

# Sample Templates for Effective Lessons Learned Processes



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## Sample Templates

The sample templates on the following pages list possible headings for documents, followed by potential content areas.

### Sample Template: Strategy and Plan

1. Introduction

*Context, leadership commitment, link to future EMB improvements, etc.*

2. Aims and Purpose of the Lessons Learned Process

*Why the lessons learned process is being conducted, intended benefits, why the process is important, etc.*

3. Methodological Overview

*Main principles followed, methodological approach and main stages of activities, main general questions, public reporting and information, etc.*

4. Consultation

*Who will be consulted (within the EMB, partners, and main stakeholder group), methods to be used (written submissions, meetings, surveys etc.), etc.*

5. Timing

*When key activities are indicatively scheduled to take place.*

6. Responsible Persons

*EMB leads, external facilitation (if required), final decision-making authority, point of contact.*

7. Concluding Comments

*Any other comments, final remarks, if any.*

## Sample Template: Lessons Learned Report

### 1. Table of Contents

*Including report publication date on the cover.*

### 2. Preface

*Remarks from the EMB leadership on the importance of the lessons learned process and commitment to implementing recommendations, acknowledgement of those who took part in the consultations.*

### 3. Executive Summary

*Short summary of methodology, conclusions, and recommendations.*

### 4. Introduction and Context

*Aims and purpose of the exercise, electoral context, electoral changes since the last election, possible information and comments on previous lessons learned exercises.*

### 5. Methodology

*Principles, methodological approach, main general questions, methodology in practice (what took place), limitations (e.g., any groups that did not make submissions).*

### 6. Main Findings, Conclusions, and Recommendations

#### 6.1 The Election Process

*Related to different stages of the election, such as voter registration, candidate nomination, the campaign, operational preparations, out-of-country voting, Election Day, counting, tabulation, announcement of results, and management of complaints.*

#### 6.2 Organizational

*Relating to institutional performance, such as the EMB's transparency, relations with partners, reliability of service, perceptions of independence, leadership appointment process, resourcing, value for money, planning, procurement of sensitive materials, internal communication, logistics, ICT, etc.*

#### 6.3 Participation and Inclusion

*Relating to overall participation and the participation of specific disadvantaged groups.*

#### 6.4 Emerging issues

*For example, disinformation and social media, environmental issues.*

*[It can be helpful to structure each of these sub-sections so they cover 1) introduction (background, description, factual information, and findings); 2) key points from*

*consultations; and 3) key conclusions and recommendations (with key responsible agency and priority recommendations identified).*

7. Next Steps

*Including references to 1) promoting the report (making it available publicly, meeting with other agencies, etc.); 2) developing a recommendations implementation plan; 3) the plan and timing for monitoring the implementation of the report's recommendations; and 4) reviewing the lessons learned process, including inviting comments on the process (with contact information).*

8. Concluding Comments

*Any other comments or final remarks, if any.*

9. Annexes

9.1 Recommendations List

*All recommendations compiled and numbered.*

9.2 Recommendations Chart

*Recommendations in a chart with columns for 1) recommendation number; 2) recommendation; 3) priority recommendation (yes/no); 4) responsible agency (EMB or identified other); 5) legal change required (required, desirable, or not required); 6) other notes.*

9.3 Additional Methodological Information on the Lessons Learned Process

*If needed.*

9.4 List of Acronyms

## Sample Template: Submissions Form

### 1. Introductory Text

#### 1.1 Purpose of the Lessons Learned Process

*To improve future election processes, use the time between elections, involve stakeholders, etc. To answer key questions about what went well, what did not go well (and reasons), and ways forward.*

#### 1.2 Methodological Approach for the Lessons Learned Process

*Principles of the lessons learned process, overview of the methodology, decision-making (EMB will listen to many views and then work out key conclusions and recommendations (based on research, consultations, the law, resources available, and international standards and good practice for elections), public reporting, later monitoring of the implementation of recommendations.*

#### 1.3 Thank You for Taking Part

### 2. Submissions Guidance

*Submissions are more likely to be effective if they are based on a careful review by the organization/person submitting, precise, constructive (making suggestions for improvements and for these to be feasible), about systemic issues (and not about individuals), not too long, points be numbered format. All information can be presented without identifying individuals who contributed comments or opinions.*

### 3. Submitting Organization

*One submission per organization that is based on information collected across the organization is optimal. Determine how to present information: anonymously (yes, no), organization's name, individual's name and position, has consultation taken place within the submitting organization: (i.e., have the views of different people within the organization been considered?), date.*

### 4. Comments and Suggestions on the Election Process

*Have numbering in place to encourage more concise and easy -to-navigate submissions. Include section headings (the election process, organizational, participation and inclusion, any other issues)*

### 5. Priorities

*Which of the above comments (up to a maximum number) are most important?*

### 6. Comments on the Lessons Learned Process

*Any comments or suggestions on the lessons learned process.*

## Sample Template: Recommendations Implementation Plan

### 1 Introduction

*Brief overview of the lessons learned process, summary of recommendations (including priority recommendations), time until the next elections and related events. This plan focuses on recommendations for the EMB (not those for other agencies).*

### 2 Overall Approach to Implementing Recommendations

*EMB commitment to implementing recommendations, incorporation of lessons learned conclusions and recommendations in operational and strategic planning, commitment to ongoing engagement with stakeholders and public reporting on recommendations and their implementation. Plan for monitoring the implementation of recommendations (timing, public reporting, and the EMB's leader for implementation).*

### 3 Plan for Implementing Recommendations

*For each recommendation: 1) recommendation number, 2) recommendation, 3) implementation lead (EMB department and role), 4) key actions to be undertaken (responsible department and possible timing), 5) resources needed, 6) targets and milestones, with timing, 7) other information (including potential risks).*

## Sample Template: Terms of Reference for External Facilitators

The list below is based on the guidelines for the lessons learned process. Select and adapt them as relevant for the context.

