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Subsequent Contract n. 16 - Ex-Ante Evaluation of Operational Programme Aid to the Most Deprived 2014-2020

Ministry of European Funds, Romania

Final Report

Ex-ante Evaluation Report for the Operational Programme Aid to the Most Deprived 2014-2020

April 2015

Framework Agreement for evaluating the Structural Instruments during 2011-2015
Lot 1 - Evaluations

Subsequent Contract n. 16 - Ex-Ante Evaluation of Operational Programme Aid to the most Deprived 2014-2020

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List of Abbreviations

NACPA	National Authority for Child Protection and Adoption
DG APE	Directorate General Analysis, Programming and Evaluation
APIA	Agency for Payments and Intervention in Agriculture
AROPE	At risk of poverty and social exclusion
CPA	Certifying and Paying Authority
DG SCTA	Directorate General System Coordination and Technical Assistance
DPPITA	Directorate Public Procurement Information Technology and Administrative
DGSAPC	Directorate General for Social Assistance and Child Protection
DGPE	Directorate General Pre-university Education
DGBFSHR	Directorate General Budget, Finance, Salaries and Human Resources
EC	European Commission
ESF	European Social Fund
ESL	Early School Leaving
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation
FEAD	Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived
GD	Government Decision
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
IMF	International Monetary Fund
MA	Managing Authority
MARD	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development
MEF	Ministry of European Funds
MESR	Ministry of Education and Scientific Research
MLFSPE	Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Protection and Elderly
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
OP	Operational Programme
OPAC	Operational Programme Administrative Capacity
OPAD	Operational Programme Aid to the Most Deprived
OPHC	Operational Programme Human Capital
PEAD	Provision of surplus food for the poorest population of the European Union
SOPHRD	Sectorial Operational Programme Human Resources Development
TO	Thematic Objective
ToR	Terms of Reference

Executive Summary

Purpose and scope

This is the final ex-ante evaluation report of the Operational Programme Aid for the Most Deprived 2014-2020. The purpose of the ex-ante evaluation was to bring added value and to improve the quality of the Operational Programme, which was negotiated with the European Commission according to EU Regulation 223/2014 on the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived.

The report provides answers to the six evaluation questions, which are grouped around four topics: the assessment of the programme strategic contribution, its internal consistency, the involvement of the relevant stakeholders in the programming process and the programme performance. For each evaluation question a brief methodological description is provided and the answer to it.

Methodology and ex-ante evaluation process

The methodology for the ex-ante evaluation was detailed in the Inception Report prepared by the Evaluator, and it is also attached to this Report in Annex 4. Among the main methods and instruments used for each evaluation question it can be noted documentary analysis, interviews and a workshop with relevant stakeholders, external coherence matrix of the operational programme, studies of working papers, relevant guidelines developed at European level and statistical databases. This was developed by taking into account the requirements of the Terms of Reference, the input from the Evaluation Steering Committee following the consultations which took place at Ministry of European Funds, and the Regulation No. 223/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 March 2014 on the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived. The ex-ante evaluation was an iterative and interactive process, where the ex-ante evaluator provided ongoing commentary on the programme development. In total, two versions of the Operational Programme were evaluated before the approval by the European Commission.

The current report is based on the Programme elaborated by the Ministry of European Funds and submitted for ex-ante evaluation during October 2014, and approved by the European Commission in November 2014.

Findings and recommendations

Overall, the Programme is consistent with the Europe 2020 strategy and other with other relevant strategies or programmes at national level. It has consistent intervention logic, starting from clearly identified needs, to programme goals, financed operations and indicators targeted. The elaboration of the Operational Programme was supported by the input of relevant stakeholders such as ministries or non-governmental organisations activating in a field relevant to the Operational Programme. Reporting actions and evaluations envisaged for the Operational Programme Aid to the Most Deprived are in line with European regulations, while for data collection procedures, there is room for improvement and clarifications, to avoid creation of administrative burden.

The findings of the evaluation are synthesised below, while a table of conclusions and recommendations is presented in all chapters, correlated with the evaluation questions included in the Terms of Reference.

► *EQ 1. Programme contribution to EU objective to reduce poverty*

The Operational Programme Aid to the Most Deprived proposes two types of assistance, namely food supplies to those with low incomes and stationery and school bags to the most deprived children addressing a total target group estimated at more than 3 million people / year. Additionally, the Programme also envisages accompanying measures in order to contribute to the social insertion of those benefiting from the food supply support, such as guidance towards social services, and as a prerequisite to the interventions of the Operational Programme Human Capital 2014-2020.

In relation to Europe 2020 Strategy's objective of reducing the population at risk of poverty or social exclusion, it is rather difficult to quantify the Programme's contribution given the relatively low monetary value of the basket of goods offered, as well as the reduced frequency of the aid. Therefore, the contribution to this objective is appraised qualitatively as medium to low.

► **EQ 2: Internal consistency**

Overall the programme displays a coherent intervention, identifying the types of material deprivation that have to be addressed in order to correspond to the national needs, indicating a programme goal, operations and accompanying measures for the food supply operation, as well as the characteristics of the distribution related to the goods provided and target group. Accompanying measures related to school equipment supplies, while not explicitly indicated in the Operational Programme are current functions carried out at school level.

Regarding consistency with other financial instruments, the evaluation revealed complementarities between the Operational Programme's types of intervention and several policies and programmes identified in the Chapter 4.2 of this report. However, two aspects could be further considered:

- The coordination with both Operational Programme Human Capital and the national policy instruments, by indicating the complementarities and synergies to be pursued, in the form of accompanying measures,
- Other programmes which finance complementary interventions for the same target groups as the Operational Programme, namely Provision of Free Text Books.

► **EQ 3: Financial allocation**

The Operational Programme financial allocation is higher than the one available in the previous programming period for food supply intervention, the average amount/participant/year is estimated at €26.6, and similar in the case of school stationary supply intervention, i.e. the average amount/participant/year is €5.5. However, some recommendations were provided which referred to:

- Including an explicit argumentation for the financial weight attributed to the two actions of the Programme,
- Specifying whether the financial allocation for School Supplies action will be on top of the current allocation for the National *Program for School Supplies Provision (law126/2002)* or the Operational Programme financial allocation will replace the national funding,
- Clarify how the accompanying measures regarding basic hygiene education, supporting the access to healthcare and social services, guiding for employment and support for job search will be financed.

► **EQ 4: Results and outputs**

The analysis related to indicators concluded that overall there is a causal link between the estimated output and intended results. Information regarding collection, the sources of data and reporting frequency will be detailed in the Guideline on indicators, whose development was initiated under the framework of the ex-ante evaluation contract.

In terms of external factors it can be considered that no significant influence will be exercised for the two actions.

► **EQ 5: Involvement of relevant stakeholders**

The Operational Programme is the result of a partnership process, steered by the Ministry of European Funds and involving the representatives of Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Protection (including National Agency for Employment), National Authority for Child Rights Protection and Adoption, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, Agency for Payments and Interventions for Agriculture, County Councils and of the civil society, respectively National Associations of Retired People in Romania, Association of Communes of Romania, and Red Cross Romania. Through the consultative process, stakeholders were informed about the programme and their feedback was received and considered in the programme.

► **EQ 6: Programme Performance**

In terms of monitoring procedures and data collection, the Operational Programme Aid for the Most Deprived is in line with the European regulation no.223/2014. Regarding the institutional set-up, the Ministry of European Funds will be the Managing Authority, and the Audit Authority and Certifying and Paying Authority will be the same as for the other Operational Programmes in Romania.

Three types of data will be collected for assessing the performance of the programme: data about goods distributed, data about financial value of goods distributed and data about members of the target group reached. Considering that the OP

does not specify the type of information to be collected, it was recommended that more detailed information should be included in the Guidelines regarding flow of data and specific type of information.

This report closes the ex-ante evaluation process for Operational Programme Aid for the Most Deprived 2014-2020.

1. Introduction

Purpose and scope of the evaluation

The current report is the Final Ex-ante Evaluation Report of the Operational Programme Aid for the Most Deprived 2014-2020. Its purpose is to bring value added and to improve the quality of the Operational Programme which will be negotiated with the European Commission, according to EU Regulation 223/2014.

The report is based on the version of the Operational Programme received by the Evaluator in October 2014 and further approved by the European Commission in November 2014.

