theoretical Review

Project management is the art of directing and coordinating human and material resources throughout the life of a project by using modern management techniques to achieve predetermined objectives of scope, cost, time, and quality and participation satisfaction. (PMBOK, 2000) It is the practice of initiating, planning, executing, controlling, and closing the work of a team to achieve specific goals and meet specific success criteria at the specified time.

While there is abundant literature on project management, but the discussion of project closure is very limited (Havila & Salmi, 2009; Havila et al., 2013). Consequently, there are not many procedures for handling the project closure stage (Havila et. al, 2013). Project life-cycle, which is a logical set of processes to accomplish the project's goal, consists of five sub-processes-initiating, planning, executing, controlling, and closing.

Project management processes can be organized into five groups according to PMI. These processes are:

1. **Initiating processes** - recognizing that a project or phase should begin and committing to do so.
2. **Planning processes** - devising and maintaining a workable scheme to accomplish the business need that the project was undertaken to address.
3. **Executing processes** - coordinating people and other resources to carry out theplan.
4. **Controlling processes** - ensuring that project objectives are met by monitoringand measuring progress and taking corrective action when necessary.
5. **Closing processes** - formalizing acceptance of the project or phase and bringingit to an orderly end.

The closing process is the last step of a project. Every project has an endpoint in which goals are accomplished and the results are shared with stakeholders. At this point, Project should be closed and the team members should return to their regular duties. (Luecke, 2009) According to Heagney (2012), the closing stage is the last stage of a project in which, the final report is prepared, budgets are closed and the project team or project-related tasks terminated, and assure that all formal documentation related to customer acceptance as required by the contract is properly executed.

According to A Guide To The Project Management Body of Knowledge, "The Project Closing Process Group consists of those processes performed to conclude all activities across all Project Management Process Groups to formally complete the project, phase, or contractual obligations. This process group, when completed, verifies that the defined processes are completed within all of the Process Groups to close the project of phase, as appropriate, and formally establishes that the project or project phase is complete" (PMBOK 2013, p. 57).

In other words, Project Closing is the combination of the following when applied to a project:

a) Assurance that all the work has been completed,

b) Assurance that all agreed-upon project management processes have been executed, and

c) Formal recognition of the completion of a project - everyone agrees that it is completed.

d) Making sure all the work that needed to be has been done.

e) Obtaining approval by the project's sponsor and customer (whether internal or external) for the work completed.

f) Reviewing whether or not all organizational governance processes have been executed.

g) Assessing whether or not the necessary project management processes have been applied.

h) Administrative closing of any and all procurements, reviewing that all work on the contract has been completed and that both parties have completed their

contractual obligations toward each other.

i) Formally recognizing the completion of a project and its transition to operations.

j) Validating that the project achieved benefits identified in the business case.

k) Capturing of lessons learned: What was done well, and should be documented so it can be repeated in the future? What could have been done better? And if so, how can it have been done better?

l) Disbanding project resources, freeing them to perform other projects and undertake other tasks as required within the organization.

m) Transitioning project deliverables to the customer organization in a manner that warrants seamless operations and support.

According to Ferry & Kah (2013), who conducted research on the importance of closure, provided a comprehensive and systematic analysis of the closure process for programs funded under the European Regional Development Fund and the Cohesion Fund in 2007- 13, explaining that program closure is often seen as a purely technical process. It involved shutting down the operation of a program, finalizing the reporting and recording of results, and ensuring sound financial management.

This included the preparation of a series of documents for each operational program that together forms the closure package- an application for payment of the final balance, a final implementation report, and a closure declaration. The research signified that the quality of the closure process has been determined by the administrative capacity and governance approaches of program authorities. The closure should be perceived as an integral part of program implementation and this role is conditioned by financial absorption pressures, the type of operations included in programs, and administrative capacities. Financial absorption pressures are prominent as closure approaches. As per this study, to communicate achievements it is important to strengthen the linkage of closure more carefully to the reporting of program achievements and outputs.

As mentioned above, the last major phase of a project's life cycle is the closeout. Projects are considered completed or "closed out" after the client receives and approves all reports as

required by the terms and conditions of the award, and notifies the contractor of its acceptance and closure of the project.

The closeout process includes:-

1) finalizing all activities completed and transfer them to the responsible entity managing and operating,
2) establishing the procedures to coordinate activities needed to verify and document the project deliverables,
3) coordinating and interacting to formalize acceptance of those deliverables by the customer and
4) Investigating and documenting the reasons for actions taken if a project is terminated before completion. In this view, two procedures are developed to establish the interactions necessary to perform the closure activities across the entire project.

### 2.1.1. Types of Project Closure

Contractual and administrative closures are the two main types of closures, with the former taking precedence and the latter following.

#### *2.1.1.1.Administrative Closure Procedures*

Administrative Closure occurs at both the end of phase and end of the project. This closure consists of verification that objectives and deliverables were met. Acceptance is formalized and phase activities are completed and administratively closed out. Administrative closure occurs on a “by-phase” basis in accordance with the Work Breakdown Structure (WBS) and should not be delayed to the project's end. At that point, the burden of closing is too great, and audits inaccurate.

This procedure details all the activities, interactions, and related roles and responsibilities of the project team members and other stakeholders involved in executing the administrative closure of the project. Performing the administrative closure process also includes integrated activities needed to collect project records, analyze project success or failure, gather lessons learned, and archive project information for future use by the organization (Brady & Jemmy, 2015).

#### *2.1.1.2.Contract Closure Procedures*

It includes all activities and interactions needed to settle and close contract agreements established for the project, as well as define those related activities supporting the formal administrative closure of the project. This procedure involves both product verification (all work completed correctly and satisfactorily) and administrative closure (updating of contract records to reflect final results and archiving that information for future use).

The contract terms and conditions, changes to the contract, and other documents (such as the technical approach, product description, or deliverable acceptance criteria and procedures) can also prescribe specifications for contract closure that must be part of this procedure. Early termination of a contract is a special case of contract closure that could involve, for example, the inability to deliver the product, a budget overrun, or lack of required resources (PMI, 2000).

### 2.1.2. The Damage of Improper Closeout on Project Team

According to Aziz, E. E. (2015) if a project is not closed properly, the project management team and the project team's efforts, time, and credibility may be negatively perceived for matters that are not their fault or responsibility. Below are some examples of when such incidents may occur, and how they can easily be avoided.

#### *2.1.2.1.The Never-Ending Project*

Many organizations have undertaken projects that, despite fulfilling all of their scope and quality obligations have continued to be perceived by the rest of the organization as projects. In this scenario, the organization does not distinguish between responsibility for maintaining and operating the deliverables of the project by other departments, but rather continues to hold the project management team accountable for such activities.

As a result, those who have the necessary skills, tools, means, and capability to "operate and maintain" a project deliverable is not tasked to do so, and instead, those who do not have such skill, tools, means, and capability (the project management team) are required to operate and maintain the deliverable. This is not an understatement or dilution of the skill set of a project management team. The project team typically has the skills, tools, means, and capability to “develop” the project deliverables, but not necessarily maintains and operated those deliverables. Therefore, the project team performs a great job in the former and fails to deliver on the latter.

To further clarify this scenario, consider that you have purchased a new computer; however, the staff at the store or at the manufacturer's call center is incapable of supporting your requests. They transfer your request to the team that developed the computer. Although they have the capability of designing and producing cutting-edge hardware, they do not have the capability of troubleshooting specific software drivers.

A by-product of this scenario is that resources that were required to manage the project would be consumed in post-launch activities, limiting their availability and capability to manage new projects, and hence limiting the capacity of the organization to meet its strategic objectives (Aziz, 2015).

#### *2.1.2.2.The Orphan Product*

Another result of inadequate project closure is the lack of a proper handover or transition of the project deliverables to business as usual (or operations). When a deliverable is produced, the parties involved with operating and maintaining that product need to receive the appropriate training, awareness, and tools to do their job effectively and efficiently. They also need to understand—and commit—to their new responsibility. The number of organizations that fail to conduct this process adequately, comprehensively, and in a timely manner, is alarming.

To further understand this example, consider how many companies in the past have produced outstanding products only to find themselves facing their demise due to their inability to provide adequate after-sales services and or support for their products? Imagine buying a new computer that works perfectly, only to not find anyone capable of fixing it when it breaks down? (Aziz, 2015).

Closing a project should be a fairly routine process. The Project Manager has the responsibilities for specific project closeout deliverables. Depending on the type of project, the following steps may be useful:

1. Obtain sign-off on the delivered product.
2. Give an updated project plan to the team leader who assumes responsibility for subsequent work and support.
3. Give management a project staffing plan with the schedule for reducing the project.
4. Write a project turnover memo, directed to all people who have been in contact with the project, communicating the new status of theproject and the new contact person.

