

LESSONS LEARNED TEMPLATE

DEFINITION

Lessons learned are detailed reflections on a particular project, initiative, or major work activity, and identification of learning points based on experiences and results achieved during implementation. These lessons may be positive (successes) or negative (failures). You should be able to state the lesson(s) learned in a few sentences and provide verifiable results that are evidence of the lesson(s). Evidence could be quantitative or qualitative and from either internal monitoring and evaluation or formal evaluations. The example template included in this document consists of the major fields (i.e., types of information) that together make up a complete, well-documented lesson learned.

EXAMPLE TEMPLATE

Each field is accompanied by brief guidance in italic text. The template may be adapted for use in other formats according to the needs of your organization, and complemented as needed by additional fields.

Document type: Lessons Learned
Area of work (Outcome Area): <i>your text here</i>
Country: <i>your text here</i>
Title: <i>your text here</i>
Related links: <i>Please provide links to related studies, reports, evaluations, websites that may provide additional information on the Lessons Learned.</i>
Contact person: <i>Please provide the name, title and e-mail address of a person who can be contacted for any questions regarding this lesson.</i>
Abstract: <i>Please provide 1-2 short paragraphs to provide in brief an overall picture of the context, the lesson/s learned (positive or negative), why it is important and the value it adds.</i>
Issue (Background): <i>Briefly (2 paragraphs) describe the initial situation (context) and the problem/ issue addressed by the project, initiative or work activity.</i>
Strategy and Implementation: <i>Describe in 2-3 paragraphs the strategy used and how it was implemented. This should link to the issue outlined above and highlight the main steps taken in implementing the strategy. Strategies may include in terms of advocacy, participation, gender equity, ownership, capacity building, coordination and partnerships, monitoring and evaluation and replication/scaling up.</i>
Progress and Results: <i>In summary (2-3 paragraphs), describe the progress and any verified results (using qualitative and/or quantitative evidence) in implementation. The results could be at output, outcome, impact levels depending on the stage of the implementation. Please describe factors that enabled or hindered progress (challenges), and any shortfalls.</i>
Lesson Learned: <i>Please provide 1-2 short paragraphs to describe in summary the lesson(s) learned. Please limit this to 1-2 major lessons learned. This should leave the reader with an overall picture of the lesson(s), why it is important and the value it adds. Please include information both on what worked and what didn't.</i>
Potential application: <i>Please describe briefly the potential application of the lesson learned to programming, operations or work activities beyond the original scope (e.g. to scale up regionally nationally or to be replicated in other settings, other sectors). What are the issues that need to be considered?</i>
Next steps: <i>Describe (1-2 paragraphs) any planned next steps in implementation and highlight any changes in strategy as a result of progress or results to date.</i>

CREDITS

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