According to the terms of reference, four broad themes are addressed through 6 evaluation questions, as presented in the table below.

Table 1: Evaluation themes and questions

Strategic contribution	Programme internal consistency
Q1: To what extent does the Programme contribute to Union's objective to reduce with at least 20 million the number of people that live in poverty or at poverty and social exclusion risk until 2020?	Q2.1: How is the internal consistency of the proposed operational programme ensured? Q2.2: What is its relationship (of the programme) with other relevant financial instruments? Q3: To what extent is there consistency between budgetary resources and the operational programme's objectives? Q4.1: How will estimated outputs contribute to results? Q4.2: To what extent do results contribute to programme objectives? Q4.3: To what extent are results influenced by external factors, including other existing instruments?
Involvement of relevant stakeholders	Programme Performance
Q5: To what extent is ensured the involvement of relevant stakeholders?	Q6: What is the adequacy of the operational programme's monitoring procedures and data collection procedures necessary for evaluation?

The time period covered in the evaluation report is between the date of the first version of the OP (August 2014) and the date when the OP was approved by the European Commission (November 2014).

Report Structure

Based on the questions included in the Terms of Reference, the report is structured as follows:

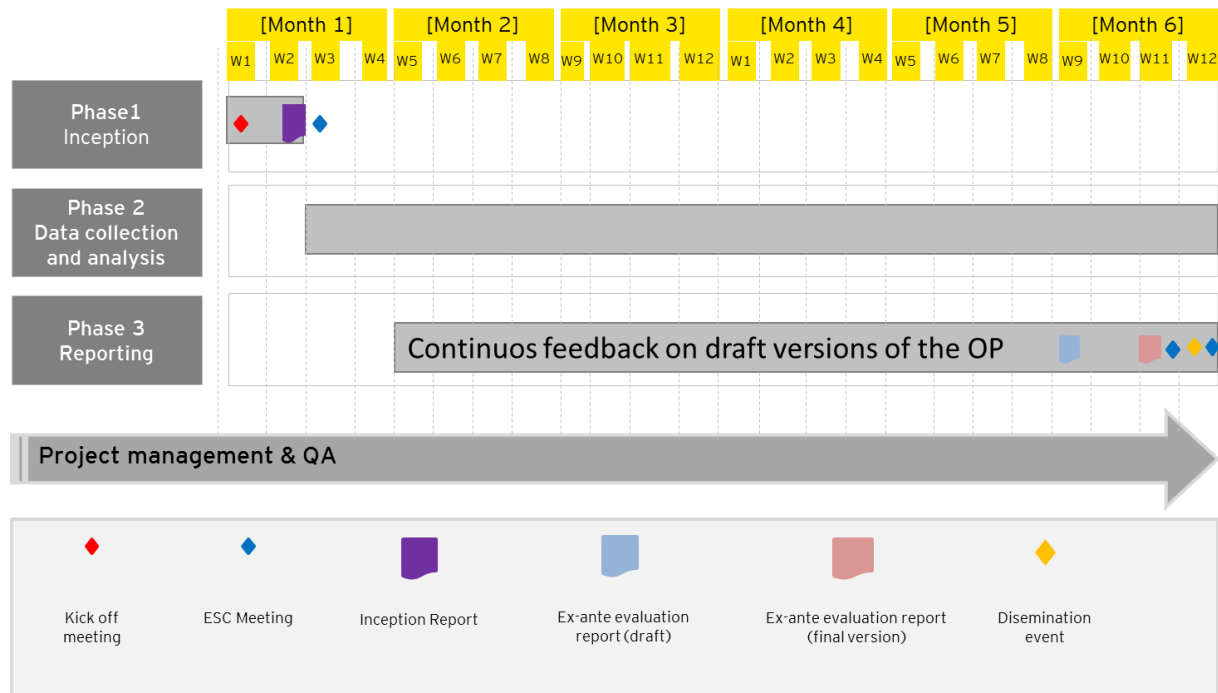
- ▶ **Overview** of the ex-ante process and methodology (Chapter 2).
- ▶ Assessment of the **strategic contribution** to European Union's objective to reduce with at least 20 million the number of people that live in poverty or at poverty and social exclusion risk until 2020 (Chapter 3).
- ▶ Assessment of the **programme internal consistency** and its relationship with other relevant financial instruments (Chapter 4), consistency between budgetary resources and the operational programme's objectives (Chapter 5), and programme outputs and results (Chapters 6).
- ▶ **Involvement of relevant stakeholders**, which assess how relevant stakeholders' view-points have been embedded in the OP (Chapter 7).
- ▶ Assessment of the **programme performance** mechanism, in terms of monitoring and data collection procedures of the OP (Chapter 8).

Each chapter provides a brief overview of the methodology used, the evaluation activities performed and tools, as well as the evaluation findings. Conclusions and recommendations are presented at the end of each chapter as well as in a summary table included in Chapter 9.

Progress in relation to proposed methodology and expected deliverables

The progress of the evaluation in relation to the suggested methodology and expected deliverables as indicated in the Terms of Reference is detailed in the final progress report of the contract.

The graphic below summarizes the main activities and deliverables of the three methodological phases which have been followed to conduct the evaluation:



The **Final Ex-ante Evaluation Report** represents the main deliverable of the contract and includes also the following **key annexes**:

- ▶ Annex 1: Logic of intervention at OP level and its operations;
- ▶ Annex 2: Guideline of Indicators;
- ▶ Annex 3: Proposed evaluation plan for the OP;
- ▶ Annex 4: The evaluation methodology used for each evaluation question (evaluation framework);
- ▶ Annex 5: Quality control report for the evaluation report.

Throughout the contract, two additional feedback reports and one draft final evaluation report have been prepared and submitted in relation to previous versions of the OP, as follows:

- ▶ Draft Evaluation Report no 1 submitted in September 2014, based on the OP version submitted by the Programmer for evaluation at the end of August 2014
- ▶ Draft Evaluation Report no 2 submitted in October 2014, based on OP version submitted by the Programmer for evaluation in October 2014
- ▶ Final Draft Evaluation Report, including Guideline for indicators and proposed Evaluation Plan, submitted in January based on OP version approved by the EC.

Structure of the Operational Program Aid for the Most Deprived 2014-2020

The OP will be financed by the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived (FEAD) according to regulation No.223/2014. According to this legislative act two types of OPs are eligible under this Fund. The first type, OP I, focuses on the identification and justification of the types of material deprivation addressed, a description of the main characteristics of the distribution of food/or basic material assistance, the relevant accompanying measures¹, as well as the financing plan, whereas no indicator system is required. The OP II takes a more complex structure which in addition to the elements of the OP I should detail an intervention strategy with specific objectives and an associated system of indicators.

The structure of the OP AD 2014-2020 follows the template for the Operational Programme I:

- ▶ **Identification**, namely the OP name and country
- ▶ **Programme Formulation**, which presents the current situation in terms of material deprivations identified at the Country level as well the material deprivations addressed by the OP together with a description of the main characteristics of distribution of food and school stationary supplies, to be provided. Nonetheless, the OP identifies the national scheme that will be used in order to deliver the two types of support.
- ▶ **Implementation**, which briefly identifies the most deprived categories addressed as well as the criteria used to make this distinction. Selection of the operations such as acquisition, distribution and technical assistance along with the selection of partner organisations, complementarity with the ESF interventions, the institutional system to be put in place and the monitoring and evaluation and the technical assistance OP component, are equally presented in this section.
- ▶ **Involvement of stakeholders** is briefly described by an indication of the main actors involved in the programming phase as well some of the main contributions provided to the OP by theme.
- ▶ **The financial plan**, presents both the yearly allocation and the allocation per activity type.

¹ According to the art.2, of the regulation No. 223/2014, the 'accompanying measures' means activities provided in addition to the distribution of food and/or basic material assistance with the aim of alleviating social exclusion and/or tackling social emergencies in a more empowering and sustainable way, for example guidance on a balanced diet and budget management advice

2. Methodology for the ex-ante evaluation

The methodology for the ex-ante evaluation was provided in the Inception Report developed by the Evaluator taking into account the requirements of the Terms of Reference, the input from the Evaluation Steering Committee following the consultations which took place at Ministry of European Funds, the Regulation No. 223/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 March 2014 on the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived, as well as other key documents and information sources presented in Annex 6 of the current report. The list of members of the Evaluation Steering Committee which provided recommendations on the proposed methodology by the ex-ante evaluator can be consulted in Annex 7².