At a minimum, this should be sent to everyone who received a copy of the project charter.

5. Perform a post-project review with the project team, customer, vendors, and management. The focus of the review is:
    a. Did the delivered product meet the specified requirements and goals of the project?
    b. Was the user/client satisfied with the end product?
    c. Were cost budgets met?
    d. Was the schedule met?
    e. Were risks identified and mitigated?
    f. Did the project management methodology work?
    g. What could be done to improve the closeout process?
    h. What would be done to improve the next project?
6. Update the project history file with final actual performance data and the post-project review. The file is then stored and organized for easy access during future projects.
7. Give individual performance feedback to the team members. In cases where the team member will receive an annual review from another manager, deliver feedback to the manager.

Close Project Accounts and finalize all payments. If required, audit and close the project budget numbers (University of Washington, 2002)

The closing stage is basically the clean-up work for the project staff. Drawings, documents, files, applications, and maintenance manuals are cataloged and will be delivered to the customer. During this phase, the contract must be completed for last-minute changes for customer satisfaction. Collected fees, the payment of the materials, and unpredictable project accounts should be closed. (Choudhury, 1994) The closing process's aim is not only to learn from the mistakes and successes of previous projects but also important to learn gradually during the current project. (Burke, 1999)

Closing is the final stage of each project. At this point, the team reports the conclusions to the sponsors and stakeholders and then, evaluates their performance. Managers are action-oriented people so they are eager to walk forward without looking back after the end of a job. (Lueck,

2009) At this stage, the most important issue is planning staff and employees involved in the project implementation. Project staff should not want to go suddenly. Therefore you should start long before for the preparation for the closing stages. First leavers may be design engineers. Then, there may be other engineers who follow orders given to them. Their positions may be taken by customers' engineers for production and maintenance. Leaving personnel should be replaced with people who have never worked before for the same project. (Choudhury, 1994) Especially, final evaluation controls should be executed by people who are outside the project and domain experts so that more accurate results can be acquired.

Ofori (2013) summarized critical project success factors for the closing processes as follows:

- ✓ Adequacy of project closure activities
- ✓ Effectiveness of consultation with stakeholders
- ✓ Competency of the project team

Although, what to do in the closing stages of the project is similar in literature; the project closing has allocated the three subsections by Burke (1999). These are;

- ✓ Compile historical data from previous projects to assist conceptual development, feasibility study, and estimating on future projects.
- ✓ Compile historical data from previous projects and the current project to predict trends and problem areas on the current project.
- ✓ Generate a closeout report which evaluates the performance of the current project against the project objectives and makes recommendations for future projects.

The quality and capabilities of the leader are always important and crucial to achieving the desired goal (Livvarçin and Kurt, 2012). The project leader's knowledge, skills, personal competencies, and behaviors are primarily effective in the success of the project. Competent project leaders are managed projects to meet the expectations of stakeholders within the framework of project management knowledge and personal competencies.

### 2.1.3. Closing and project evaluation

Because of the short and insufficient description in the literature, it is needed to make a new assessment for the closing stages (Özge, 2014).

With the assessment, the closing decision should be healthily given priority. During the project life cycle, time, cost, and scope should be assessed continuously and acceptable limits for time and cost re-defined. The project manager must accept the project is a failure and close it in case of outside these limits. The failure is not an obstacle to a good closing stage of the project management. It should be a good analysis that how it was made a mistake and how to reduce the recurrence of this error.

Reviewing the project should not be anticipated for a long time because it is remembered in the minds of what is needed to be fresh. According to Newton (2012), while reviewing the project, the basic questions to be answered:

1. What you will continue to do? What went well and what you'll do again on your next project?
2. What do you end? What went wrong and what will you do differently in your next project?
3. What will you begin to do? What do you the next projects that do not this Project which you have to understand later would be good for you?
4. Is there anything else to remember that you can use the next time you find out?

In this context, suggested actions in the closing processes for a good evaluation are as follows:

- ✓ It should be created as part of the members of the evaluation team which has known difference project phase and good communication between them should be ensured,
- ✓ The purpose of the evaluation, scope, constraints, and methods should be identified,
- ✓ The evaluation process should be managed by someone who has strong leadership qualities,
- ✓ It should be determined to shape the evaluation reports.
- ✓ During the evaluation, documents (reports, invoices, surveys, etc.) and data should be collected at all stages and should be added to the final evaluation report,
- ✓ Last corrections and additions should be made with the last recommendations of

the project stakeholders,

- ✓ Evaluation should be done in a cooperative manner,
- ✓ What to do/not do in the next project should be indicated in the evaluation report.

### 2.1.4. The Project Manager's Challenges during the Project Closeout Phase

The challenges that face the project manager during the closeout period fall into one of the three categories:

a. Technical challenges,
b. Project Team challenges and
c. Customer challenges (Heerkens, 2001)

In order to ensure that the project will deliver what was promised, most of the technical issues and problems which might be addressed during the execution and control phases of the project will have arisen during the final closure phase.

#### a. Technical challenges

The technical challenges which face the project manager are:

- ✓ Start-up problems with new products or new designs.
- ✓ Thorough identification and agreement on all remaining deliverables.
- ✓ Loss of control of the charges to the project.
- ✓ Difficulties in securing useful project historical data.

#### b. Project Team Challenges

Approaching the closure phase of the project, the team's output begins to falter. Some team members have disappeared after completing their work; those who remain may become preoccupied with "life after this project."

Team members (or those remaining) scramble to complete the last few tasks, which may not have been included in the original plan. This is a difficult time for the project manager to fight against the team's loss of interest or looking for the next assignment. The project team challenges that face the project manager at the closer out stage are:

- ✓ Loss of team functionality as some members complete their tasks.
- ✓ Loss of interest in tasks such as documentation and
- ✓ Attention is diverted as members transition into new projects or other work
- ✓ Fear of no future work; hence, foot-dragging

**c. Customer Challenges**

In order to bring the project to a successful conclusion, the customer should be satisfied, ready, and willing to accept the deliverables of the project. Towards the end of the project, the following customer challenges arise:

- ✓ Agreement on what outstanding commitments still exist
- ✓ Absence of a clear hand-off strategy
- ✓ Change of responsible personnel at critical transition points
- ✓ Unavailability of key personnel

### 2.1.5. Professional Closeout and delivering successful projects

The closeout phase of the project should be given more project management attention than any other phase of the project. Bringing a project to a successful conclusion requires close attention to several different managerial functions. More than any other project phase, project closeout requires an extremely diverse set of technical, organizational, and leadership skills.

According to Othman (2007), in his conference paper on delivering the successfulproject through achieving professional project closeout and identified the key elements for achieving successful project closeout as follow:

**Ensure that the project will deliver what was promised**

This key element should be addressed throughout the entire execution and control phase. The project manager must continually monitor the functionality and quality of the project deliverables and protect these from degradation. From the project closeout perspective, the project manager must avoid last-minute surprises.

**Actively lead the project team through a confusing period of time**

The project manager has to actively make his visibility greater at this time than at any time since the beginning of the project. The project team may begin to disintegrate as a functional unit when the project nears completion. Communication will become more difficult for the project manager. Organizing people and things will become increasingly difficult. All of these issues require that the project manager maintain a high profile and assume a position of strong leadership.

**Ensure timely completion of the "Odds-and-Ends"**

There will come a point where the project manager can just about abandon the original project plan. When that happens, the project manager will find it helpful to focus everyone's attention on the specific work items required to get the job done. This could be handled by meeting the punch list requirements.

**Prepare for the transition into the next phase in the overall project life cycle**

The period after the project is completed is of prime importance to the success ofthe project. The deliverables which the project produced are normally accepted and used by the customer. One of the basic rules of managing projects is that the project manager has the primary responsibility for ensuring that the "handoff" to the customer or user goes smoothly.

**The secure consensus that the project has met the completion criteria**

As mentioned previously, you should establish criteria for completion at the beginning of your project. If you ignore this issue until the end of your project, disagreements may become significant in scope. Resolving some problems late in the project can involve significant rework.

**Obtain customer acceptance and verify customer satisfaction**

This is not done enough at least not in a formalized way. The project manager should strive to create an almost "ceremonial" atmosphere when addressing customer acceptance and customer satisfaction. Just as a formal kick-off meeting communicates project initiation, a formal session where you secure customer satisfaction and acceptance should signal successful project completion in a positiveand upbeat way.

**Ensure that the project records reflect accurate "As-Built" data**

This issue may include a wide range of documentation. It refers to the process of updating any and all documents related to the project to reflect the reality that exists at the end of the project. This ensures the existence of accurate historical data, which can be of great value to project teams in the future. Project files (most notably the project plan) should be updated to reflect the final "actual" in terms of cost, schedule, functionality, and quality.

