

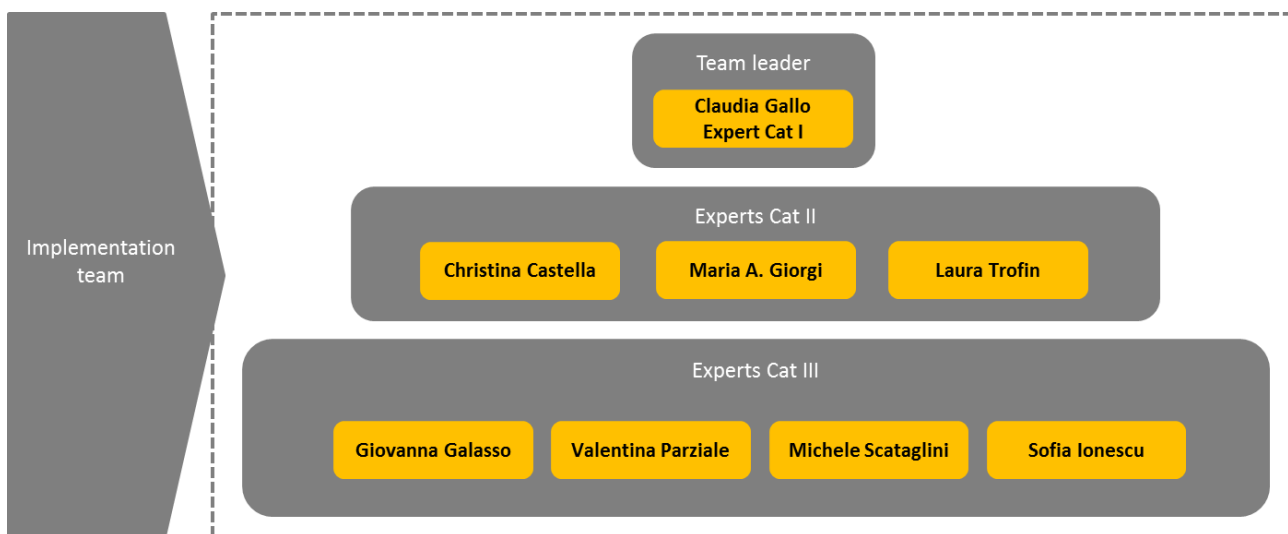
Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1. Context of the project

The project *“Examination of the evaluation culture”* is financed under the Operational Programme Technical Assistance (OPTA), within the *“Framework Agreement for evaluation of Structural Instruments during 2011-2015 - Lot 2 Capacity Building in the Field of Evaluation”*. The total value of the contract is 1,023,868 RON, including the incidental expenditure.

The beneficiary is the Central Evaluation Unit of the Ministry of European Funds and the above mentioned Framework Agreement is part of the projects financed under KAI 1.2 of the Operational Programme Technical Assistance in order to enhance the development of a common evaluation culture.

The implementation team includes experts with relevant experience in the evaluation of policies and programmes financed from EU funds and information management systems for Structural Instruments:



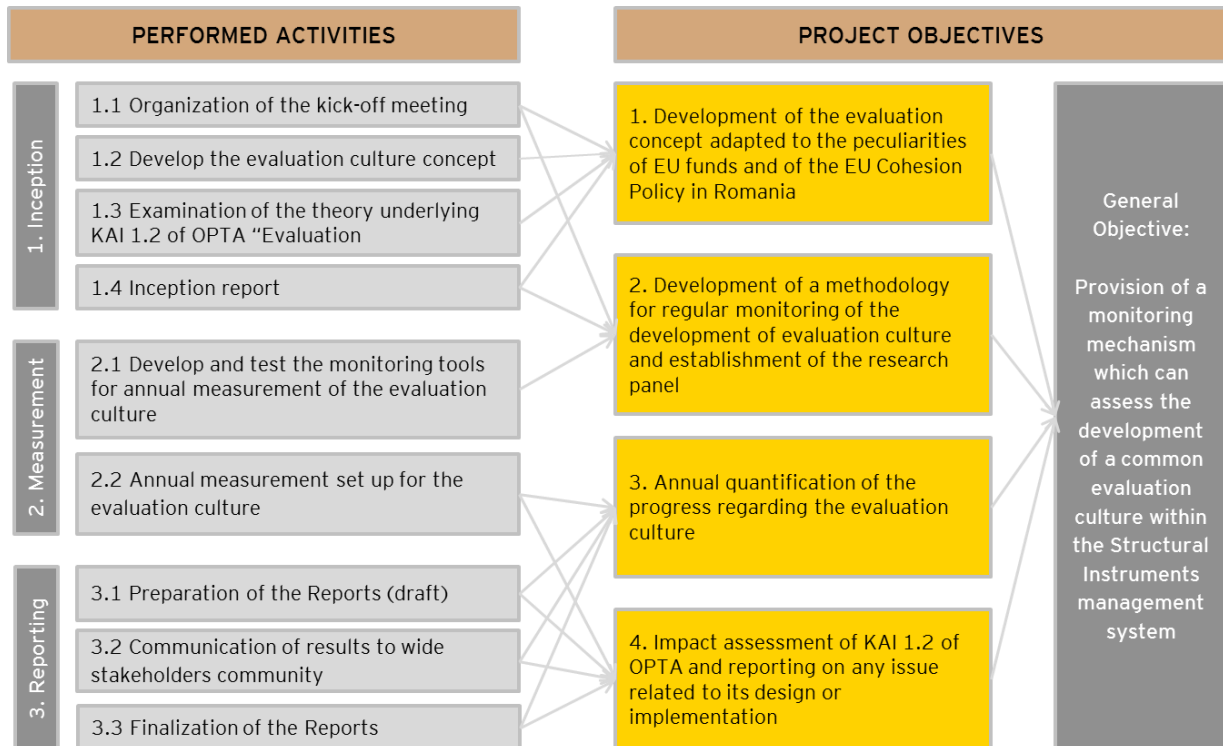
The project stems from the OPTA interim evaluation, completed in September 2010, according to which the evaluation culture concept in Romania is not tailored for the specificities of Structural Instruments and thus it is necessary to develop a monitoring mechanism which may assess and estimate the development of the evaluation culture related to Structural Instruments, both in qualitative and quantitative terms.

The **overall objective** of the project is to contribute to the improvement of the quality, efficiency and consistency of KAI 1.2 “Evaluation” of OPTA through the **provision of a monitoring mechanism** which can assess the level of achievement of the key area of intervention, namely the development of a common evaluation culture within the Structural Instruments management system, both in quantitative and qualitative terms.

The **specific objective** of this subsequent contract is to support the Evaluation Central Unit (ECU) and the MA of the OPTA in the:

- ▶ Development of the evaluation concept adapted to the peculiarities of EU funds and of the EU Cohesion Policy in Romania
- ▶ Examination of the theory underlying the strategy of KAI 1.2 of OPTA and reporting on any issue related to its design or implementation
- ▶ Development of a methodology for regular monitoring of the development of evaluation culture and establishment of the research panel
- ▶ Annual quantification of the progress regarding the evaluation culture

Within the project, the Evaluation Team measured the diffusion of Evaluation Culture within the System of Structural Instruments in Romania and monitored its progress through three Annual Measurement cycles, between 18.04.2012 and 17.10.2014. The graph below illustrates the activities performed by the Evaluation Team and the contribution towards achieving the project objectives:



The progress of the Project was monitored through 5 Interim Reports:

- ▶ Interim report 1 (related to first evaluation cycle): included in the annex the methodological document and the measurement report for the first evaluation cycle
- ▶ Interim report 2 (related to second evaluation cycle): included in the annex the methodological document for the second evaluation cycle
- ▶ Interim report 3 (related to second evaluation cycle): included in the annex the evaluation report for the second evaluation cycle
- ▶ Interim report 4 (related to third evaluation cycle): included in the annex the methodological document for the third evaluation cycle
- ▶ Interim report 5 (related to third evaluation cycle): included in the annex the measurement report for the third evaluation cycle

The first cycle was completed with the approval of the First Annual Measurement Report in February 2013. The second cycle was completed with the approval of the Second Annual Measurement Report in November 2013. The present document, the third Annual Measurement Report, illustrates the results of the third cycle of evaluation and the overall conclusions of the project.

1.2. Definition of Evaluation Culture and its dimension

The literature review concerning the concept of evaluation culture has brought a series of aspects into light, widely acknowledged by all sources analysed. The discourse on evaluation culture stems in most sources from:

- ▶ the main purposes of evaluation, e.g. accountability and learning