

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR OUTCOME EVALUATION OF UNDP ROMANIA COUNTRY PROGRAMME 2005 – 2009

Programme Evaluation Period: 2005 – 2009

Programme Areas: Economic growth and poverty reduction

Outcome: Reduced poverty among vulnerable groups – Roma, rural women, youth (including post-institutionalized), people living with AIDS – through employment generation and specific interventions to promote social inclusion.

1. Purpose of the Evaluation

In line with Country Programme evaluation plan for 2005-2009, UNDP Romania Country Office is preparing to carry out a terminal outcome evaluation of the Country Programme in October - November 2009. The purpose of the proposed Outcome Evaluation is to measure UNDP Romania Country Programme 2005-2009 contribution to the national objectives, namely with respect to the specific objective of reduced poverty among vulnerable groups – Roma, rural women, youth (including postinstitutionalized), people living with AIDS – through employment generation and specific interventions to promote social inclusion;

It will also look at UNDP's contribution to corporate (MYFF/Strategic Plan¹) goals of reducing poverty and achieving MDGs, fostering democratic governance and sustainable development with a view to inform, guide the implementation of the Country Programme Document for 2010-2012 with explicit purpose of inputting the Country Program Action Plan (CPAP) for the same period.

In this context, the express purpose of the evaluation is to take stock of lessons learned from the previous programming period to inform CPAP especially with a view to how the CO may use past experience to inform programming under new modalities benefiting from structural, cross border, cohesion and other funds made available to UNDP program by the Government of Romania.

The UNDP Country Office has not to date had an Evaluation Management Committee. As part of the CPD 2010-2012 preparations, the CO has committed to the following evaluation management arrangement:

The Government and UNDP will establish a joint planning and review mechanism for all programme components, to assess the country programme results and resources framework and prepare a work plan for the next year. Annual planning and review meetings will dedicate special attention to systematic monitoring of the cost-effectiveness of the partnership between UNDP and the Government of Romania, identifying

¹ The Multi-Year Funding Framework (MYFF) was introduced in 2000 as UNDP's primary corporate strategic planning instrument. However, 2008 sees the introduction of a Strategic Plan. For the period 2008-2011, a Strategic Plan replaces the MYFF.

areas for corrective action. Other United Nations organizations, and representatives of donors and civil society, may also participate in these meetings.

At present, the Evaluation Management stakeholder is the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on behalf of the Government of Romania. It is expected that the Evaluation Management Committee will be established at end 2009 to review this Evaluation exercise and will comprise the signatory ministries of the CPAP.

2. Social, Economic and Political context

Romania joined the European Union (EU) on 1 January 2007 following a pre-accession period which saw fundamental reforms towards deepening democratic and market economy practice. Following accession, the country qualified for access to substantial EU structural and cohesion funds of Euro 19.7 billion for the period 2007 - 2013. This also includes promotion of social inclusion.

The European Commission notes, however, that fighting corruption and social inclusion continue to pose challenges for Romania to meet its accession commitments:

Poverty persists, with 13.8% of the population living below the poverty line (as of 2007). Two-thirds of Romania's poor live in rural areas despite the country's substantial potential in agriculture, forestry, and fisheries. The Roma are under risk of social inclusion and experience poverty at highest incidence in the country, threatened by discriminatory practice in housing, education and health, according to the most recent EC assessment. Successful programs targeting Roma inclusion are needed not only for Romania's own social inclusion goals but also for the benefit of other countries facing challenges of Roma inclusion both within the EU member states and among neighboring countries. The international decade for Roma inclusion provides a needed international collaboration framework for this field. The national strategy for Roma inclusion has been formulated in 2007, however, its full fledged implementation and monitoring by social partners has not been fully achieved. The disabled and youth leaving institutional care continue to be defined as vulnerable groups who need further social policy attention.

Labor market challenges persist, despite the apparently low levels of unemployment. Active labor market programs have not been fully successful in integrating vulnerable groups, while population dynamics, notably migration, continue to distort labor market dynamics. Business practices for women in employment, including work-life balance solutions, have not met European standards. The global economic downturn in 2009 is expected to impact Romania by reduced remittances from workers and further exacerbating the living conditions of the rural poor and Roma.

Although gender equality is achieved in key social development areas (education, health and employment), democratic deficits in representation are acute for gender equality and possibly run along ethnic lines.

EU membership also poses new challenges and opportunities for Romania to enter into a new sphere of relations with the international development community. Development cooperation is a shared competence with the EC and consequently the Government of Romania will advance the EU wide goal towards allocation of 0.33% of GDP by 2015 for development assistance (ODA).

Indeed, Romania is poised to play a lead role among new member states in advancing this goal, and in contributing towards the global achievement of the MDGs by becoming more active promoting global public goods and governance institutions. Similarly, the Government links its growing development cooperation role to efforts to promote regional and national public goods, through regional leadership in trade, energy supply, environment and peace and security.