**Transfer the learned to others**

Performing a "lessons learned study" is vital for achieving successful projects. The purpose of this study is to obtain information through a systematic review of project experiences. Understanding the nature of positive and negative experiences allows future projects to avoid unfavorable influences, and exploit favorable opportunities. The project manager should include input from all key stakeholders in the study. The project manager plays a leading role in organizing and carrying out the study. The format and structure of the lessons learned sessions can vary, but it is often done in a team meeting context, using an approach similar to brainstorming. It is important and useful to transfer any critical information that has been accumulated or lessons learned to anyone who may benefit from the recently acquired wisdom.

**Acknowledge the contribution of contributors**

The project manager has to acknowledge those who helped him achieving project success. It is not just a nice thing to do; it's a strong building block for the future. People who work hard and make significant contributions can actually become de-motivated if their work goes unrecognized. This can hurt the overall effectiveness of the organization. Study after study shows that personal recognition means more to people than nearly any other type of reward. Of course, financial rewards are nice, but knowing that others appreciate your work is the most meaningful thing to most people. It's a personal affirmation that tells them they matte something all people crave.

**Bring the project to efficient administrative closure**

This may include a wide range of administrative issues. For example, the project manager needs to address accounting issues, such as closing open charge account numbers. It also includes ensuring that all outstanding invoices have been submitted, and all bills are paid. It may also include closing out rental or lease agreements, as well as disposing of or

storing any leftover materials (Heerkens, 2001).

### 2.1.6. Planned project closure versus unplanned project closure

Planned project closure is a formal step that has been incorporated in the planning done at the outset of the project and is carried out as scheduled to formally set in motion the windup of the project (Lock, 2003). McManus & Wood-Harper (2003) say that project's boundaries need to be clearly defined for the planned closure of a project.

Unplanned project closure is a premature termination of the project due to different internal or external reasons. Lock (2003) writes that sometimes projects don't end successfully and lists the following reasons for premature closure of the projects:

1. Lack of funds
2. Fundamental changes to the project necessitate scrapping the project
3. Changes in economic or political conditions which render the project unpractical
4. The project is put on hold based on the directions from the customer
5. Disruptions due to hostile activities
6. Intervention caused by an act of God such as tsunami, earthquake, flood, and so on.

Therefore, project closure encompasses vital elements such as turnover of deliverables to operations, redeployment of resources (staff, facilities, equipment) closing financial accounts, archiving project records, documenting success & lessons gained, and carryout post-implementation review.

In general, Project closure is the last phase where a project team needs to give emphasis same to all other project phases in managing it. Specifically, this phase is the most neglected phase which needs the project team to pay attention for better benefit (Westland 2006). Project closure is a phenomenon of every project which is the last phase in the cycle. It can be applied at early termination or at project completion. Early termination may occur, because parties may agree to stop the project before its planned activities completion; a negotiated settlement may take place. Default often results from a problem with the project's cost, schedule, or performance. The Client can also decide to terminate a project early because he or she has lost confidence in the contractor who is performing the project. The convenience of the Client can also happen through no fault of

the contractor as it may face unexpected difficulties or changing priorities. It might decide that the resources assigned to a project could be more profitably applied to a different project. Project managers need to present the facts of project progress and make recommendations for early termination if they feel it is warranted. If a decision is made to terminate a project early, the project manager owes it to his or her team to communicate quickly and honestly.

At the project closure phase, both contractual and administrative closures need to be performed, where the former precede. Contracts made for work explicitly on the project are terminated. Some project managers establish minor work events for people who are involved in the project to acknowledge them for their energies. At project completion, a project manager will usually hold a meeting to evaluate what went right in a project and detect project failures. It is particularly useful to grasp lessons gained so that improvements can be made for future projects. Once the project is complete, project managers still have a few tasks to finalize.

### 2.1.7. Benefits of Project Closure

The closeout process includes closing final contracts, closing the project management office, archiving records, and producing the Project Completion Report. According to Brockmeie (2017), an effective and standard project closure will help in documenting the experience and lessons learned from the project executed and enable to release of remaining resources for other projects/uses, to clear outstanding issues, celebrate success, create motivation, etc.

A project manager may decide to create a transition plan to help the customer successfully use the project deliverables. A project transition plan is a sort of instruction manual on how the customer should use the project deliverables once the project team has completed its work. A transition plan can ensure that all responsibilities are considered and all deliverables—whether complete or not—are given with appropriate documentation to the people who will use them. If any activity remains incomplete when the deliverables are transitioned, they should be itemized, and responsibility for each should be clearly identified. A punch list of remaining items would be determined, and the contractor would agree to complete them.

Applying lessons learned contains three process groups; analyze, store, and retrieve. An organization identifies and documents lessons, which is important to apply them to existing and future projects. Applying lessons learned is necessary for establishing and sustaining a culture of

consistent project management improvement.

The team timely updates for their personnel records, honest recommendations, and help securing their next assignments, and rapid notification of any issues. Helping efficient workers secure follow-on work is one of the most important things a project manager must do near the end of a project. Many of these workers will be eager to work again for that project manager and will tell others of their good experience.

When people are reminded of their accomplishments, they realize they just met a large challenge and are motivated to undertake new challenges. The team members are frequently energized to finish the last few administrative tasks so they are done. The team members exert themselves to finish the last few items. The celebration can persuade membersto believe they can do just a bit more than they might otherwise think is possible. Celebration is an excellent time to recognize and acknowledge both effort and results.

## 2.2. Empirical Review

An empirical review is based on earlier study findings that have been observed and measured, and it derives information from actual experience rather than theory or belief. The goal is to discuss and review the necessity of full project closure practices. The empirical review reviewed the research findings based on government, project financing institution, and project advising consultant reports, as well as publications in the study's field.

Ferry & Kah (2013), who conducted research on the importance of closure, provided a comprehensive and systematic analysis of the closure process for programs funded under the European Regional Development Fund and the Cohesion Fund in 2007-13, explaining that program closure is frequently perceived as a purely technical process. It entailed closing down a program's operations, completing results reporting and documentation, and assuring solid financial management. This includes the creation of a closure package consisting of an application for payment of the final balance, a final implementation report, and a closure declaration for each operational program. According to the findings, the administrative capability and governance approaches of program authorities impact the quality of the closure process. Closure should be viewed as an essential component of program execution, and its importance is determined by cost constraints, the types of operations included in programs,

and administrative capabilities. As the deadline approaches, financial absorption demands are becoming more obvious. According to this study, it is critical to increase the relationship of closure to the reporting of program achievements and outputs in order to communicate achievements.

Closure is regarded as an issue for the lifetime of a program by the European Commission (EC), not just for the final years, it should remain a priority for program authorities and project sponsors, and to ensure commitment from all those involved in closure, administrative tasks associated with closure are substantial, and program authors must be willing to take on these tasks (training, recruitment, outsourcing etc.).

The formal requirements associated with closure are vital for ensuring that programs are fully committed and spent, but also acknowledging the tension between being able to spend for as long as feasible while still having adequate time to organize closure. The feature of closure stressed in the Financial Regulation is the settlement of the final balance, which cleared all prior spending to operations or the recovery of monies paid in excess by the EC. The filing of a "closing package" of documents is required to end a program.

Silverman (1976) noted that release is not an easy task; it takes meticulous planning to prevent project people from losing their spirit de-corps. Because projects do not run in the same way as they are implemented at the end, it is problematic because the manager is losing the spirit de-corps that held the entire working environment together. The project team begins to consider the future project rather than the current one. Customers, on the other hand, are still quite concerned about the project since the need for logistics, field assistance, maintenance, and spare parts lingers long after the project is completed. A chaotic finale to a project can generate problems for the manager because no one will pay heed to any requests as transferring to other hotspots.

The project manager may need to deal with a different team from the one that was working on the project, which would necessitate correctly documenting a plethora of data that will be left to newly assigned workers. If experienced individuals are kept, however, the hotspot's quality control will suffer. This made it difficult to strike a balance. It is not the same as declaring bankruptcy, but it does necessitate a change in management style, returning to the supporting

attitude adopted throughout the kickoff project.

Establishing a phase out plan, which is similar to previous project phases in terms of the activities to be completed and who will be responsible for them, must be specified and prepared. Project and customer interface phase-out plans must be approved by the organization's management and the customer, respectively.

It is necessary to discharge the best employees first, as they are most eager to find other jobs that are less useful for closeout. Also, because they don't have capacity for thinned-out workforce, initial release lease qualified. To develop a high-quality report, you'll need experienced employees. Contract management can continue to exist even after no more responsibilities have been assigned to it if it is not properly closed. Any future queries regarding a project can be answered by its documentation; it can also be used as a training guide for other project managers; and it can occur for a manager's top achievement, both positive and bad, or blame.