The following activities should be conducted in coordination with the EMB leadership, assigned staff, and possible external facilitators. The EMB leadership will make final decisions and be responsible for the content of reporting. Actions of the external facilitator should be consistent with the directions by the EMB leadership, the Lessons Learned Processes Guidelines, national legislation, and international standards for elections.

### **The External Facilitator will contribute to or lead on the following:**

#### Stage 1: Pre-election preparation of strategy and plan

##### Activities:

- *Develop a strategy and plan for the lessons learned process*
- *Develop an internal resourcing plan for the lessons learned process*
- *Hold consultation meetings with key stakeholders on the draft strategy and plan*
- *Finalize the strategy and plan*
- *Disseminate public information on the strategy and plan*
- *Prepare the research methodology, including stakeholder mapping and preparation of commissioning surveys and focus groups*
- *Prepare the tentative format of the final report*

##### Deliverables:

- *Reporting on actions performed*
- *Draft lessons learned strategy and plan*
- *Draft internal resourcing plan*
- *Meeting notes on consultations with stakeholders on the lessons learned strategy and plan*
- *Research methodology materials*
- *Report format*

Stage 2: Following the election, gather information and opinions

Activities:

- *Conduct a desk review of EMB and related information and documentation*
- *Collect opinions from within the EMB (internal consultations)*
- *Collect information and opinions from partners*
- *Collect information and opinions from stakeholders*
- *Archive information*

Deliverables:

- *Notes on consultations within the EMB and with partners and stakeholders on the election process*

Stage 3: Prepare and discuss draft conclusions and recommendations

Activities:

- *Prepare a draft analysis with clear conclusions*
- *Identify draft recommendations*
- *Discuss draft analysis, conclusions, and recommendations with the EMB leadership; make appropriate adjustments*
- *Discuss draft analysis, conclusions, and recommendations within the EMB, partners, and stakeholders*
- *Revise the draft analysis, conclusions, and recommendations*

Deliverables:

- *Draft analysis, conclusions, and recommendations*
- *Notes on discussions of the draft within the EMB and with partners and stakeholders on the election process*

Stage 4: Finalize the report and develop a recommendations implementation plan

Activities:

- *Revise and finalize the report*
- *Submit the report to the EMB leadership for approval*
- *Format the report so it is user-friendly*
- *Prepare a recommendations implementation plan with the responsible department*



Deliverables:

- *Complete draft report*
- *Final report*
- *Recommendations implementation plan*

Stage 5: Share and promote the report

Activities:

- *Prepare the report for publication*
- *Prepare summaries for presentation*
- *Prepare a dedicated outreach plan*
- *Prepare media materials and plan support to the EMB leadership and others for media interviews*
- *Meet with EMB staff to present and discuss the report*
- *Support the EMB leadership in presenting the report to stakeholders*
- *Support the EMB leadership in presenting the report to the legislature and other state agencies*

Deliverables:

- *Report summaries for presentation*
- *Media and interview materials (questions and answers, etc.)*

Stage 6: Follow up

Activities:

- *Collect views on the lessons learned process*
- *Write a report on the lessons learned process*
- *Assemble a full archive of the lessons learned process*
- *Prepare a plan for monitoring the implementation of recommendations*
- *Monitor the implementation of recommendations at a later time*
- *Produce a monitoring report on the implementation of recommendations*
- *Discuss the monitoring report within the EMB and with stakeholders; share the report*
- *Update the records of the lessons learned process*
- *Support the EMB in feeding the lessons learned process into strategic and operational planning*

- *Brief any new commissioners or senior staff on the lessons learned process*
- *Brief others on the lessons learned process and outcomes*

Deliverables:

- *Report on the lessons learned process*
- *Lessons learned process Archive*
- *Plan for monitoring of the implementation of recommendations*
- *Monitoring report on the implementation of recommendations*

**Location:** [For consultants based out of the country, it may be helpful to specify the number of trips expected to the country, with other work being undertaken remotely. At a minimum this would likely include one trip for preparation of a strategy (stage 1), and a second longer trip for consultations and preparation of the report (stages 2 and 3). A third trip could also be undertaken for promotion of the report (stage 5) and monitoring of the implementation of recommendations (stage 6).]

**Timing:** Number of days over [specify] period

**Reporting and decision-making:** [Specify] will hold overall decision-making authority and responsibility for the work. [Specify] will be responsible for daily management, support, and supervision. The work will be performed in conjunction with [specify EMB team/department] and [specify] external facilitators ([specify] with leadership responsibility).

All information should be treated confidentially. Neutrality and impartiality are required in all aspects of the work.



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