Correspondingly, the ex-ante evaluation criteria were developed and detailed in the Inception Report and are summarized in table 3.

Table 2: Analyses performed

Evaluation Theme	Analyses performed
<input type="checkbox"/> Strategic contribution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Analysis of the contribution to EU 2020 Strategy
<input type="checkbox"/> Internal consistency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ The clarity of the programme structure, use of evidence for the needs assessment ▶ Consistency between the Programme actions and the identified needs ▶ The financial allocation in respect to the types of material deprivations addresses by the programme
<input type="checkbox"/> Involvement of relevant stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Analysis of the consultative process ▶ Analysis of the steps taken by the Programmer in order to involve all the relevant stakeholders in the consultation process
<input type="checkbox"/> Programme performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Analysis of programme functions, structure, human resources, systems and tools ▶ Analysis of administrative organization and approach to implementation

In order to perform the ex-ante evaluation of the Operational Programme Aid to the Most Deprived a series of evaluation tools were used. Annex 8 provides a view on the use of those tools, with details on the stakeholders to be involved, the type of information to be collected and the correspondence with the evaluation questions. The interview guideline can be consulted in Annex 9, while the list of interviewees is presented in Annex 10. Additionally, the list of participants to the kick-off meeting and workshop regarding Evaluation Plan and Guideline on Indicators are presented in Annex 11 and 12.

² In the beginning of the programming process there were involved solely the experts from DG APE in discussing the inception report and the evaluation methodology; subsequently, the list of experts part of the Steering Committee was finalised.

3. EQ 1: Strategic contribution

3.1. EQ 1. Programme contribution to EU objective to reduce poverty

EQ 1	To what extent does the Programme contribute to Union's objective to reduce with at least 20 million the number of people that live in poverty or at poverty and social exclusion risk until 2020?
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3.1.1. Description on the evaluation process for EQ 1

The analyses presented in this section are aimed at assessing the Programme's contribution to the EU 2020 Strategy objective of reducing the number of people that live at risk of poverty or social exclusion. The tables below summarize the data analysis and collection tools and the primary and secondary sources of information applied to answer to this question:

Table 3: Data analysis and data collection tools used in the ex-ante evaluation

Data analysis / collection tools	OP AD (August 2014) First Draft Evaluation Report	OP AD (October 2014) Second Draft Evaluation Report	OP AD (October 2014) Final Evaluation Report
Data analysis tools			
Consistency table with Europe 2020 Strategy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Data collection tools			
Desk research	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Interviews	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Table 4: Primary and secondary sources of information

Source of information	Primary sources	Secondary sources
Minutes of the interviews	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Europe 2020 Strategy OP section corresponding to the needs assessment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
National Reform Programme 2011-2013	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
National Reform Programme 2014	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Partnership Agreement 2014-2020	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Council Recommendations for the National Reform Programme 2014	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Regulation (EU) No 223/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 March 2014, on the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Position of the Commission Services on the development of Partnership Agreement and programmes in ROMANIA for the period 2014-2020	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

The main recommendations provided by the Evaluator in the draft (feedback) reports as well as their status of implementation are presented in Annex 13 of the current report.

3.1.2. Answer to the evaluation question

Findings

As stated in the Reg. 223/2014, Art. 3(1), the scope of the FEAD is to complement the European Structural and Investment Funds by mainly addressing ‘the worst forms of poverty’ via in kind assistance to the most deprived persons. In this respect, the OP Aid to the Most Deprived proposes two types of assistance:

- ▶ Food to those with low incomes;
- ▶ School supplies to the most deprived children.

According to the information presented in the OP, even though the situation has improved slightly, Romania currently has the second highest percentage of population living at risk of poverty or social exclusion in Europe (41.7%³), as well as the second highest percentage of population living in severe material deprivation (29.9%⁴). In order to address these issues, relevant policies have been put in place with the National Strategy for Poverty Reduction and Social Inclusion 2014-2020 being the most important in the context of Europe 2020 Strategy and its *European platform against poverty*.

In relation to the Europe 2020 Strategy objective of reducing the population at risk of poverty or social exclusion, as well the early school leave rate, OP AD addresses in Romania a target group estimated at 3 million people with low income by providing food supplies and school supplies. Additionally, the Programme also envisages *accompanying measures* in order to contribute to the social insertion of those benefiting from the food supply support through measures such as *guidance towards medical and social services, education regarding basic hygiene as well as guidance towards employment services*. These services will be ensured with the support of partner organisations, which can be public or private (NGO’s proving experience in charitable work).

Table 5: Contribution analysis table

National Reform Programme		OP Aid to Most Deprived expected contribution	
EU Headline target	Quantified target	Quantitative Contribution	Qualitative judgement
Reduction of population at risk of poverty or social exclusion in number of persons	580,000	Difficult to estimate	<i>Medium to low</i> While the Programme addresses 3 million people, its contribution to the reduction of the population at risk of poverty is appreciated as medium to low considering the frequency and monetary value of the aid.

While the OP targets an important number of persons, it is rather difficult to quantify its contribution to EU 2020 Strategy’s objective of reducing the population at risk of poverty or social exclusion. However, its contribution is appraised qualitatively as medium to low given the relatively low monetary value of the basket of goods offered, as well as the low frequency of the aid (i.e. once per year in 2014 and at least twice per year in following period). The interviews with the Programmer highlighted also the set of accompanying measures which are expected to support the initiation of the process of social integration of the persons supported.

³ EUROSTAT data, 2012

⁴ Idem 3

Conclusions and recommendations for EQ 1

<i>Conclusions</i>	<i>Recommendations</i>
<p>C1. The OP is consistent with Europe 2020's objective of reducing poverty and risk of social inclusion by addressing those most severely affected by poverty and material deprivation through two types of support including also accompanying measures.</p> <p>Its contribution to this objective is appraised qualitatively as medium to low given the relatively low monetary value of the basket of goods offered, as well as the low frequency of the aid (i.e. once per year in 2014 and at least twice per year in following period).</p> <p>The Programme equally contains an indicative list of accompanying measures which will be supported by the selected partner organisations, public or private (NGO's proving charitable experience)</p>	<p>R1. No specific recommendations provided</p>

4. EQ 2: Internal Consistency

This chapter is structured in two sections:

- ▶ **Section 4.1** addresses the issue of internal consistency starting from the national challenges and the relevance of the proposed objectives and planned actions to solve such challenges.
- ▶ **Section 4.2** analyses the relationship of the programme with other relevant financial instruments

4.1. EQ 2.1. Internal consistency

EQ 2.1	How is the internal consistency of the proposed operational programme ensured?
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4.1.1. Description on the evaluation process for EQ 2.1

The analyses performed under this evaluation sub-question, are aimed at assessing the following aspects:

- ▶ How the national needs regarding material deprivation have been identified, in terms of clarity, use of evidence and updated statistical data, coverage of vulnerable groups and conclusions.
- ▶ How the intervention structure of the Programme, in terms of consistency between Programme goals and types of material deprivation is achieved.
- ▶ The adequacy of the characteristics of the material assistance distribution.

