

## Annotated template for strategic reports (updated January 2019) EEA and Norwegian Financial Mechanisms 2014-2021<sup>1</sup>

This annotated template is drafted to guide National Focal Points to produce concise and analytical strategic reports – providing their assessment rather than merely a description under each section below. The report shall not exceed 25 pages (excluding annexes) and shall be based on the latest data and information prior to the report being submitted – the cut-off date for information reported and analysed in the report shall be 1 month prior to the submission of the report.

### 1. Executive summary

Provide a 1-1.5-page summary of the report with a focus on: the effects of the Grants, status of programmes, status of bilateral funds, and key risks. If relevant, mention any changes in management and implementation of the Grants.

### 2. Political, economic and social context

Describe any significant political, economic and social change or trends in the Beneficiary State that had an impact on the implementation of the Financial Mechanisms. [Beneficiary States submitting the Strategic Report within 12 months of signing the Memorandum of Understanding can skip this annex]

### 3. Effects of the Grants

Report and assess the aggregated effect of the Grants as concerns:

- progress towards reducing social and economic disparities
- progress towards strengthening bilateral relations with donor state entities

Provide an analysis of the results' contribution to the latest development trends in the Beneficiary State.



[In the early stages of implementation, the programmes or JCBF might not have any results to report. In this case, you can state this and move on to the next section]

### 4. Status of programmes

Provide a brief assessment of the status of programmes. Include information on:

- Progress in developing and implementing programmes (in terms of concept notes approved, programme agreements signed, calls launched, projects under implementation, bilateral partnerships at project level, etc.);
- How MoU special concerns and/or conditions set in the programme agreements have been addressed in programme design or implementation (for example, how Roma inclusion concerns in the MoU/programme agreements have been addressed);
- Challenges faced related to absorption/disbursements, with implemented/planned solutions.

### 5. Status of bilateral funds

Briefly outline the progress in establishing the Joint Committee for the Bilateral Funds (JCBF). Summarise the development/implementation of the work plan for the bilateral funds and main activities implemented and planned in the coming 12 months and provide a brief assessment of the functioning of the JCBF. The assessment presented in this section shall also include information on the use of the bilateral funds allocated to the programmes by JCBF (including in the MoU) and challenges faced related to absorption/disbursements with planned solutions.

### 6. Management and implementation

#### a. Management and control systems (MCS)

Provide a brief summary of any changes in relation to the national level MCS, any significant changes (implemented or envisaged, if known) in the setup or staffing of the national authorities involved in the implementation of the EEA and Norway Grants. [If relevant]

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<sup>1</sup> Only one (joint) strategic report covering both EEA and Norwegian Financial Mechanisms is required.

If not yet acknowledged by the Donor States, briefly outline progress with respect to establishing Management and Control Systems in the Beneficiary State at national level.

**b. Complaints**

Provide a brief summary and assessment of the complaints received by the National Focal Point and how they have been dealt with. **[Skip if no complaints have been received since the previous Strategic Report]**

**c. Irregularities**

Provide an analysis of any trends in the irregularities detected and how they have been dealt with. **[Skip if no significant developments have happened since the previous Strategic Report]**

**d. Audit**

Give a summary of the findings of audits undertaken by the national audit authorities. **[Skip if no audits have been undertaken since the previous Strategic Report]**

**7. Communication**

Outline progress in the development/implementation of the national-level Communication Strategy, including an assessment of key communication activities carried out by the NFP and planned for the next 12 months

**8. Monitoring and evaluation**

**a. Monitoring**

**II** Provide a brief summary of the key findings of monitoring activities carried out by the NFP (information about audits should *NOT* be reported under this heading) **[If programmes are not in implementation, simply state so]**

**b. Evaluation**

**II** Summarise the findings of any programme evaluations carried out since the previous Strategic Report **[If relevant]**

**9. Issues for the annual meeting**

Please provide any additional information requested by the donors (for example, at the previous annual meeting). If relevant, suggest any issues of particular importance that you would like to discuss at the next annual meeting.

**Annexes<sup>2</sup>** (not published)

**A. Risk assessment and management plan.** Please use the template provided:

<b>Programme name</b> (one row per programme managed by the BS authorities)	<b>Overall level of risk</b> of the programme (on a scale 1-4, where one is very low and 4 is very high)	<b>Risks</b> (key risks to the programme <u>from the point of view of the NFP</u> )	<b>Responses to the risks</b> (undertaken by the NFP in the last 12 months)	<b>Responses to the risks</b> (planned by the NFP in the next 12 months)
Programme 1				
Programme 2, etc.				

**B. Evaluation plan** **[Once all programme agreements have been signed]**

**C. Cooperation with Donor Programme Partners and International Partner Organisations.** Provide a brief assessment of the cooperation between the Programme Operators and Donor Programme Partners/International Partner Organizations, outlining the successes and challenges faced over the last 12 months.

<sup>2</sup> Please submit the annexes as a separate file

- D. **Technical assistance report.** Please account for the use of technical assistance funds, **using the template below.** *[Information on implementation and the effect of activities related to the Fund for bilateral relations or on communication and information activities should be reported through the relevant sections of the Strategic Report, and not through this attachment. The same applies to national level institutions' activities related to risk management and reporting irregularities.*

**Overview of main activities**

This section shall give a brief summary of the main activities carried out by each of the national-level institutions involved in the implementation of the EEA and/or Norway Grants 2014-2021 – the National Focal Point, the Certifying Authority, the Audit Authority, and the Irregularity Authority. The overview should be factual. Any challenges and the way they have been / are being addressed should be noted.

**Budget overview**

This section shall provide information on:

- the implementation of the previous year's TA budget (actual expenditure vs. planned expenditure);
- disbursements to date (cumulative expenditure since the signature of the Agreement vs. total budget); and
- show the planned expenditure for the coming year. If changes are proposed, compared to the budget provided by 30 September of the previous year, then a proper justification is required

**Procurement**

This section shall describe any procurements that have been carried out where certain activities have been outsourced by national level institutions, including the value of the procurement and the name of the provider (for amounts that exceed the national thresholds for the procurement).

**Staffing**

This section shall list the staff involved in the implementation of the Grants, providing their names, official position, their principal responsibilities in respect of the Grants, as well as the estimated percentage of their level of effort related to the Grants. The overview is to allow the Donors to understand the resources available to implement the Grants in the various national-level institutions. The listing should include individuals important to the implementation of the Grants, even if they are not financed through the TA Agreement.

<b>National Focal Point</b>				
Name of staff	Official position	Main tasks	Level of effort (% of working time)	Funded through the Grants (Y/N)
<b>Certifying Authority</b>				
Name of staff	Official position	Main tasks	Level of effort (% of working time)	Funded through the Grants (Y/N)
<b>Name of Audit Authority</b>				
Name of staff	Official position	Main tasks	Level of effort (% of working time)	Funded through the Grants (Y/N)
<b>Irregularities Authority</b>				
Name of staff	Official position	Main tasks	Level of effort (% of working time)	Funded through the Grants (Y/N)