3. Subject of the evaluation

The subject of the evaluation is the country programme and projects with a specific focus on one outcome, that is Outcome for reduced poverty among vulnerable groups – Roma, rural women, youth (including post-institutionalized), people living with AIDS – through employment generation and specific interventions to promote social inclusion. The selection of the outcome for evaluation (namely Reduced poverty among vulnerable groups) is made on the grounds that most of program pipeline development under the new CPD, Outcome 3 will fall under this category of projects, especially are relating to supporting national authorities in their absorptive capacities of European structural funds.

The financial analysis of the Country Program resources as at end 2008 is as follows:

III. Country Programme Resources (as at end 2008)

Focus Area		
	Total USD	% of Total
Poverty and MDGs	3,946,000	23
Democratic Governance	10,455,000	61
Environment and Sustainable Development	2,827,000	16
Total	17,228,000	100

4. Evaluation Objectives and Scope

The overall objective of the terminal outcome evaluation will be to assess how UNDP Romania Country Programme 2005-2009 results contributed, together with the assistance of partners, to a change in development conditions in Romania. A particular focus will be addressed to Outcome 3 Reduced poverty among vulnerable groups –

Roma, rural women, youth (including post-institutionalized), people living with AIDS – through employment generation and specific interventions to promote social inclusion.

More specifically, this terminal outcome evaluation seeks to achieve the following objectives, namely;

- Assess progress towards the achievement of the outcome, the extent to which the Country Programme outcome resulting from the inputs and outputs have been achieved.
- Determine contributing factors and impediments and extent of the UNDP contribution to the achievement of the results.
- Assess the viability and effectiveness of partnership strategies in relation to the achievement of the results.
- Document experiences and lessons learned of relevance to new programming initiatives within the context of programming efforts with European Structural Funds, notably the window for human resources development in terms including but not limited to:
 - Partnerships
 - Geographical focus of interventions
- Assess if the programmatic adjustments moved the CPD in right direction
- Based on the analysis of achievements and positioning above, present key findings; draw key lessons and provide clear and forward-looking recommendations (e.g. new CPD baselines) in order to make the necessary adjustments in the future Country Programme cycle and feed into the Country Programme Action Plan (CPAP).

Primary users of the evaluation will be CO management and Programme staff. Based on evaluation findings, needed adjustments would be made during the new Country programme and Action Plan development.

Within its scope, the evaluation will cover the following subject matters:

Strategic Positioning

- The evaluation should review the role and position of UNDP in the context of the recent EU accession of Romania.

Development Results and Sustainability Issues

- Provide an examination of the effectiveness and sustainability of the UNDP programme, by (a) highlighting main achievements (outcomes) at national level in the last five years (2005-2009) and UNDP's contribution to these in terms of key outputs; (b) ascertaining current progress made in achieving the 'reduced poverty among vulnerable groups' outcome in the given thematic areas of UNDP and UNDP's support to these. Assess contribution to capacity development at the national level to the extent it is implicit in the intended results. Consider anticipated and unanticipated, positive and negative outcomes.

- Identify and document cross practice linkages that have been achieved in the past programming cycle (e.g. environmental protection or enhanced good governance practices achieved and sustainable through interventions under the outcome with goal of reducing poverty)
- Provide an analysis of UNDP Romania SRF/MYFF outcomes/service lines under the chosen MDG Goals, assessing the anticipated progress in achieving the intended outcome.

Lessons Learned and good practices

- Identify key lessons in the thematic areas of focus and on positioning that can provide a useful basis for strengthening UNDP and its support to the country and for improving programme performance, results and effectiveness in the future.
- Draw lessons from unintended results.
- Make recommendations and advice on the baselines for the future cycle.

5. Evaluation Questions

During the course of the evaluation, the following broad questions need to be addressed:

- ✓ Have the right things been done? (was the UNDP results and associated programmes and projects relevant, appropriate and strategic to national goals and the UNDP mandate?)
- ✓ Have things been done right? (were the actions to achieve the results effective and efficient?)
- ✓ Are the results sustainable? (will the results lead to benefits beyond the life of the existing programmes(s)/projects(s) ?
- ✓ How might we do things better in the future? (which findings may have relevance for future programming or for other similar initiatives elsewhere?)
- ✓ Has gender been mainstreamed into the programming approach? Is progress towards outcome targets resulting in gender equality advancements?
- ✓ Has human rights approach been followed? Is progress towards outcome targets based on human rights advancements?
- ✓ **Have cross practice linkages been established with environment and energy practice; with democratic governance practice?**

Outcome status: Determine whether or not the outcome has been achieved and, if not, whether there has been progress made towards its achievement, and also identify the challenges to the attainment of the outcome. Identify innovative approaches and capacities developed through UNDP assistance. Identify gender equality and human rights approaches developed through UNDP assistance.