The tables below summarize the data analysis and collection tools and the primary and secondary sources of information applied to answer to this question:

Table 6: Data analysis and data collection tools used in the ex-ante evaluation

Data analysis / collection tools	OP AD (August 2014) First Draft Evaluation Report	OP AD (October 2014) Second Draft Evaluation Report	OP AD (October 2014) Final Evaluation Report
Data analysis tools			
Identification of national needs table	☑	☑	☑
Distribution characteristics analysis	☑	☑	☑
Consistency matrix between programme goals and types of deprivation	☑	☑	☑
Data collection tools			
Desk research	☑	☑	☑
Interviews with the Programmer, National Authority for Child Rights Protection and Adoptions, Ministry of Education and Scientific Research	☑	☑	☑

Table 7: Data analysis and data collection tools used in the ex-ante evaluation

Source of information	Primary sources	Secondary sources
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Minutes of the interviews	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
REGULATION (EU) No 223/2014 OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL of 11 March 2014, on the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Socio-economic analyses of the OP	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Statistical data	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Results of the "Food distribution programme for the most deprived communities (PEAD)"	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Consultation protocols of the stakeholders	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Consultative documents related to the OP	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Documents related to the draft OP	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Minutes of the consultative process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

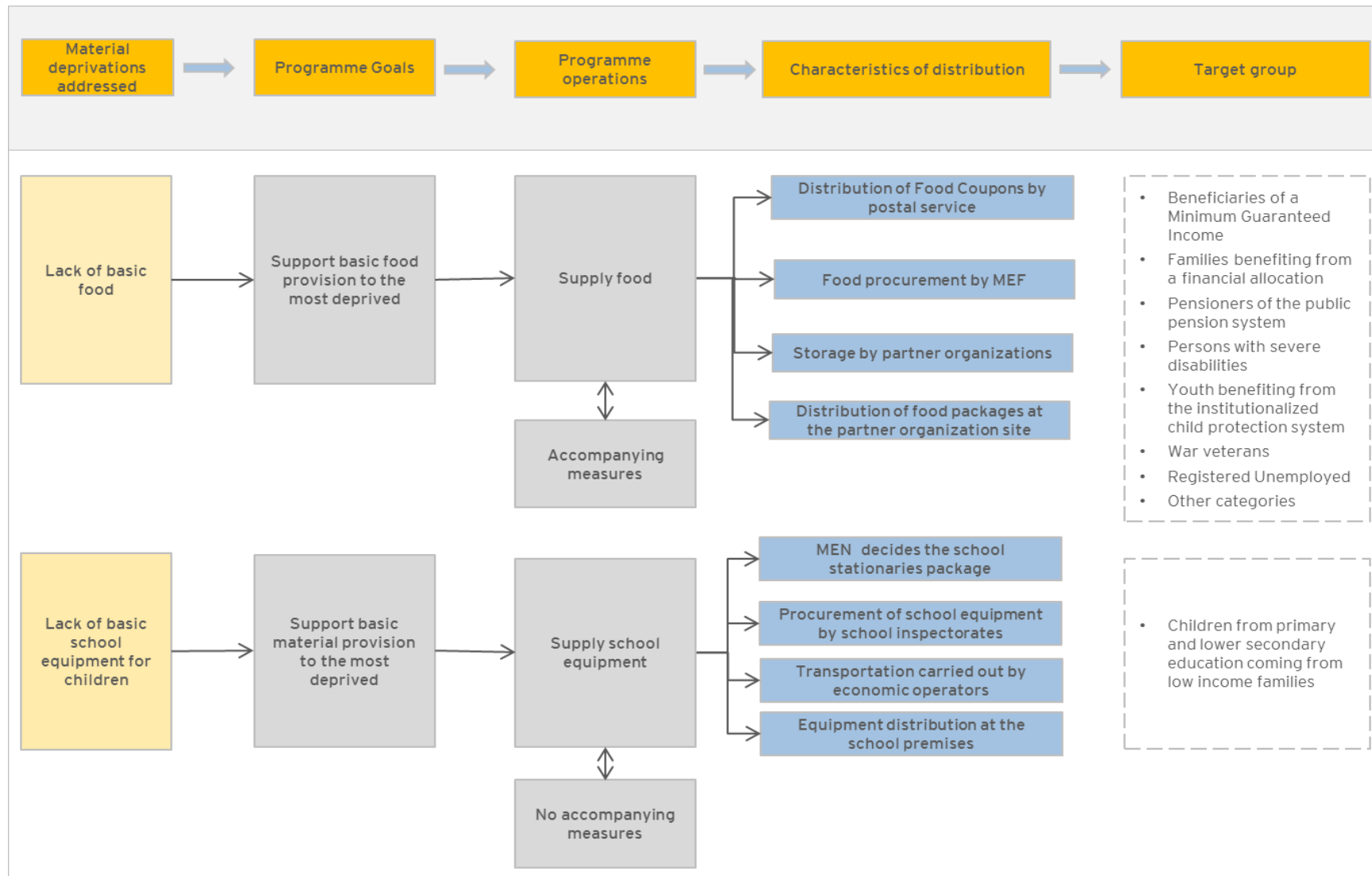
The main recommendations provided by the Evaluator in the draft (feedback) reports as well as their status of implementation are presented in Annex 13 of the current report.

4.1.2. Answer to the evaluation question

Findings

The programme intervention structure is articulated around five dimensions: material deprivation addressed, programme goal, operations and accompanying measures, characteristics of the distribution related to the goods provided and target group. A representation of this structure can be seen in the graph below.

Graph 1: Program intervention structure without indicators



1. Identification of types of material deprivation to be addressed

The OP identifies the types of material deprivation to be addressed in section 2.1, according to the provisions of Reg. 223/2014, Annex I.

Regarding the **structure of the analysis**, the section presents the current national situation and the groups most affected by poverty. Compared to the previous version of the OP the content of this section has improved in particular, **section 2.1 now specifies both lack of food and lack of school supplies as forms of material deprivation.**

In terms of **data**, the OP makes use of the available information both at the national and European level offering an overview of the current national situation in 2012, regarding the percentage of the population at risk of poverty or social exclusion (AROPE), the percentage of the population facing severe material deprivation and the percentage of the population at risk of poverty.

Moreover, the OP also identifies the **groups most affected** by poverty (i.e. unemployed, employed persons living under the poverty rate, retired persons, people receiving the Guaranteed Minimum Income and children from primary and secondary education coming from families with a monthly net income lower than 50% from the average minimum gross salary at country level), based on which the OP's target group is identified in section 3.1.

Additionally, the Programme presents the **policy context**, briefly indicating Romania's commitment in achieving Europe 2020 targets as well as Romania's commitment to reduce poverty and continue the reform of social security system.

Table 8: Identification of needs analysis table

Characteristic verified	Judgment	Findings
Clarity	Well-written, with all of the main points drawn out in the main text, but also introductory and concluding sections	▶ Section 2.1 of the Programme presents the current national situation, the groups most affected by poverty and a brief national context regarding Romania's commitments in tackling poverty and social exclusion.
Use of evidence and updated statistical data	All main points backed up by primary or secondary sources	▶ Official sources of quantitative data are presented in section 2.1 of the Programme.
Coverage of poverty and vulnerable groups	Specific needs of the vulnerable groups are identified	▶ Section 2.1 of the Programme clearly identifies the vulnerable groups most affected by poverty and at risk of social exclusion , which contributes to the identification of the OP's target group in section 3.1.
Conclusions	Clear conclusions for strategy development	▶ The subsection 2.1.2 clearly indicates the two types of material deprivation addressed by the OP.

2. Consistency between types of deprivation and Programme goals

Regarding the consistency between the types of material deprivation identified and the Programme goals, **the analysis has revealed a complete link.** The OP addresses two different material deprivations and two goals are indicated, namely: **support basic food provision** to the most deprived and **support basic material provision** to the most deprived (i.e. children).

Table 9: Internal consistency analysis table

Types of deprivation	Programme goals
Lack of food	<i>Support basic food provision to the most deprived</i>
Lack of school equipment for children	<i>Support basic material provision to the most deprived</i>

The consistency between the accompanying measures indicated in the OP and its operations is partially secured. Education regarding basic hygiene, facilitating access to judicial counselling, orientation towards social services as well other measures for the same target group are presented in association to food supply. Accompanying measures relate to school equipment supplies, while not explicitly indicated in the OP, based on the interviews carried out with programme and MESR representatives, counselling activities are current functions carried out at school level. Moreover, the HCOP 2014-2020, i.e.

under the Specific Objectives 6.2: *Boosting the access and participation in primary and secondary education and preventing early school leaving, particularly for disadvantaged children*, envisages measures such as counselling and mentoring services for both pupils and parents.

3. Distribution characteristics

Following the provisions of Reg. 223/2014, Annex I, the OP presents the characteristics of the distribution systems of food and school stationery in Section 2.2.

