

”Strengthening the national institutional and educational capacity to carry out ODA programmes/projects”

Summary

For Romania - deeply engaged in the process of building a modern European democracy - the Millennium Development Goals have represented an instrument to mobilise national energies. By joining the EU in 2007 and thus becoming a member of the family of donor communities, Romania and other new member states are now contributors to the achievement of the MDGs; its donor status has both a national and global perspective, the latter by delivering development assistance to low and medium income countries.

According to the commitments made within the EU, Romania has established its own policy of cooperation for development, complementary to similar efforts at the European level. The Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) as coordinator of this policy, administers and is responsible for the use of funds reserved for the policy of international cooperation for development. The development assistance offered by Romania enters the category of Official Development Assistance (ODA), in compliance with the OECD definition.

”Strengthening the national institutional and educational Capacity to carry out ODA programmes/projects” (hereby called *the programme*) will contribute to the achievement of objectives and priorities established by the National Strategy of cooperation for development for the period 2007- 2009. Its budget of 1, 432,840 USD is set for a period of 25 months.

The programme is financed by the MFA and developed in partnership with The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Romania; it has two main components:

- Component 1: To contribute to strengthening the institutional and administrative capacity to carry out ODA programmes and projects in partner¹ countries, according to the National Strategy of cooperation for development.
- Component 2: To raise the public awareness on Romania's objectives of international cooperation for development and to promote solidarity with the countries which will benefit of this type of assistance.

The beneficiaries of the programme are:

1. Public officials from ministries, agencies and offices directly involved in delivering development assistance and humanitarian aid;
2. Representatives of non-governmental organisations which implement projects and activities connected to development cooperation;
3. Members of Parliament and Parliamentary Committees linked to international relations and to the policy of cooperation for development;
4. Representatives of the higher education system, research institutes, think-tanks, workers unions and private sector;
5. Romanian government, particularly the MFA.

The programme will ensure the technical assistance needed for strengthening the institutional and administrative capacity to reach the objectives set by the National Strategy. The activities outlined by this component will set out transparent and efficient mechanisms of ODA implementation and will contribute

¹Partner country/ partner state: development state of low or middle income level, beneficiary of Romanian ODA, catalogued as potential beneficiary of development assistance by the OECD DAC. See also other definition of terms in Article 3 of the Governmental Decision HG 747/2007.

to strengthening the capacity of institutions and organisation involved in development cooperation actions. Component 1 will include:

- training sessions for public officials of the MFA and other ministries as well as representatives of non-governmental organisations.
- research of best practices and of relevant experience of other donor states in the draw-up and implementation of policies of cooperation for development.
- exchanges and working visits in EU member states and partner countries
- involving national consultants and experts in the field in the draw-up of new development assistance projects and programmes.

The programme's Component 2 contains a national awareness raising campaign, meant to introduce the public to the role and importance of the national policy of international cooperation and the Millenium Development Goals. The campaign will be carried out in close cooperation to the civil society, will contribute to raising the awareness of the public on Romania's role as a donor state and develop solidarity with ODA beneficiary countries. This component will include information and training sessions for journalists, round tables, seminars, special events and mass-media campaign.

Education and preparedness in the field of development is a complementary part of the development cooperation policy of Romania. In this sense, the programme's objective is to introduce specialised courses in the university curriculum to prepare new experts of the field.

The programme will be implemented in partnership with various actors of the private and public sector. The civil society, education and research institutions and mass-media will be appealed to contribute to the planning and implementation of training and awareness raising activities.

The programme will run parallel to the process of ensuring technical assistance for the draw-up and implementation of projects carried out in cooperation with other states and gathering of information on the development needs of priority countries² of the Romanian ODA, necessary for the delivery of development assistance to the priority countries. The process will focus primarily on the Republic of Moldavia, Serbia and Georgia and will be carried out in cooperation with the UNDP offices in these countries.

² Priority state: partner country, beneficiary of Romanian ODA on a multi-annual basis, total assistance volume assistance exceeding 5 million EUR annually.