EC required a specialized closure unit to provide for the concentration of closure capacities, including experienced workers who had previously closed programming periods. Closure matrix combines staff tasks in various places, with time spent in the dedicated closure unit typically accounting for 10% of total time spent. A closure procedures handbook has been produced for internal training sessions. According to the findings, financial absorption pressures have an impact on the closure process' efficiency. The quality of the closure process is determined by administrative competence and the governance approach of the program authority, according to the study. The coordinated participation of actors and structures has been necessary for effective program closure. It's bureaucratically tough to put in place, which can slow down program closure. In Romania, phasing entailed a number of difficult internal procedures, project assessments, and application to the European Commission for approval. The closure of an Operational Program (OP) was hindered by a pending Major Projects (MP) decision, since the Managing Authority (MA) and Audit Authority (AA) did not know how to deal with expenses when compiling the closure documentation.

Financial Engineering Instrument (FEI) auditing has proven to be difficult and time-consuming, necessitating specialized skills, particularly during the program's final phase, when reviews of the instruments' performance are carried out. Dealing with non-functioning projects was not

recognized as a key issue for the closure process by the majority of program authorities interviewed for the study. Non-operational projects would have been shut down in the majority of cases during the programming period.

MSs may face capacity difficulties as a result of closure, particularly where governance quality is poor. Variation in governance quality can manifest itself in the construction of appropriate closure-related institutions, the ability to supply necessary human resources, and the usage of closure-related processes and technologies.

In Wales, a project closure group consists of key stakeholders who work together to increase ownership and track risk management. In England, a Closure Technical Working Group is responsible for working-level closure decisions, while a Closure Operational Policy Assurance Group is responsible for senior-level closure decisions. The timely input of EU, national, and program levels is required for effective program closure.

The formulation of timelines and coordination arrangements across different levels are among the obstacles of managing the program closure process, according to the research, and techniques vary based on current administrative arrangements, the size and breadth of projects, and so on. A series of closure letters were sent to all parties involved in the closure process in Finnish. National government bodies in charge of coordinating Cohesion policy administration and implementation were involved in the majority of cases, contributing to the drafting of EC closure guidance, producing domestic guidance, and coordinating the closure process among Ops.

A major source of concern for closure is capacity difficulties, which include both who is there to carry out the duties and how much reliable information is available to ensure that the tasks are completed correctly. As a vicious circle, insufficient capacity causes delays in closure, which affects the launch of the following OP, which causes more delays in closure, and so on. For example, the Transformation Triggering Facility project's six-month delay in settling the balance and closing an awareness creation broadcasting on consumer protection in Ethiopia in 2017 not only complicated the final 60 percent payment, but also resulted in a 100 percent cancellation of the second round intervention project planning. It is unavoidable that program administrators, beneficiaries, and other stakeholders focus on the new period's potential and

responsibilities, leaving limited capacity to complete closing activities accurately and efficiently. In other cases, an emphasis on closure obstructs the launch of new OPs, especially when closure is difficult or delayed. Closure of projects at risk of non-completion in Wales entailed identifying a set of projects on the edge of closure and dedicating all relevant workers solely to the closure of those projects for that week.

This focused strategy proved to be beneficial. To avoid an overburdening closure effort at the conclusion of the period, program officials in Western Finland and Belgium took a proactive approach to closure and attempted to spread project closures over the programming period. According to the EC, most AAs are capable of providing reliable audit results for successful closure. It does, however, underline the importance of ensuring adequate capacity, particularly during closure. Bavaria, for example, has developed a "closing brochure" on the program's accomplishments. For the first time in Wales, a Welsh Government minister announced that all of the money allocated to the initiative had been spent. Aspects of the closure regulations, particularly the 10% flexibility mechanism, are credited with this possibility for good communication. Beyond country-specific formal processes, the research contends that program closure should be viewed as an integral part of program implementation, influencing resource allocation, securing and raising awareness of program achievements and legacies, and facilitating an efficient transition to the next programming period.

The strain on the closure process was increased by the desire to absorb the maximum amount of available funding before the spending deadline. Annual closure reports were widely regarded as beneficial in terms of streamlining the closure procedure, providing assurance to the EC, and lessening the burden on MAs and AAs at the end of programming periods.

Closure processes, in addition to financial performance, should be more tightly linked to program outcomes. Closure should be considered throughout the life of a program, not just in the last years, according to the MA, however in Ethiopia, except for a few large investment projects involving foreign financiers, it is uncommon to see it even at the end of execution. Closure must remain a top priority for program authorities and project sponsors in order for enough time to be allocated to the process. Closure must be considered part of the MA's continuous project management. It is important that program officials participating in closing work closely together.

MSs and program administrators must ensure that sufficient closure capacity is available. Given the significant administrative tasks associated with closure, as well as the fact that much of the work occurs during the critical period of transition between programming periods, when organizational flux and staff turnover are common, it is critical that program authorities devote sufficient resources to effective closure. The Livestock Value Chain/Public Private Dialogue project in Ethiopia (2011–2015) had a common challenge in that the project crew was released after completion, but before closure, which resulted in difficulty settling lingering financial concerns over two years and liable to additional expenditures. The loss of skilled staff in key areas led to inability to deliver quality products and services.

The deadlines for closure vary significantly between EC Member States' operational programs and between program authorities. Given this, EC advice should be more specific about the steps to closure. Differentiated timelines for different program authority should be included, understanding that the intensity of MA and AA closure activity changes at different stages of the closure process. The EC's efforts to strengthen closing capacity, particularly for AAs, should be continued. For example, the requirement for programs in 2014-20 to close accounts and submit the assurance package by a fixed annual deadline should alleviate strains on AA capacity at closing. This offers an incentive for MSs to resolve concerns as soon as possible in order to be able to account for relevant expense. This should make closure easier in 2014-20. Nonetheless, the role of AAs in OP implementation, including closure, expanded dramatically between 2007 and 2013, and is anticipated to do so again between 2014 and 2020, necessitating EU-led capacity-building measures.

Although program administrators were clear about the potential financial penalties of errors or irregularities in closure paperwork learned from the 2007-2013 Programing Period Closure, the relationship between reporting achievements and the EC's approval of closure submissions was less evident.

Guidance, support, and mechanisms from the MS should be established, expanding on or collaborating with EU-level closure support. The formation of working groups (such as the Welsh Closure Group) aids in keeping closure on the program management agenda. In order to provide personalized closure support in specific national and program contexts, MS input is

critical. Setting internal closure timelines that take individual program designs or the distribution of administrative tasks and capacities into account is one example. It can also refer to the formation of closure-related groups and/or the creation of a closure ‘pack' for OPs to help them coordinate program authorities and disseminate guidance and knowledge. Closure should be considered for the duration of a program, not simply the last years, according to the MA. Work on facilitating closure should begin as early as the beginning of the programming period, for example, by acquiring copies of the project sponsor's document retention policy and ensuring that EU requirements on document retention are understood and applied correctly by project sponsors. Closure must be considered part of the MA's continuous project management. For example, early formation of a program closure group and/or ‘champion' to keep closure on the program management agenda; drafting a project plan to create targets for the number of projects the MA seeks to shut per month and for early identification of ‘problem' projects. The challenges can be discussed at project management meetings on a regular basis. Closure can be kept on the agenda as a "stand-alone" topic at meetings (for example, closure can be an agenda item for the MA's risk management group, which has its own risk register for closure).

Given the significant administrative tasks associated with closure, as well as the fact that much of the work occurs during the critical period of transition between programming periods, when organizational flux and staff turnover are common, it is critical that program authorities devote sufficient resources to effective closure. This necessitates careful human resource management in MAs and AAs, including staff training and the development of relevant systems and tools to aid closure (databases to track project progress, guidelines, manuals, systems, procedures, forms, and so on); or the engagement of external staff (e.g. experienced consultants) on a fixed-term basis to aid closure.

For the period July 2014 to February 2017, the Ministry of Finance and Economic Cooperation (MoFEC) and the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC), in collaboration with development partners, have been supporting the implementation of the Climate Resilient Green Economy (CRGE) Strategy through the implementation of Fast Track Investment Projects.

The study primarily summarizes the FTIs implementation's significant performance and

accomplishments. Ad hoc Quality Assurance Missions validating Monitoring & Evaluation information held regional and woreda-level reflection meetings to discuss observations, decisions, and action items originating from the mission in order to learn timely corrective steps. The missions helped to strengthen the Fast Track Investment's implementation and reporting at all levels, as well as smooth interactions between federal and regional organizations, skills transfer, and identifying significant lessons from past achievements and obstacles for future projects/program stages.