3.1. Food aid

With respect to the **food assistance**, based on the information provided in the Programme, the following distinct stages of the distribution cycle can be distinguished:

- ▶ Issuing and distributing the food coupons
- ▶ Procurement, transportation and storage of the food
- ▶ Food packages distribution to the final recipients

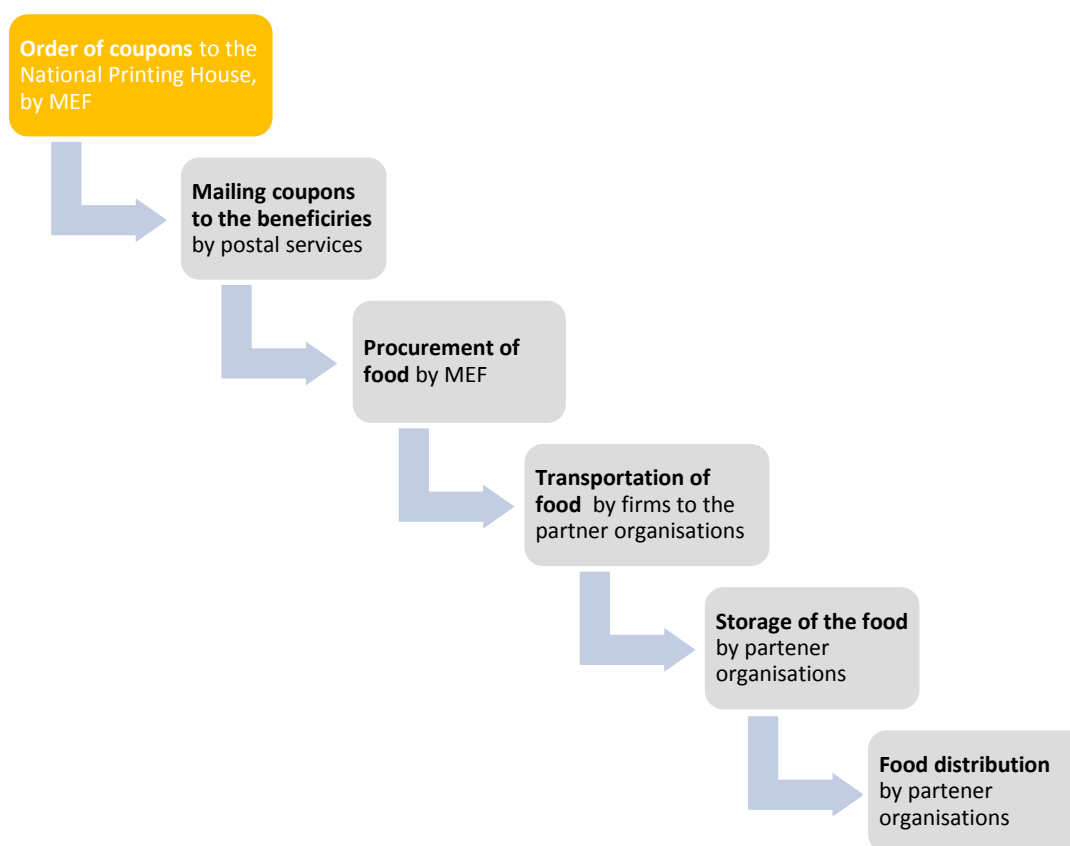
In a first stage of the distribution cycle, the Managing Authority will order the food coupons to the National Printing House which will be then distributed to the beneficiaries by the postal services.

The procurement of food will be organized by MEF. According to the interviews carried out with the Programmer the procurement activities will be held at sub-regional level in order to facilitate the food transportation which will be done by the economic operators. The goods will be stored at premises of partner organisations and finally distributed to the beneficiaries.

In order for the food assistance to reach the final beneficiaries, the persons entitled to food assistance (i.e. target group) will provide the individual coupons, which will bear the name and the personal identification number of the recipient. These coupons are then to be sent by partner organisations to the Ministry of European Funds.

A graphical presentation of this process can be seen below.

Graph 2: The food distribution mechanism



Additionally, according to Reg.223/2014 Art. 4 (1), the distribution of food will be coupled by *accompanying measures, such as education for personal hygiene or guidance towards social services, in order to initiate the process of social inclusion of the most deprived persons*. As revealed by the interviews with MEF representatives, part of these services is to be financed by the state budget and is to be delivered partner organisations.

Overall, the characteristics of the food assistance distribution mechanism are appropriate for the adequate implementation of the Programme.

3.2. Supply of school stationaries

With respect to the **material assistance for children**, the following cycles can be distinguished in the Programme:

- ▶ The Ministry of Education decides upon the school equipment to be provided
- ▶ Procurement of goods by school inspectorates
- ▶ Transportation of goods by the economic operators to school inspectorates
- ▶ Distribution of goods at the school premises to final recipients

As opposed to the distribution characteristics of the food aid, the implementation of the entire distribution chain of school supplies will be delegated by the Managing Authority to the Ministry of Education and Scientific Research (MESR), currently running a similar state-budget financed programme, under the law 126/2002.

The public procurement procedures will be carried out at the level of school inspectorates, taking into account the size of the target group. The economic operators will transport the goods to the school inspectorates which will secure their storage until the schools will take over and distribute them to the children belonging to the target group.

As revealed by the interviews with the representatives of MEF, the OP AD is only to replace the funding source of Law 126/2002. Moreover, according to the Programmer, starting with 2015-2016 school year, the content of the supply will be enriched. However, the precise role of the Ministry of Education is still to be fully clarified, aspect equally revealed by interviews carried out with its representatives.

Conclusions and recommendations for EQ 2.1

<i>Conclusions</i>	<i>Recommendations</i>
Identification of needs to be addressed	
C2. Section 2.1 adequately presents the current situation, through the use of statistical data as well brief information about the national policy context, namely Romania's commitment towards EU 2020 targets and reducing poverty.	R2. No specific recommendations provided
Consistency between types of deprivation and Programme goals	
C3. The two types of material deprivation addressed, namely the lack of food among the most deprived and the lack of school supplies among the pupils coming from the poorest families, are linked to the programme goals.	R3. No specific recommendations provided
C4. The accompanying measures are indicated only for food supply action. Accompanying measures related to school equipment supplies, while not explicitly indicated in the OP, based on the interviews carried out with programme and MESR representatives, counselling activities are current functions carried out at school level.	R4. No specific recommendations provided
Distribution characteristics	
C5. The characteristics of the distribution system for food aid are appropriate for the adequate implementation of the scheme.	R5. No specific recommendations provided
C6. The characteristics of the distribution system for material assistance for pupils are based on the current National Programme for school supplies (law 126/2002), However, MESR responsibilities in the implementation of OP AD have not yet been clarified.	R6. The Programmer/MA OP HC should consider clarifying the role of the MESR during implementation.

4.2. EQ 2.2 Relationship with other instruments

EQ 2.2	What is its relationship of the programme with other relevant financial instruments?
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4.2.1. Description on the evaluation process for EQ 2.2

Even though at European and national level a variety of programmes and policy interventions are set up to reduce social exclusion and poverty rate, we have appraised the consistency between the operations supported by OP AD and those programmes identified either by the Programmer or by the Ex-ante Evaluator, namely:

- ▶ **European relevant programmes such as the Social Investment Package**
- ▶ **National programmes or policy interventions:** Social Canteens Programme (Law 208/1997), Croissant and Milk Programme (Law 6/2012), Money for High-school Programme (GD 1488/2004), Provision of Free Text Books (Law 1/2011, Art 69).
- ▶ **Programmes or projects developed by civil society:** **Food Bank Project** developed and implemented by Romania Red Cross, **NGO Fund in Romania** operated by Civil Society Development Foundation together with its partners Romanian Environmental Partnership Foundation and Resource Centre for Roma Communities, **“Future donor” Programme** developed by World Vision Romania
- ▶ **Operational Programmes 2014-2020:** we have selected those thematic objectives focusing on **combating social exclusion and poverty (TO 9)** and **supporting education (TO 10)**, **corresponding to Operational Programme Human Capital.**

Having regard of the particular structure of the OP, i.e. without specific objectives, we have assessed the consistency at the level of each of the three operations and their corresponding target groups. Therefore the findings will mainly focus on the target groups common to OP AD and the financial instrument analysed. The tables below summarize the data analysis and collection tools and the primary and secondary sources of information applied to answer to this question:

Table 10: Data analysis and data collection tools used in the ex-ante evaluation

Data analysis / collection tools	OP AD (August 2014) First Draft Evaluation Report	OP AD (October 2014) Second Draft Evaluation Report	OP AD (October 2014) Final Evaluation Report
Data analysis tools			
Consistency table with EU Social Investment Package	☑	☑	☑
Consistency table with national programmes or policy interventions and programmes or projects developed by the civil society	☑	☑	☑
Consistency table with relevant Operational Programmes 2014-2020	☑	☑	☑
Data collection tools			
Desk research	☑	☑	☑
Interviews	☑	☑	☑

Table 11: Primary and secondary sources of information

Source of information	Primary sources	Secondary sources
Minutes of the interviews	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Relevant national financial instruments resulting from the Social Welfare Act no. 292/2011	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
European Programme for Employment and Social Innovation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Other relevant European financial instruments	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Consultative documents of this operational program	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Documents related to the draft OP	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

The main recommendations provided by the Evaluator in the draft (feedback) reports as well as their status of implementation are presented in Annex 13 of the current report.

