

**Romanian Development Camp – Together for 2015**

Cheile Gradistei, Brasov County, 18-20 September 2008 - The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) organized the First Romanian Development Camp called "Developing ourselves to help develop others." This is an activity within the programme "Strengthening the national institutional and educational capacity to carry out Official Development Assistance (ODA) programme" funded by the Romanian MFA and implemented by UNDP.

As a new EU member state and consequently as a donor country which also signed the UN's *Millennium Declaration* in the year 2000, Romania is joining forces with other 191 states to achieve the 8 Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by the year 2015.

The ODA camp gathered 80 officials from UNDP, MFA Romania, Brasov County, MFA France, MFA Netherlands, MFA Poland, MFA Columbia, European Commission (EC), Alliance Francaise, World Bank, UN Volunteers Bonn, EuropeAid, SIDA, AECID Spain, the German Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, IrishAID Volunteers and The National Youth Council Romania.

"This is a watershed moment for Romania's emerging status as a provider of Official Development Assistance. Ten years from now we are all going to remember how important were the seeds that were planted today," said Mr. Jan Sorensen in his welcoming remarks.

"Right now, the main challenge related to the assistance for

development is the public perception and understanding concerning this issue," continued Sorensen. "Experience has showed us that even the most advanced countries in this field are continuously challenged if the public opinion does not understand and support the development assistance."

The Romanian Development Camp was opened by the presentation of a short film, "Fighting Poverty – the EU in action" produced by EuropeAid and was moderated by Ms. Anamaria Almasan, Deputy Director of the ODA Division within Romania MFA who noted that, "the Romanian mentality can be associated with one of a receiver country rather than a donor actor. With a little effort, this situation will change, given the fact that Romanians usually side with those who are suffering."

European Commission representative Timo Olkkonen noted that the European Union is the greatest donor in the world, 57% of the world assistance comes from EU and its member states. In this context, "Romania can achieve greater visibility by sharing its know-how."

In the first day members of Romanian line ministries, civil society and civil society were trained on a set of comprehensive issues ranging from "Global policy frameworks for development cooperation" (Jan Sorensen, UN RC/UNDP RR) to "Priorities for the French EU Presidency in the field of EU cooperation" (Anne Sophie Ducreaux, Bureau du Pilotage strategique de l'aide, MFA France); and "EU Development Policy" (Timo Olkkonen, DG Development and Relations with African, Caribbean and Pacific States, European Commission). In the afternoon, there were presentations on aid effectiveness, policy coherence in practice, volunteer contributions, and multilateral channels for development cooperation (UN, World Bank and EU).

The second day was dedicated to more technical issues on delivering bilateral ODA with case studies about Serbia, the Republic of Moldova, Latin America, Africa, Afghanistan and Georgia.

The evening was concluded with the opening of an exhibition of creative Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) posters titled "Together for 2015/ Huit Fois Oui" – "De 8 ori Da!" and hosted at the French Alliance within the "George Baritiu" County Library in Brasov. The event was organized by the UNDP in cooperation with the Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), the French Embassy in Bucharest and the French Alliance in Brasov.

The exhibition was a common effort to inform and raise awareness on national and international efforts made to achieve the MDGs, and it will be open to the public until 2 November 2008. The year 2008 marks the middle of the period of time reserved to reach these objectives.

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