According to formal correspondence letters from the Contracting Authority (National Authorizing Office) to the supplier AGMIN ITALY SRL, the Ethiopian Conformity Assessment Enterprise implemented the Agricultural Marketing project from 2012 to 2015. The project included the procurement of laboratory equipment through an international bid process and from an AGMIN supplier for a total of 496,529.66 euros. Only 98,068 euros worth of equipment could be delivered by the company. The vendor failed to fulfill its contractual commitments. Due to the project's delayed appropriate closure, the early-termination closure and mandatory recovery of the pre-financing amount of 385,201.16 could not be completed on time. Due to a lack of prompt settlement, the situation may result in litigation and increased costs.

# III. Chapter Three: Research Methodology

## 3.1. Introduction

The Research Design and Methodology part describes the importance of the design used for this study and indicates the means by which the primary data is collected in terms of sampling, target population, unit of analysis, sample frame, and size. Thus, this chapter presents how the current study was designed and provides a clear description of the specific stepsthat were taken to address the research problem. Accordingly, the purpose of this section is to present the research methodology which was followed to accomplish the objectives of the research which is specified at the commencement. The study site for this specific research would be Addis Ababa, as the name of the projectindicates 'Beautifying Sheger', even though there is an ongoing project intervention throughout the country.

## 3.2. Research Approach & Design

Based on literature review, archival study, and informal discussion with colleagues and professionals in the sector; the researcher decided to follow the following research design. The research approaches that will be used to achieve this aim are explorative and descriptive. The descriptive method will be utilized for this study because it will help to present the facts of the problem as it exists during the time of the study. The study focuses only on the project closeout stage of PMO understudy and involving staff of the Project Management Office as well as concerned stakeholders.

To attain and meet the objective of assessing the project closeout with special reference to 'Beautifying Sheger', the research will be using a descriptive design to gather pertinent data for analysis and to decide for the conclusion of this paper.

Based on the objectives, this research can be considered descriptive since it seeks to find the different information and aspect regarding the project closeout stage of the Office under study. The research method that will be utilized and considered in this study is based on a qualitative and quantitative approach. The qualitative approach enables an iterative and flexible technique, while quantitative research enables to assert the findings.

## 3.3. Sources and Data Collection Instrument

In terms of data, the study will be used both primary and secondary sources of information. In relation to the primary data, a standard questionnaire will be utilized to explore the PMO's project completion stage.

Furthermore, a different source of the Project Office's documentation will be assessed in order to explore and describe administrative and contract closure procedures that are employed in the project closeout stage.

In general, the research will try to identify the procedures followed through archival study, unstructured literature review and discussion with PMO staff as well as with project management professionals in the area.

### 3.3.1. Primary data

A self-administered questionnaire which was partially adopted with minor customization from previous researches. The primary data for this research would be collected through a questionnaire from sample respondents of the 'Beautifying Sheger' project participants.

### 3.3.2. Secondary data

In general, the research will try to identify the procedures followed through archival study and discussion with PMO staff as well as with project management professionals in the area.

### 3.3.3. Questionnaires

A self-administered and structured questionnaire was used as the main primary data collection instrument. It consisted of a series of written questions to which responses were sought (Malhotra 1999, pp 293). In the study, under the rating scaletechnique categorical scales, ranging from "yes" to "no" were used as responses. Under the ranking scale, respondents were asked to place responses in order of importance. The Five-Point Likert Scale, which is a measure of attitudes ranging from "very negative" to "very positive" will be used. This required respondents to indicate how strongly they agreed or disagreed with a statement (Cooper & Schindler 1998).

The advantage of this scaling is that it is simple to use. It is the same as the interval scale in nature and therefore provides the use of the mean-based and powerful statistical analysis like the

correlation and regression analysis.

Therefore, a questionnaire was used as the main survey instrument. The questionnaire will be divided into two parts, the first part being demographic profile and the second part on the activities of the project closeout stage. It is planned that the questionnaires will have a 5 point Likert Scale, as well as yes-no and open-ended questions.

On the other hand, the literature reviews which was presented in the second chapter of the study represent the secondary data of the study. The secondary sources of data came from related studies, books, institution reports, and official statistics. Sometimes, secondary research is required in the preliminary stages of research to determine what is known already and what new data are required, or to inform research design. Acquiring secondary data is more convenient to use because they are already condensed and organized. Moreover, analysis and interpretation can be done more easily.

### 3.3.4. Pre-testing of questionnaire

The questionnaire pre-test will be made for reliability and validity checks. The questionnaire was divided into the following parts, demographic characteristics, and project closeout activities. Most of the items were pre-coded on a 1-5 scale.

## 3.4. Target Population and Sample

### 3.4.1. Target Population

The target population is defined precisely to target all the 'Beautifying Sheger' project office implementers. Since the primary focus of this study is the project closeout, personnel involved specifically in the closeout process are targeted. So, the study is based on a census data because only small number of participants (15) are involved in the process.

### 3.4.2. Method of Data Analysis

The data is presented using descriptive statistics and qualitative analysis, based on a number of propositions that the study identified. And SPSS is used to analyze the responses and presented in written format with the addition of data charts, representing study results.

The descriptive aspect highlights using tables and percentages. The quantitative methods will be used to identify whether the project closeout is appropriately conducted or not (both

administrative and contractual closeout) procedures will be assessed here.

The primary data gathered from the respondents were checked and then the data was coded in SPSS 22, statistic software/application. Descriptive statistics like the arithmetic mean the standard deviation and the variance were used to measure the central tendency and dispersion respectively thus providing meaningful answers to the research question.

### 3.4.3. Ethical rules/standards

- All research participants should be given enough information/explanation aboutthe research; and
- The privacy of the informant and the confidentiality of the information providedby respondents shall be respected.

# IV. Chapter Four: Results and Discussion

This chapter presents analysis, interpretation, and findings of information collected through self-administered questionnaires from 15 respondents, who were directly involved in the 'Beautifying Sheger' Project. Thus, the analysis is based on the information obtained from 15 project employees. Each research question is answered by presenting and discussing the results obtained from the data analysis appropriate for each particular question. Moreover, analysis of researcher experience and observations was presented and discussed.

## 4.1. Reliability test

Reliability and validity is an important aspect in any research to be able to make a contribution. To have the result being reliable the result should be replicated and have almost the identical outcome. Reliability can be measured by doing the same test twice or using different methods to get the same results (Saunders et al., 2009)

Validity refers to the ability to measure what something is supposed to measure. The accuracy of a study or test in research needs to be valid if the results are of any significance. If a result can be properly referenced and there is good evidence of the outcome then you have validity in a form.

In this study, we want to have both reliability and validity to the most extent. By doing the same type of data collection on different subjects we can have a sort of consistency in our work and also try to use both primary and secondary data sources.

A pre-test was made for reliability and validity. Out of the 5 copies of questionnaires sent out all were completed and returned. The Cronbach Alpha was used to test the reliability of the scales used from the pre-test sample.

The Alpha coefficient range in value from 0 to 1, the higher the Alpha, the more reliable the test. Usually 0.7 and above is acceptable for internal consistency based on D.L.R Vander Waldt, T. Robello, and W.J brown (2009) an alpha coefficient of 0.912 was obtained. Thus, the data generation was reliable and free of random errors.

## 4.2. Response Rate

The final questionnaire was sent to all the respondents in the sample in such a way that the researcher's suitability to those directly engaged in the project. Out of the15 questionnaires sent out, all 15 were returned during a period of one week time representing a response rate of 100 %. In Addition to the questionnaire open ended email questions were sent for 15 respondents and all the 15 participants have responded to the email questions which served as qualitative information.

**Table 4.1: Respondents' response rate**

| Respondents | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Correctly filled and Returned | | Not correctly filled | Not returned | Correctly filled and Returned | Not correctly filled | Not returned |
| Number | 15 | - | - | 15 | - | - |
| Percentage | 100 | - | - | 100 | - | - |

**Source – Researcher's own data**

## 4.3. Descriptive data analysis

In this section, frequencies and percentages are used to describe the sample characteristics in terms of - the demographic information of the participants.

### 4.3.1. Demographic profile of the respondents

The following table presents the demographic grouping of all the respondents who participated in the surveying process.

**Table 4.2: Information about respondents work experience.**

| Work Experience | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid | <5years | 3 | 20.0 | 20.0 | 20.0 |
| | >5years | 12 | 80.0 | 80.0 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 15 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

**Source: Researcher's own data**

As we can learn from the above table, almost two-thirds of the project members were male and one-third of them are female professionals. Apart from that, the project had experienced staff

with more than five years of work experience. In other words, 12 out of 15 respondents (80% of them) were having experiences in the area.