4.2.2. Answer to the evaluation question

Findings

The following paragraphs include the findings in respect to instruments consistent with both food supply and school supplies operations and instruments consistent only with school supply operations. The detailed analysis is available in Annexes 14 - 16 of this report.

1. European and National Instruments consistent with both food supplies and school supplies operation

EU Social Investment Package

The EU **Social Investment Package** aims among others, at supporting adequate livelihoods/improving awareness of social rights by improving access to information for citizens, such as on job search services, unemployment benefits, child allowances and healthcare. Equally, this policy supports actions aimed at investing in children/early Childhood Education and Care that can reduce ESL rate. Therefore, the **consistency with OP AD is ensured both at the level of the measures accompanying the food supply operation** which will be supported through the European Structural and Investment Funds, and with the **school supplies operations of the OP AD given their focus on reducing the ESL for pupils enrolled in primary and lower secondary whose parents have a net monthly medium income set at 50% of the minimum net wage/person.**

Social Canteens Programme

The **Social Canteens Programme** provides free daily lunches and dinners to a wide range of disadvantaged persons. **The complementarities identified for both OP AD operations, refer to the following target groups addressed:**

- ▶ **Persons receiving social assistance** or other financial aid granted by law and whose income is up to the net minimum monthly income for a single person
- ▶ **Retired persons** with a pension up to 400 lei per month
- ▶ **Persons which are socially isolated:** the food supplies will be provided only to those persons who fulfil the criteria established in the OP AD (e.g. mono-parental families and single persons with a minimum guaranteed income through Law 416/2001)
- ▶ **Persons with disabilities.**
- ▶ **Children under 18 years old,** enrolled in primary and lower secondary education whose parents have a net monthly medium income set at 50% of the minimum net wage/person, which are equally targeted by the OP AD

Even though the **Social Canteens Programme** does not cover all the counties in the country, a person entitled to a daily lunch and dinner could be as well eligible for the food supplies provided through OP AD. In this case, given that the food assistance is offered at least twice per year (except for 2014) and includes products which could be used on longer term, **an overlapping risk is not present, but rather complementarities with OP AD have been identified.**

Food Bank Project

The **Food Bank Project** implemented by Red Cross Romania aims at providing food support to different vulnerable groups and covers 31 counties out of 41 without Bucharest region. **Complementarities have been identified for both OP AD operations.**

For food supply operation they have been identified in the case of:

- ▶ **People without or with very small incomes** (e.g. beneficiaries of a minimum guaranteed income (Law 416/2001))
- ▶ **Families with more than two children** benefiting from a financial allocation
- ▶ **Mono-parental families** with a minimum guarantee income through Law 416/2001
- ▶ **Elderly**, respectively retired persons with a pension up to 400 lei per month
- ▶ **Unemployed, without income or with allowance up to 400lei/month**
- ▶ **Persons with disabilities.**

For school stationaries supply operation complementarities have been identified in the case of:

- ▶ Children left in grandparents' care or to other relatives enrolled in primary or lower secondary education whose parents have a net monthly medium income set at 50% of the minimum net wage/person
- ▶ Youngsters coming from the child protection system relatives enrolled in primary or lower secondary education whose parents have a net monthly medium income set at 50% of the minimum net wage/person

OPHC 2014-2020

With regard to the OP AD accompanying measures and actions of other Operational Programmes, complementarities were identified with OP HC 2014-2020 at the level of TO 9 - *Promoting social inclusion, combating poverty and any discrimination* and TO 10 - *Education and skills*.

The public authorities and NGOs implementing the accompanying measures mentioned in OP AD could be funded through OPHC, TO 9, if these actions fall under the scope of ESF. The following actions are examples of accompanying measures that could be supported through OPHC: provision of services (social/medical/employment/education/training etc.) which addresses the specific needs of vulnerable groups, including through an integrated approach, supporting the development of services (social/medical etc.) for various vulnerable groups in accordance with their specific needs or even information and awareness-raising campaigns concerning the services that can be accessed.

Nonetheless, OPHC could fund actions aimed at providing integrated services, including teaching materials or new learning materials and thus **supporting the accompanying measures that could be implemented through OP AD for the school supply operations.**

2. Instruments consistent with the school supplies operation

NGO Fund in Romania

The NGO Fund in Romania⁵ is operated by Romanian Civil Society Development Foundation aiming at improving the situation of Roma communities and increasing access to and provision of welfare and basic services to vulnerable people by **mobilising the local human, financial and material resources in education and training activities, thus complementing the OP AD school supplies operation.**

Croissant and Milk Programme

The **Croissant and Milk Programme** provides free daily dairy and bakery products to all children from primary and lower secondary schools regardless of parents' income. **The complementarities identified refer again to the same target group - those pupils whose parents have a net monthly medium income set at 50% of the minimum net wage/person.**

⁵ This Fund will be available until the end of 2014 and it is not known at the time of writing this report if it will be extended

Provision of Free Text Books

Provision of free text books intervention ensures each pupil enrolled in compulsory education with free textbooks, thus complementing the school supplies operation and contributing at reducing the ESL rate. **The complementarities identified refer to the same target group as above**, pupils enrolled in primary and lower secondary education whose parents have a net monthly medium income set at 50% of the minimum net wage/person.

“Future donor” programme

This programme provides to pupils different educational materials. **The complementarity with OP AD school supplies operation is ensured** for pupils residing in Dolj County and enrolled in primary and secondary education whose parents have a net monthly medium income set at 50% of the minimum net wage/person.

It was equally found that although Section 2.3 of the **OP mentioned as a relevant national instrument the Money for High-school Programme**, **the analysis performed did not identify a link with the latter programme** due to the different target groups they are addressing respectively, the pupils enrolled in upper secondary education and vocational schools which are not subject to any of the categories envisaged by OP AD.

Furthermore, **OP AD does not make any reference to other financial instruments relevant for the purpose of the programme, such as Provision of Free Text Books (Law 1/2011, Art 69).**

Conclusions and recommendations for EQ 2.2

<i>Conclusions</i>	<i>Recommendations</i>
<p>C7. Overall the assessment revealed complementarities between the OP food and school supplies operation, and the European and national instruments envisaged by OP AD or the Ex-ante Evaluator.</p> <p>Moreover, the programmes which are complementing the operations supported through OP AD are presented in Section 2.3 of OP AD.</p>	<p>R7. Section 2.3 could make reference as well to other programmes which financed complementary interventions for the same groups as OP AD, namely Provision of Free Text Books (Law 1/2011, Art 69)</p>
<p>C8. Although in the OP AD it is mentioned that Money for High-school Programme is a relevant financial instrument for the Programme’s interventions, the complementarity between the two programmes is arguable since the target groups addressed are different.</p>	<p>R8. The programmer should indicate as a brief justification for selecting Money for High-school Programme considering that the target group envisaged is not subject to the categories included in OP AD.</p>
<p>C9. The food supplies operation of OP AD presents a general good consistency with European and national programmes, projects developed by the civil society and OPHC.</p>	<p>R9. No specific recommendation</p>
<p>C10. The school supplies operation of OP AD presents a general good consistency with European and national programmes, projects developed by the civil society and OPHC.</p>	<p>R10. No specific recommendation</p>

5. EQ 3: Financial allocation

5.1. EQ 3. Consistency of financial allocation with the Programme objectives

EQ 3	To what extent is there consistency between budgetary resources and the operational programme's objectives?
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5.1.1. Description on the evaluation process for EQ 3

The analysis performed under this evaluation sub-question, is aimed at assessing the financial allocation in respect to the types of material deprivation addresses by the programme. Equally, the assessment was done by analysing the financial allocation in respect to the extent of the target group, as well the comparison between the allocations for this programming period with the ones granted during 2007-2013 and the financial sources indicated for the accompanying measures.