Underlying factors: Analyze the underlying factors beyond UNDP's control that influenced the outcome. Distinguish the substantive design issues from the key implementation and/or management capacities and issues including the timeliness of

results, the degree of stakeholders and partners' involvement in the completion of results, and how processes were managed/carried out.

Partnership strategy: Ascertain whether UNDP's partnership strategy has been appropriate and effective. What were the partnerships formed? What was the role of UNDP? How did the partnership contribute to the achievement of the outcome? What was the level of stakeholders' participation? Examine the partnership among UN Agencies and other donor organizations in the relevant field.

This will also aim at validating the appropriateness and relevance of the Country Programme results to the country's needs and the partnership strategy and hence enhancing development effectiveness and/or decision making on UNDP future programming and role.

Lessons learnt: Identify lessons learnt and best practices and related innovative ideas and approaches in programming, and in relation to management and implementation of activities to achieve related outcomes. This will support learning lessons about UNDP's contribution to the Country Programme cycle so as to design a better assistance strategy for the next Country Programme 2010-2012.

5. Evaluation Approach

Based on the objectives mentioned above, the lead consultant will propose a methodology and plan for this assignment, which will be approved by UNDP Romania CO senior management. A design matrix approach relating objectives and/or outcomes to indicators, study questions, data required to measure indicators, data sources and collection methods that allow triangulation of data and information often ensure adequate attention is given to all study objectives.

However, it is recommended that the methodology should take into account the following, namely:

- Strategic Results Framework (SRF) for a description of the intended results, the baseline for the results and the indicators and benchmarks used. Obtain information from the country office gathered through monitoring and reporting on the outcome. This will help inform evaluation of whether change has taken place.
- Examination of contextual information and baselines contained in project documents, the Country Programme Document, Common Country Assessment/United Nations Development Assistance Framework (CCA/UNDAF) and other sources. These documents speak to the outcome itself, as opposed to what UNDP is doing about it, and how it was envisaged at certain points in time preceding UNDP's interventions.
- Validation of information about the status of the results that is culled from contextual sources such as the SRF or monitoring reports. To do this,

- consultant(s) may use interviews or questionnaires during the evaluation that seek key respondents' perceptions on a number of issues, including their perception of whether an outcome has changed.
- Probing the pre-selected outcome indicators, go beyond these to explore other possible outcome indicators, and determine whether the indicators have actually been continuously tracked.
 - Undertake a constructive critique of the outcome formulation itself (and the associated indicators). This is integral to the scope of outcome evaluation. The consultants can and should make recommendations on how the outcome statement can be improved in terms of conceptual clarity, credibility of association with UNDP operations and prospects for gathering of evidence.
 - Desk review of existing documents and materials such as support documents, evaluations, assessments, and a variety of temporal and focused reports. In particular it will review mission, programme/project reports, the annual reports and the consultant's technical assessment reports.
 - Interviews with key informants including gathering the information on what the partners have achieved with regard to the outcome and what strategies they have used including focus group discussions.
 - Field visits to selected sites; and briefing and debriefing sessions with UNDP and the Government, as well as with donors and partners.

6. Expected Products

The consultants will produce a report (in line with UNDP evaluation report format and quality control checklist for its content), with an executive summary describing key findings and recommendations. The assessment will entail, *inter alia*:

1) A report containing (Hard copy, a soft copy in MS Word and Acrobat reader, Times New Roman, Size 12, Single Spacing):

- Executive summary
- Introduction, description of the evaluation methodology
- An analysis of key interactions (the outcome, substantive influences, UNDP's contribution and how UNDP works with other relevant actors) and associations between variables measuring the outcome,
- Key lessons learnt, highlighting key factors that might hamper the impact of CO programmes and projects and suggesting possible recommendations,
- Conceptual Framework to the Country Programme in terms of future programming and policy
- Assumptions made during the evaluation and study limitations, and
- Conclusions and recommendations
- Annexes: ToRs, field visits, people interviewed, documents reviewed, etc

2) Debrief UNDP, Government of Romania, other UN agencies and development partners in Romania

On the overall, the evaluation team will have the following responsibilities:

- Documentation review
- Planning, conducting and reporting on the evaluation exercise.
- Deciding on division of labour within the evaluation team in coordination with the UNDP DRR
- Use of best practice evaluation methodologies in conducting the evaluation
- Presentation of the draft evaluation findings and recommendations in-country
- Conducting the debriefing for UNDP and Partners
- Drafting and finalization of the evaluation report
- Informing on the social, economic and political context
- Contributing to the development of the evaluation plan and methodology
- Conducting those elements of the evaluation determined by the lead consultant
- Contributing to presentation of the evaluation findings and recommendations at the evaluation wrap-up meeting
- Contributing to the drafting and finalization of the evaluation report.