**Table 4.3: Education level and role of the respondents**

| Education level and role of the respondents | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid | Degree | 7 | 46.7 | 46.7 | 46.7 |
| | Masters | 8 | 53.3 | 53.3 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 15 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

| Role in the project | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid | Project management team | 9 | 60.0 | 60.0 | 60.0 |
| | Project engineering team | 6 | 40.0 | 40.0 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 15 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

**Source: Researcher's own data**

Out of the 15 respondents, 8 (53.3%) have a second degree in the area and the rest 46.7% of the respondents are the first-degree holder. So we can see here that the project was engaging professionals with different levels of education and work experiences. Furthermore, the majority of the respondents (9 out of 15 or 60%) were engaged in the Project management team as the rest are engaged in engineering work. This might be the reason to provide due attention for such a project as it was a new experience for the country.

This study focused on the process of the closure phase by taking a sample size of about 15 respondents from the 'Beautifying Sheger' project. The study used a descriptive type of research analysis.

### 4.3.2. Results related to the practice of closing

The following table shows the results related to research questions 1 and 2 which are related to how effective the project acceptance verification practice was and the post-project review and evaluation in 'Sheger' beautification Projects?

To this end, as any other phase of the project, the closeout phase of the project should be given more project management attention. Bringing a project to a successful conclusion requires close attention to several different managerial functions. More than any other project phase, project closeout requires an extremely diverse set of technical, organizational, and leadership skills. In order to answer these questions, the researcher calculated the means, standard deviations, and variances.

**Table4.4: Result related to closeout effectiveness**

| No. | Question | N | Mean | Std. Deviation | Variance |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Were the objectives for this project is clearly defined? | 15 | 4.7333 | .45774 | .210 |
| 2 | Do you feel strong management support for this project? | 15 | 4.6000 | .50709 | .257 |
| 3 | Was your project role and responsibilities clearly defined? | 15 | 4.7333 | .45774 | .210 |
| 4 | Were you able to adequately participate in the project decision? | 15 | 4.3333 | .72375 | .524 |
| 5 | Has there been adequate cross-functional participation in the project? | 15 | 4.1333 | .83381 | .695 |
| 6 | Were technical meetings run efficiently and effectively? | 15 | 4.6000 | .50709 | .257 |
| 7 | Did you feel appreciated, recognized, and rewarded for your efforts | 15 | 4.2667 | .96115 | .924 |
| 8 | Have any "people issues" impacted the project in any way? | 15 | 3.6667 | 1.04654 | 1.095 |
| 9 | To what degree did you feel the entire team was committed to the project schedule? | 15 | 4.6667 | .48795 | .238 |
| 10 | The project closure practice both technically & financially is done completely | 15 | 4.5333 | .51640 | .267 |
| 11 | All the project closure plans and steps are properly followed? | 15 | 4.2667 | .59362 | .352 |
| | **Total Score /Average** | | **4.4121** | **.6448** | **.4571** |

**Source: Researcher's own data**

The above table shows that the overall total score of the project effectiveness achieved a mean of **(4.4121)** and a standard deviation of **(0.6448)** which indicates a high level of project effectiveness is perceived by the employees. However, a moderate score is registered with a mean score of **(3.6667)** and a standard deviation of **(1.04654)** in relation to the specific question of - "people issues" impacted the project in any way?

### 4.3.3. Results related to the administrative closeout questions (research questions 3, 4, 6, and 7)

The proper project closure has multi-fold benefits, such as lessons learning, timely release of remain fund, freeing workers, sustaining project benefits, etc., based on the findings of this study and practices assessed, it can be said that there is awareness about those benefits among the project staffs.

About 93.3% of the respondents witnessed that all deliverables are completed and their documentation is handed over to operations. Apart from that adequate knowledge transfer (73.3%) was conducted in the closeout stage.

Only 33.3% of the respondents believed that there might be recurring maintenance/operational costs for the product which entails that they are confident enough with the work done in the project. However, 60% of the respondents are still in a position to recommend further enhancements could be done in the project.

According to the assessment revealed in this study, there was a high level of communication in terms of project remaining issues, risks and in providing opportunities to stakeholders in order to gain feedback about the deliverables and to ensure their satisfaction .

Learning lessons from the projects can serve to apply them for future projects throughout a business. Project closure confirms that the work is done to satisfy a set of agreed requirements, enables to complete the procurement & financial closure, to gain financial acceptance, to transfer final deliverables to users, solicit feedback from the customer, also to index and archive records, etc.

**Table 4.5: Administrative closure results related to Deliverable verification and acceptance**

| No. | Question | N | Mean | Std. Deviation | Percentage |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Are all deliverables completed and transitioned to operations? | 15 | 1.0667 | .25820 | 93.3 |
| 2 | Are there recurring maintenance/operational costs for the product to be accounted for? | 15 | 1.8000 | .67612 | 33.3 |
| 3 | Are there recommended enhancements or updates still required? | 15 | 1.4000 | .50709 | 60.0 |
| 4 | Are there outstanding project outcome measurements that need to be done in the future and transitioned to operations? | 15 | 1.6667 | .72375 | 46.7 |
| 5 | Have all tasks been completed? | 15 | 1.1333 | .35187 | 86.7 |
| 6 | The official handover is conducted timely? | 15 | 1.2667 | .45774 | 73.3 |
| 7 | Is Project Objective met (1st Phase)? | 15 | 1.0000 | .00000 | 100.0 |
| 8 | Are there future recommended projects or initiatives related to this one? | 15 | 1.2667 | .59362 | 80.0 |
| | **Total score / average** | | **1.3250** | **0.44604** | **71.7** |

**Source: Researcher's own data**

**Table 4.6: Administrative closure results related to Communication practice**

| No. | Question | N | Mean | Std. Deviation | Percentage |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Have any remaining issues been communicated to operations? | 15 | 1.1333 | .35187 | 86.7 |
| 2 | Have any remaining risks been communicated to operations? | 15 | 1.0667 | .25820 | 93.3 |
| 3 | Were stakeholders provided with an opportunity to provide feedback about the deliverables and their satisfaction? | 15 | 1.0667 | .25820 | 93.3 |
| 4 | Has the closure been communicated to all stakeholders? | 15 | 1.0667 | .25820 | 93.3 |
| 5 | Has team member performance been communicated to their functional managers, where requested? | 15 | 1.0667 | .25820 | 93.3 |
| 6 | Success acknowledged? | 15 | 1.5333 | .74322 | 60.0 |
| | **Total score / average** | | **1.1555** | **0.35464** | **86.6** |

**Source: Researcher's own data**

**Table 4.7: Administrative closure results related to Team involvement and recognition**

| No. | Question | N | Mean | Std. Deviation | Percentage |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Has adequate knowledge transfer and training been completed? | 15 | 1.1333 | .35187 | 86.7 |
| 2 | Has there been appreciation expressed to the project team, including any relevant celebrations? | 15 | 1.8000 | .67612 | 33.3 |
| 3 | Have project team members been released from the project or re-allocated? | 15 | 1.0667 | .25820 | 93.3 |
| 4 | Have you had a closure meeting with the Management Group? | 15 | 1.0667 | .25820 | 93.3 |
| 5 | Are you Satisfied? | 15 | 1.0667 | .25820 | 93.3 |
| 6 | The Project success is celebrated? | 15 | 1.5333 | .74322 | 60.0 |
| | **Total score / average** | | **1.2777** | **0.42430** | **76.65** |

**Source: Researcher's own data**

**Table 4.8: Administrative closure results related to Documentation archival and lesson learning**

| No. | Question | N | Mean | Std. Deviation | Percentage |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Has deliverable documentation been handed over to stakeholders and Operations? | 15 | 1.0667 | .25820 | 93.3 |
| 2 | Has documentation been archived in the appropriate repository? | 15 | 1.0667 | .25820 | 93.3 |
| 3 | Have lessons learned been collected and completed by stakeholders? | 15 | 1.4667 | .74322 | 66.7 |
| 4 | If lessons learned have been collected and completed, have they been archived appropriately in a repository or knowledge base? and transitioned to operations? | 15 | 1.2000 | .56061 | 86.7 |
| 5 | Lessons learned are reviewed? | 15 | 1.0667 | .25820 | 93.3 |
| 6 | Is the terminal/closure report prepared? | 15 | 1.2667 | .45774 | 73.3 |
| 7 | Are all the reports approved? | 15 | 1.4000 | .50709 | 60.0 |
| 8 | Does the project office complete and archive final product records? | 15 | 1.0667 | .25820 | 93.3 |
| | **Total score / average** | | **1.2000** | **0.41268** | **82.5** |

**Source: Researcher's own data**

The current administrative closure project practice examined in this study in terms of appreciation expressed to the project team and lessons learned been collected and completed by stakeholders are moderate acceptable closure standard.