The tables below summarize the data analysis and collection tools and the primary and secondary sources of information applied to answer to this question:

Table 12: Data analysis and data collection tools used in the ex-ante evaluation

Data analysis / collection tools	OP AD (August 2014) First Draft Evaluation Report	OP AD (October 2014) Second Draft Evaluation Report	OP AD (October 2014) Final Evaluation Report
Data analysis tools			
Analysis of the financial allocation available in the OP AD	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Analysis of the financial allocations for PEAD 2007-2013	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Analysis of the categories of target groups	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Analysis of the accompanying measures indicated the OP AD	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Data collection tools			
Desk research	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Interview with the Programmers, National Authority for Child Rights Protections and Adoption, Ministry of Education and Scientific Research	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Table 13: Primary and secondary sources of information

Source of information	Primary sources	Secondary sources
Minutes of the interviews	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Reports/minutes of the programme stakeholders consultations	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Documents related to the EU policies	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Guides and thematic reports by the European Commission	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
APIA reports on food aid "program providing food to the most deprived persons" (PEAD)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Support documents related to the drafting process of the OP, such as the OP template.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

The main recommendations provided by the Evaluator in the draft (feedback) reports as well as their status of implementation are presented in Annex 13 of the current report.

5.1.2. Answer to the evaluation question

Findings

The Programme features a logic of intervention focused on two operations: the **distribution of food and school supplies (i.e. school bags and stationaries) to the most deprived people.**

The overall financial allocation indicated in Section 5.2 of the programme amounts to over EUR 518 mn. with 86% of the financial resources directed towards food supplies action and 5% to the school supplies action. While the OP does not provide any explicit argumentation for this choice, a differentiation of weight can be partly explained by the extent of the targeted groups envisaged by the two operations:

Table 14: Financial allocation

Type of action/operation	Allocation (million €)
1. Food supply	465.89
Accompanying measures	0
2. School supply	27.00
Accompanying measures	0
3. Technical assistance	25.94
Total	518.83

Food supply

The Programme aims at **providing food supplies to approximately 2.5 million people** / year of several categories of target groups:

- ▶ Beneficiaries of a Minimum Guaranteed Income (Law 416/2001) – currently estimated at 190,000 persons
- ▶ Families benefiting from a financial allocation (Law no. 416/2001) – currently estimated at 350,000 persons
- ▶ Registered Unemployed (Law 76/2002) – about 380,000 persons (both those without allowance and those with an income below 400 lei/month)
- ▶ Pensioners of the public pension system receiving less than 400 lei/month – currently estimated at 1 million persons
- ▶ Persons with severe disabilities and accentuated handicap, adults and children, un-institutionalized – currently estimated at 598,000 persons
- ▶ War veterans (Law no. 49/1991) – currently estimated at 4,000 persons

School supply

Based on the estimations of the Ministry of Education for the year 2013-2014, an approximate number of 700,000 **children/year will benefit from this programme intervention**. Although not mentioned in the Operational Programme, the interviews carried out with the Programmer, revealed that **the school supplies action** will be based on the **National Programme for school supplies provision** to children from primary and secondary education coming from families with a monthly net income lower than 50% from the average minimum gross salary at country level (Law no.126/2002 that approves the Government Ordinance 33/2001).

The consistency between the allocation of budgetary resources and the types of material deprivation addressed **was also assessed by looking at the average amount of support per person**. As it can be seen in the table below, **this results into a relatively small amount**, especially since the support is granted only once in 2014⁶ and at least twice per year in the following period. Based on the estimated target group for both types of actions and the respective financial allocations, **the average amount/participant/year is €26.6 for the food supply and €5.5 for the school supplies**.

Table 15: Average amount per participant, corresponding to each type of action

Type of Action	Allocation (million €)	Estimated total number (million persons/year)	Average amount/person/year (€)
Food supply	465,8	2.5	26.6
School supplies	27	0.7	5.5

Comparison with the financial allocations for the previous programming period

Compared to the previous programming period the budget for food supply displays an increase of the average amount per person per year. The financial equivalent for food distribution financed through PEAD 2007- 2013 (Provision of Surplus food for the poorest population of the European Union) was 56% lower.

In the case of school equipment supplies **the average amount per person per year is almost the same**. However, currently it is not clear whether the financial allocation from OP AD will come on the top of the current national allocation, or the former will replace the latter. Moreover, based on the interviews with the programme stakeholders, consultations will be carried out regarding this aspect.

Table 16: Comparisons of allocations to the previous programming period

Type of Action	Allocation (million €)		Estimated total number as per OP (million persons/year)		Average cost/person/year (€)	
	2014-2020	2007-2013	2014-2020	2007-2013	2014-2020	2007-2013
<i>Programming period</i>						
Food distribution	465,8	260	2,5	2,5	26.6	14.9
School supplies	27	24	0.7	0.7	5.5	4.9

Financial allocations related to accompanying measures

As activities provided in addition to the distribution of food and/or basic material assistance, according to the regulation No. 223/2014, **the accompanying measures** may also be supported by the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived. While **the financial source for the accompanying measures** such as access to judicial counselling services and nutritional advice is indicated in the OP, **no information is provided regarding the financial sources for the following measures: basic hygiene education, supporting the access to healthcare and social services, guiding for employment and support for job searching**.

⁶Given that the Programme will be approved towards the end of the year 2014

Conclusions and recommendations for EQ 3

Conclusions	Recommendations
C11. This version of the OP does not provide an explicit argumentation for the different financial weight attributed for the two actions.	R11. The Programmers should consider including an explicit argumentation for the financial weight attributed to the two actions of the Programme.
C12. The interviews with the Programmer revealed that the OP AD will fund the National <i>Programme for School Supplies Provision</i> . However; this is not made explicit and detailed in the Programme.	R12. The Programmer should clarify whether the financial allocation for School Supplies action will be on top of the current allocation for the National <i>Program for School Supplies Provision (law126/2002)</i> or the OP financial allocation will replace the national funding.
C13. While the average amounts of money allocated per person for both food supply and school supplies are relatively small, these amounts are higher than the previous programming period allocations.	R13. No specific recommendation.
C14. The accompanying measures presented in the OP as a part of the Food supply action will not be financed through OP AD however their finical source is generally indicated, except for the measure regarding basic hygiene education, supporting the access to healthcare and social services, guiding for employment and support for job search	R14. The Programmer should clarify how the accompanying measures regarding basic hygiene education, supporting the access to healthcare and social services, guiding for employment and support for job search will be financed

6. EQ 4: Results and outputs

This chapter is structured in three sections, each divided into two sub-sections:

- ▶ **Section 6.1** analyses the contribution of estimated outputs to results
- ▶ **Section 6.2** analyses the extent to which results contribute to programme objectives
- ▶ **Section 6.3** analyses the extent to which results are influenced by external factors, including other existing instruments

6.1. EQ 4.1. Contribution of outputs to results

EQ 4.1	How will the estimated outputs contribute to results?
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6.1.1. Description on the evaluation process for EQ 4.1.

The analysis performed under this evaluation sub-question is aimed at assessing:

- ▶ The robustness and validation in terms of analysis of data sources
- ▶ The contribution of output indicators to result indicators

The table below summarizes the evaluation activities performed prior to this evaluation report, as well as the data analysis and data collection tools and the sources of information applied by the Evaluator to answer this evaluation question:

Table 17: Data analysis and data collection tools used in the ex-ante evaluation

Data analysis / collection tools	OP AD (August 2014) First Draft Evaluation Report	OP AD (October 2014) Second Draft Evaluation Report	OP AD (October 2014) Final Evaluation Report
Data analysis tools			
Analysis of the type of aid supported	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Analysis of the categories of target groups	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Data collection tools			
Desk research	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Workshop	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Interviews	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Table 18: Primary and secondary sources of information

Source of information	Primary sources	Secondary sources
Minutes of the workshop	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Annex to the Commission Delegated Regulation supplementing (EU) Regulation No 223/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived by laying down the content of the annual and final implementation reports, including the list of common indicators	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Draft OP	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Statistical data, related to the Programme for food supply to most disadvantaged people in the Community (PEAD)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Impact Assessment Study carried out in the context of a review of the "Food Distribution programme for the Most Deprived Persons of the Community"	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

At the time of answering this evaluation question there was available only one impact assessment study , included in the Commission Staff Working Document (SEC(2008) 2436/2). This study was carried out in the context of a review of the "Food Distribution programme for the Most Deprived Persons of the Community" in 2008. No other ex-post analyses were carried out at European or national level; therefore the evaluation team did not have available more recent data to be used.