Management Arrangements:

UNDP Romania will:

- Provide the consultants with all the necessary support (not under the consultant's control) to ensure that the consultants undertake the study with reasonable efficiency.
- Appoint a focal point in the programme section to support the consultants during the evaluation process.
- Collect comprehensive background documentation and inform partners and selected project counterparts.
- Arrange and meet all travel related costs to project sites as part of the programme evaluation cost.
- Support and identify key stakeholders to be interviewed as part of the evaluation.
- The programme staff members will be responsible for liaising with partners, logistical backstopping and providing relevant documentation and feedback to the evaluation team
- Organize inception meeting between the consultants, partners and stakeholders, including Government prior to the scheduled start of the evaluation assignment.

Equally, UNDP Romania will provide the following documents to the Evaluation Team:

- ✓ UNDP Quality Criteria for Evaluation Report
- ✓ Ethical Code of Conduct for Evaluation in UNDP
- ✓ UNDP Guidelines for Outcome Evaluators
- ✓ Mid term project evaluations 2005-2009
- ✓ Programme and Project Documents
- ✓ Annual Reports (project and programme-ROAR)

7. Composition, skills and experience of the evaluation team

The evaluation team shall consist of:

- One international consultant
- One national consultant

The general qualifications of the consultants will include:

- Advanced university degree, relevant to the assignment (e.g. Business/Public Administration, Economics, Law, etc)
- Proven experience of at least 10 years in programme/project management at the international level, preferably with UN experience
- Proven knowledge of and experience in evaluation methodologies and tools
- Demonstrated exposure and knowledge of the political, cultural and economic situation in Central and Eastern Europe; strong understanding of the development in transition and prior experience in programming in a transitional and EU accession setting
- Excellent writing and analytical skills
- Ability to meet tight deadlines
- Fluency in English.

8. Tentative Plan for evaluation implementation

Tentative Scheme for proposed 30 day Evaluation Mission (time tolerance 5-10%) for 2 consultants resulting in 15 day per consultant. Other arrangements of division of labor between the consultants may be considered.

Planned timeframe:

Expected starting date of the assignment = 19 October 2009

Submission of draft evaluation report = 2 November 2009

Submission of final evaluation report = 9 November 2009

In particular:

- Deskwork and documentation review at UNDP Romania Country Office (10 days)
- UNDP Briefing (2 days)
- Consultations in Bucharest, meetings with major stakeholders and partners (5 days)
- Collecting inputs and feedback of in-country donors (3 days)
- Visit to project sites, information gathering and analysis (3 days)
- Preparation of draft evaluation report (3 days)
- Evaluation report finalisation and submission (3 days)
- Final Review UNDP and Ministry of Foreign Affairs (1 days)

9. Selection Criteria:

A cumulative analysis will be utilized in evaluating the candidates, through a two-stage procedure. In the first stage, based on P11 forms, letters of intentions and telephone interviews, qualifications and working experience will be evaluated in view of responsiveness to the Terms of Reference (TOR). A technically qualified and responsive candidate will be considered the one passing the minimum technical score of 49 (=70%) of the obtainable technical score of 70 points.

In the second stage, **only the qualified and responsive candidates** (those passing the minimum 49 points) **will be contacted and requested to provide their financial offers**. A maximum of 30 points will be assigned to the lowest priced offer. All other price offers will receive points in inverse proportion, using the formula:

$$\text{Financial score offer X} = 30 * (\text{lowest priced offer} / \text{price offer X})$$

The candidate obtaining the highest cumulative score (technical + financial) will be considered as offering best value for money. Reference checks on the successful candidate will be performed by UNDP as mandatory process prior to the award of contract.

	Technical criteria			Total technical	Financial offer scores	Total score
	Proven experience of at least 10 years in programme/project management at the international level, preferably with UN experience	Proven knowledge of and experience in evaluation methodologies and tools	Demonstrated exposure and knowledge of the political, cultural and economic situation in Central and Eastern Europe; strong understanding of the development in transition and prior experience in programming in a transitional and EU accession setting			
Max. pts. obtainable	(20)	(30)	(20)	(70)	(30)	(100)

10. How to apply

Interested individual consultants should submit the following documents:

- An application letter, in English, indicating how the consultant's experience fits with the requirements of this notice and what is the envisaged approach in successfully fulfilling the tasks.
- the fully filled-in and signed P11 form
- at least 2 signed references (in English) from previous beneficiaries of services of similar nature

The documents must be sent:

- by e-mail to procurement.ro@undp.org
- or by fax to 0212017828

Important note: consultants should NOT send any financial offer at this stage.

The deadline for submitting applications is 12 October, 2009.