According to the results above, about 46.7% of the respondents are witnessed that there are outstanding project outcome measurements that need to be done in the future and transitioned to operations. Thus, the project office should be reinforced, and all tools and techniques mentioned in the project closeout practice should be studied carefully.

### 4.3.4. Results related to the contractual closeout

The contractual closeout is the other prominent aspect of the project closeout. In this regard, it was observed that the 'Beautifying Sheger' project was led by the Office of Prime Minister and

funded with different development partners and local investors. Thus, strict follow-up and contractual agreements were employed in the process.

**Table 4.9: Results related to project contractual closeout**

| No. | Question | N | Mean | Std. Deviation | Percentages |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Does the project office disburse project resources – staff, facilities, and automated systems if any? | 15 | 1.9333 | 1.03280 | 53.3 |
| 2 | The remaining resource released | 15 | 2.6000 | .50709 | 0.0 |
| 3 | Are all bills paid? | 15 | 1.9333 | 1.03280 | 53.3 |
| 4 | Are the license & guarantee released? | 15 | 2.7333 | .59362 | 6.7 |
| 5 | Are all property has been returned? | 15 | 1.9333 | 1.03280 | 53.3 |
| 6 | There are no outstanding issues | 15 | 1.6667 | .61721 | 40 |
| 7 | Are all excess budgets are returned/relocated? | 15 | 2.4667 | .83381 | 20 |
| 8 | Are all the 1st phase work are accepted? | 15 | 1.3333 | .61721 | 73.3 |
| 9 | Did you confirm the completed deliverables were accepted? | 15 | 1.2000 | .56061 | 86.7 |
| 10 | Are all procurement audited? | 15 | 1.9333 | .96115 | 46.7 |
| | **Total score /Average** | | **1.97332** | **0.77891** | **43.3** |

**Source: Researcher's own data**

As a deduction of the above results, nearly half of the respondents (53.3%) are aware of the disbursement of the project resources, all bills (payments) are paid and all properties have been returned. However, no one of the respondents (0%) is aware of whether the remaining resources are released or not. Furthermore, only one respondent (6.7%) had a clue on as the license & guarantee is released. This might show for each task there is accountable and responsible personnel.

Based on the results mentioned above, there is only a little awareness by the respondents that outstanding issues and excess budgets are returned/relocated. And almost half of the respondents

have knowledge of whether their project procurement is audited or not.

The majority of them are agreed that the 1st phase works are accepted and the deliverables confirmed and accepted by the users.

In general, the results show that most of the indicators in the administrative closeout are performed at a high and moderate level of performance and usually a strict and clear methodology leads to this level. In other words, the results proved that the 'Beautifying Sheger' project management followed a set of separate processes with proper attention.

Furthermore, according to the analysis result obtained from the respondents' comment, ownership and political will of the Government of Ethiopia were very much helpful for the successful accomplishment of the project. In this regard, the project requirements were clearly set and documented from the beginning to ensure the satisfaction of all related stakeholders.

Clear, accurate, and timely communication is critical to the success of any project, as miscommunication can result in increased project risks. Clear project communication, therefore, ensures that the stakeholders have the right information, at the right time, with which to make well-informed decisions.

To this end, the project management was able to achieve clear, accurate, and timely communication to minimize risks and project delays.

### 4.3.5. Results from emailed questions

According to the email response most of the respondents are aware of the project closure activities necessary to come to proper end of the project. It is also seen that the lesson learned was properly done and documents are archived in repository. Further more the closure activities were planned in advance and all the checklist and required activities were informed for the project team prior to the closure activity begins. Finally most respondents believe that the contract type used in the project which is “Design and Build” or DB, have a major role in the successful closure practice.

1. **Did you start preparing for project closure well in advance?**

All the respondents talked about starting the preparations for project closure in advance.

> *"We mostly plan for project closure for a couple of weeks or may be sometimes months in advance."*

For short term projects it might be easier to do so since the project is small and closure phase is not too far in the time plan. But for long term projects it is important to plan for closure phase in advance.

> *"For the smaller projects it is not normally a problem because they are small and their teams are really small. So in that case I usually get in touch with the project manager two weeks before the project should end and ask how you are going to wrap this up. For the larger projects I talk to the project managers approximately two months before the end date."*

2. **How well the lessons were learned?**

An important part of project closure is to reflect on what went well in the project and what could be done better. It helps to conduct post mortem of the project and document the lessons. These lessons can be, and should be, used for upcoming projects. It would be extremely disconcerting if similar mistakes are repeated over and over in different projects.

> *"Try to summarize the project, to learn what has been good and what can be done better next time."*

> *"One of the immediate benefit of the lesson learned practice was its direct applicability on the second phase of beautifying sheger project which has began as soon as this phase was completed. All the lessons are being carefully checked in the current project activities."* Claims one of the project engineering team leader.

3. **What are closure practice both technically & financially**

The final report must be prepared before the projects can be phased out. These reports are required to show whether the initial objectives have been reached and whether the contractors

have any remaining tasks to complete. To be given to the intended recipients.

4. **Can you explain to me the main project closure activities?**

70% of the respondents were aware of some of the closure activities such as final reports to be prepared, 5% retention to be retained for correcting possible defects and provisional & final acceptance certificate signed.

5. **Have you gone through the entire projects closure checklist?**

Two of the managers stressed upon the importance of having a well-maintained checklist and consulting it while closing the project.

> *"…should go through a checklist of the requirements to see that everything has been going as it should."*

It helps to have regular meetings with project team members to exchange information, to address the problems and their resolutions, to discuss the status of the activities and share upcoming changes in the situation of the project.

> *"Yes sort of, something that I feel is important as well is to have a meeting each morning with the project team and go through the tasks for every individual and also state if there is any problems inside the group that can be handled by all team members instead of keeping the problem for you. This you can do to check everyone and it builds a team."*

It emerged from the discussion that checklists help to ensure that the tasks are not missed out while rushing to make it to the scheduled time and help to keep track of the personnel who should be involved with the activities. If the project has to be delivered to maintenance team then the details of the maintenance team contact person, and how it would be carried out needs to be identified at the start.

> *"If you don't plan the handover from the start then there is no one to receive result. So that's always the problem. ..You need to have decided at the start who receives this and how shall this be done."*

6. **Do you think your project office give due emphasis in project closure practices?**

60% of the respondent said *"yes"* And one of the team leader said, *"since it involves both external and domestic resources the closeout activities were planned well at the start of the project. Otherwise things would have got complicated and on time delivery could have only been a dream."*

7. **Please explain the lessons drawn from this project execution?**

Projects deliverables delivered on time for reasons a) Good design of the project, b) Strong organization of contractors – Proper staffing, enough equipment/ machinery c) The support from Chinese government avoids foreign currency shortage for timely importing materials and equipment. d) Well synchronization of activities e) Attention from government of Ethiopia via Prime Minister Office.

8. **Do you think the project contract type bring about successful project closure?**

Most of the respondents think the fact that the contract put in place for executing the beautifying shegher project is Design and build hugely aided the successful closure of the project activities.

9. **How is the contractual closeout practice in the project?**

80% of the respondents refer that all the contractual related closeout activities are handled by the type of contract used in the project. This type of contract (design and Build) allows the contractor to fully exercise its overall idea with the design, consultation and building activities being done internally by the contractor.

10. **Is there anything you would like to add?**

The responses can be summarized as "The will and commitment of the government played great role in successful completion of the project. So effective planning and attention is vital for project execution and closure."

# V. Chapter Five: Conclusion and Recommendations

## 5.1. Conclusion

One can learn from the project management works of literature that in most successful projects, usually there is a problem associated with their projects closure phase. Thus, in this study, the main focus was to explore a uniquely perceived successful project i.e 'Beautifying Sheger' – 1st phase of Addis Ababa River and Riverside Development project closeout achievement. Addis Ababa, Ethiopia has a number of relatively small, but very significant, rivers running through it.

These rivers are highly polluted and subject to flooding, causing severe environmental and health problems. The potential of the river environmentally, socially, and economically is not being realized and this was recognized by the Prime Minister of Ethiopia who, in 2018, announced the launch of the "Beautifying Sheger" Project.

As mentioned above, this thesis focuses on project closure - an important phase in the project's lifecycle. Moreover, it explores the specific stage of the 'Beautifying Sheger' project closure. As it was a unique type of project for the country in terms of deliberate attention provision from the Government of Ethiopia. During the investigation conducted in this research, there are many good points that can be explained further in future studies.

In this study, the structured questionnaire was the primary data source and provided ground for our understanding and results in the analysis section. It is found that project closure is not a difficult phase to handle if properly handled in the early stages. Planning and preparation for the closure stage are as important as executing the project. Apart from planning there needs to be a closing procedure that everyone knows and is familiar with.

Therefore, the researcher draws the following conclusion based on the findings obtained:-

1. There is a high level of project effectiveness achieved with a mean value of **(4.4121)** and a standard deviation of **(0.6448)** in Lickert scale questions. (RQ1) Thus, contrasting to the common form of project intervention in the country the project acceptance verification practice in the 'Sheger' beautification process was successful and can be benchmarked

2. The main factors of the administrative closeout reveal that in a range of 66.7% - 93.3% of the respondents are agreed on the lessons learned been collected and completed by stakeholders. In general, the project's closure practice examined in this study in terms of lessons learned been collected and completed by stakeholders, and appreciation expressed to the project team can be cited as acceptable closure standard (RQ 2,3). Furthermore, the lessons have been archived appropriately in a repository (RQ 6)

3. There was a high level of communication (93.3%) in terms of project remaining issues, risks and in providing opportunities to stakeholders to gain feedback about the deliverables and to ensure the project's success. Apart from this, more than half (60%) of the respondents witnessed that their project success is celebrated in the process.

4. In terms of the contractual closure, the project office resources disbursement issues are not well-known. Meaning nearly half (46.7%) of the respondents disagreed that this activity is unknown to them. This seems the Project Management Office followed a set of separate processes for contractual closure.

From the study, we can realize that the closure phase needs due attention like other stages of the project implementation process. Often the closure of a project is underestimated. There is not enough time invested in the actual closing of a project or it could be that the project is prematurely closed by a manager (Havila, Medlin, & Salmi, 2013).

Therefore, the project manager needs to implement certain mechanisms to check the progress of project closure and ascertain that the project closes successfully. The involvement of both employees and managers is very important in the last stage.

Having procedures that are known by everyone in the project team is a good way because the communication in the team early on can make it easier in the closing phase. It is especially important for the project manager. This limits the bad surprises and gives the team members a clear picture of what is needed and also who is responsible for the transition when the project is finished.

## 5.2. Recommendations

Broadening and promoting the culture of the accomplishments and lessons learned from this project would be the ideal step to be taken.

Future studies can investigate the handling of project closures in other public organizations. The other public organizations might have a different perspective on handling such project closures because of the environment operating in.

Furthermore, a comparative analysis of the project closures in the public sector and private sector organizations can be conducted to get better insights.

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# Annex : Interview and Mail based open ended questionnaire

## A) Standardized Interview Questionnaire

**Dear Respondents!**

Thank you for your time to fill out my questionnaire. This is intended for partial fulfillment of my Master's Degree program in project management. I am working on the "Assessment of 'Beautifying Sheger' Project closeout" stage accomplishments.

This Survey has been created to solicit feedback on the first phase of the "Beautifying Sheger" Project, to identify how the project closeout was conducted. This survey is meant to capture lessons learned from the project while it is freshin people's minds.

I would like to assert you that, the privacy of the informant and the confidentiality of the information provided by respondents shall be respected. **Thank you once again!**

### I. Demographic profile of the respondents:

1. Your responsibility on the project_____
2. Sex: Male_____ Female_____
3. Work Experience: Below Five years_____ Above five years_____
4. Education Level:
   Certificate_____ Diploma_____ Degree_____ Masters_____ PHD_____
5. In which role do you involve in the project? Project management team_____ Project engineering team_____

### II. Project-related questions

***Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with each statement using the scale shown below asguide: 1. Do not apply =*** *strongly Disagree* ***2. Not at all =*** *Disagree* ***3. Not Very =*** *Neutral* ***4. Somewhat =*** *Agree* ***5. Very =*** *strongly agree*

1. Were the objectives for this project clearly defined?

_____Very

_____Somewhat

_____Not very

_____Not at all

_____Does not apply

2. Did you feel there was strong management support for this project?

_____Very

_____Somewhat

_____Not very

_____Not at all

_____Does not apply

3. Was your project role and responsibilities clearly defined?

_____Very

_____Somewhat

_____Not very

_____Not at all

_____Does not apply

4. Were you able to adequately participate in project decisions?

_____Very

_____Somewhat

_____Not very

_____Not at all

_____Does not apply

5. Has there been adequate cross-functional participation in the project?

_____Very

_____Somewhat

_____Not very

_____Not at all

_____Does not apply

6. Were technical meetings run efficiently and effectively?

_____Very

_____Somewhat

_____Not very

_____Not at all

_____Does not apply

7. Did you feel appreciated, recognized, and rewarded for your efforts?

_____Very

_____Somewhat

_____Not very

_____Not at all

_____Does not apply

8. Have any "people issues" impacted the project in any way?

_____Very

_____Somewhat

_____Not very

_____Not at all

_____Does not apply

9. To what degree did you feel the entire team was committed to the project schedule?

_____Very

_____Somewhat

_____Not very

_____Not at all

_____Does not apply

10. The project closure practice both technically & financially is done completely.

_____Very

_____Somewhat

_____Not very

_____Not at all

_____Does not apply

11. All the project closure plans and steps are properly followed?

_____Very

_____Somewhat

_____Not very

_____Not at all

_____Does not apply

### III. Administrative Closure related questions

***Please indicate your answers on the space provided***

(i) Administrative closure practice related to Deliverable verification and acceptance

| No. | Question | Yes | No | N/A | Comments |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Are all deliverables completed and transitioned to operations? | | | | |
| 2 | Are there recurring maintenance/operational costs for the product to be accounted for? | | | | |
| 3 | Are there recommended enhancements or updates still required? | | | | |
| 4 | Are there outstanding project outcome measurements that need to be done in the future and transitioned to operations? | | | | |
| 5 | Have all tasks been completed? | | | | |
| 6 | The official handover is conducted timely? | | | | |
| 7 | Is Project Objective met (1st Phase)? | | | | |
| 8 | Are there future recommended projects or initiatives related to this one? | | | | |

(ii) Administrative closure practice related to Communication

| No. | Question | Yes | No | N/A | Comments |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Have any remaining issues been communicated to operations? | | | | |
| 2 | Have any remaining risks been communicated to operations? | | | | |
| 3 | Were stakeholders provided with an opportunity to provide feedback about the deliverables and their satisfaction? | | | | |
| 4 | Has the closure been communicated to all stakeholders? | | | | |
| 5 | Has team member performance been communicated to their functional managers, where requested? | | | | |
| 6 | Success acknowledged? | | | | |

(iii) Administrative closure results related to Team involvement and recognition

| No. | Question | Yes | No | N/A | Comments |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Has adequate knowledge transfer and training been completed? | | | | |
| 2 | Has there been appreciation expressed to the project team, including any relevant celebrations? | | | | |
| 3 | Have project team members been released from the project or re-allocated? | | | | |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 4 | Have you had a closure meeting with the Management Group? | | | | |
| 5 | Are you Satisfied? | | | | |
| 6 | The Project success is celebrated? | | | | |

(iv) Administrative closure results related to Documentation archival and lesson learning

| **No.** | **Question** | Yes | No | N/A | Comments |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Has deliverable documentation been handed over to stakeholders and Operations? | | | | |
| 2 | Has documentation been archived in the appropriate repository? | | | | |
| 3 | Have lessons learned been collected and completed by stakeholders? | | | | |
| 4 | If lessons learned have been collected and completed, have they been archived appropriately in a repository or knowledge base? and transitioned to operations? | | | | |
| 5 | Lessons learned are reviewed? | | | | |
| 6 | Is the terminal/closure report prepared? | | | | |
| 7 | Are all the reports approved? | | | | |
| 8 | Does the project office complete and archive final product records? | | | | |

**IV. Contractual closure related questions**

| No | | Yes | No | N/A | Comments |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Does the project office disburse project resources – staff, facilities, and automated systems if any? | | | | |
| 2. | The remaining resource released | | | | |
| 3. | Are all bills paid? | | | | |
| 4. | Are the license & guarantee released? | | | | |
| 5. | Are all property has been returned? | | | | |
| 6. | There are no outstanding issues | | | | |
| 7. | Are all excess budgets are returned/relocated? | | | | |
| 8. | Are all the 1st phase work are accepted? | | | | |
| 9. | Did you confirm the completed deliverables were accepted? | | | | |
| 10. | Are all procurement audited? | | | | |

**I really thank you for your time!!!**

B) **Standardized open-ended mail questionnaire on close out activities on the project**

1. Did you start preparing for project closure well in advance?

2. How well the lessons were learned?

3. What are closure practice both technically & financially

4. Can you explain to me the main project closure activities?

5. Have you gone through the entire projects closure checklist?

6. Do you think your project office give due emphasis in project closure practices?

7. Please explain the lessons drawn from this project execution?

8. Do you think the project contract type bring about successful project closure?

9. How is the contractual closeout practice in the project?

10. Is there anything you would like to add?