There were no recommendations provided by the evaluator in the first or second draft report due to the unavailability of data on indicators.

Robustness of indicators and validation in terms of analysis of data sources

The analysis performed under the Evaluation Question 4, related to indicators, concluded that *in terms of collection, the sources of data and reporting frequency are not mentioned in the OP (October version). However, this information will be made available in the guideline on indicators, whose developed was started in the framework of the ex-ante evaluation contract.*

The contribution of output indicators to result indicators

The relation between the estimated output and intended results is analysed in the table below. Output indicators are attributed to specific types of operations, and their potential input on intended results is evaluated.

The analysis took into consideration **the list of indicators selected for the monitoring of the Operational Programme.**

Table 19: The relation between the estimated outputs and intended results

Type of operation	Estimated outputs	Intended results	Causal links between estimated output and intended results	Judgement
Operation I Lack of basic food	1. Quantity of meat	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Total number of persons 2. Total number of persons aged 15 or less 3. Number of persons aged 65 or more 4. Number of women 5. Number of persons with disabilities 	<p>The estimated output, <i>Quantity of meat</i>, reflects the following categories of activities financed by <i>OP Aid to the most deprived 2014-2020</i>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Procurement of meat ▶ Distribution of meat <p>The quantity of meat purchased and distributed affects in a direct manner the output results that count the number of persons (under different categories) that received meat as part of food packages. The figures for estimated output and intended results are directly proportional.</p>	There is a causal link between the estimated output and intended results. Assumptions underlying results chains are plausible.
Operation I Lack of basic food	2. Quantity of flour (corn and wheat)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Total number of persons 2. Total number of persons aged 15 or less 3. Number of persons aged 65 or more 4. Number of women 5. Number of persons with disabilities 	<p>The estimated output, <i>Quantity of flour</i>, reflects the following categories of activities financed by <i>OP Aid to the most deprived 2014-2020</i>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Procurement of flour (corn and wheat) ▶ Distribution of flour (corn and wheat) <p>The quantity of flour (corn and wheat) purchased and distributed affects in a direct manner the output results that count the number of persons (under different categories) that received flour (corn and wheat) as part of food packages. The figures for estimated output and intended results are directly proportional.</p>	There is a causal link between the estimated output and intended results. Assumptions underlying results chains are plausible.
Operation I Lack of basic food	3. Quantity of sugar	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Total number of persons 2. Total number of persons aged 15 or less 3. Number of persons aged 65 or more 4. Number of women 5. Number of persons with disabilities 	<p>The estimated output, <i>Quantity of sugar</i>, reflects the following categories of activities financed by <i>OP Aid to the most deprived 2014-2020</i>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Procurement of sugar ▶ Distribution of sugar <p>The quantity of sugar purchased and distributed affects in a direct manner the output results that count the number of persons (under different categories) that received sugar as part of food packages. The figures for</p>	There is a causal link between the estimated output and intended results. Assumptions underlying results chains are plausible.

Type of operation	Estimated outputs	Intended results	Causal links between estimated output and intended results	Judgement
			estimated output and intended results are directly proportional.	
Operation I Lack of basic food	4. Quantity of oil	1. Total number of persons 2. Total number of persons aged 15 or less 3. Number of persons aged 65 or more 4. Number of women 5. Number of persons with disabilities	The estimated output, <i>Quantity of oil</i> , reflects the following categories of activities financed by <i>OP Aid to the most deprived 2014-2020</i> : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Procurement of oil ▶ Distribution of oil The quantity of oil purchased and distributed affects in a direct manner the output results that count the number of persons (under different categories) that received oil as part of food packages. The figures for estimated output and intended results are directly proportional.	There is a causal link between the estimated output and intended results. Assumptions underlying results chains are plausible.
Operation I Lack of basic food	5. Quantity of pasta	1. Total number of persons 2. Total number of persons aged 15 or less 3. Number of persons aged 65 or more 4. Number of women 5. Number of persons with disabilities	The estimated output, <i>Quantity of pasta</i> , reflects the following categories of activities financed by <i>OP Aid to the most deprived 2014-2020</i> : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Procurement of pasta ▶ Distribution of pasta The quantity of pasta purchased and distributed affects in a direct manner the output results that count the number of persons (under different categories) that received pasta as part of food packages. The figures for estimated output and intended results are directly proportional.	There is a causal link between the estimated output and intended results. Assumptions underlying results chains are plausible.
Operation I Lack of basic food	6. Total number of packages distributed	1. Total number of persons 2. Total number of persons aged 15 or less 3. Number of persons aged 65 or more 4. Number of women 5. Number of persons with disabilities	The estimated output, <i>Total number of packages distributed</i> , reflects the following categories of activities financed by <i>OP Aid to the most deprived 2014-2020</i> : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Procurement of basic food ▶ Distribution of basic food The total number of packages distributed affects in a direct manner the output results that count the number of persons (under different categories) that received the food packages. The figures for estimated output and	There is a causal link between the estimated output and intended results. Assumptions underlying results chains are plausible.

Type of operation	Estimated outputs	Intended results	Causal links between estimated output and intended results	Judgement
			intended results are directly proportional.	
Operation II Lack of basic school equipment	7. Total financial value of goods for children	1. Number of children aged 15 or less	<p>The estimated output, <i>Total financial value of goods for children</i>, covers the following activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Procurement of stationary and school bags ▶ Distribution of stationary and school bags <p>The total financial value of goods for children affects in a direct manner the number of children aged 15 or less that receive these goods, i.e. the greater the financial value of goods for children the more children aged 15 or less that receive the goods.</p>	There is a causal link between the estimated output and intended results. Assumptions underlying results chains are plausible.
Operation II Lack of basic school equipment	8. Number of packages containing school equipment	1. Number of children aged 15 or less	<p>The estimated output, <i>Number of packages containing school equipment</i>, covers the following activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Procurement of school equipment ▶ Distribution of school equipment <p>The number of packages containing school equipment affects in a direct manner the number of children aged 15 or less that receive these goods, i.e. the greater the number of packages containing school equipment distributed, the more children aged 15 or less that receive the school equipment.</p>	There is a causal link between the estimated output and intended results. Assumptions underlying results chains are plausible.
Operation II Lack of basic school equipment	9. Number of school bags	1. Number of children aged 15 or less	<p>The estimated output, <i>Number of school bags</i>, covers the following activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Procurement of school bags ▶ Distribution of school bags <p>The number of school bags affects in a direct manner the number of children aged 15 or less that receive these school bags, i.e. the greater the number of school bags distributed, the more children aged 15 or less that receive these school bags.</p>	There is a causal link between the estimated output and intended results. Assumptions underlying results chains are plausible.

6.2. EQ 4.2: Contribution of results to Programme objectives

EQ 4.2	To what extent do results contribute to programme objectives?
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6.2.1. Description on the evaluation process for EQ 4.2

The analysis for this sub-evaluation question took into account *the total number of persons receiving basic material assistance as the program's result* and assessed its relative contribution to the programme stated goal. The tables below summarize the data analysis and collection tools and the primary and secondary sources of information applied to answer to this question:

Table 20: Data analysis and data collection tools used in the ex-ante evaluation

Data analysis / collection tools	OP AD (August 2014) First Draft Evaluation Report	OP AD (October 2014) Second Draft Evaluation Report	OP AD (October 2014) Final Evaluation Report
Data analysis tools			
Analysis of the OP AD structure	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Analysis of the categories of target groups	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Data collection tools			
Desk research	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Interview with the Programmers, National Authority for Child Rights Protections and Adoption, Ministry of Education and Scientific Research representatives	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Table 21: Primary and secondary sources of information

Source of information	Primary sources	Secondary sources
Minutes of the workshop	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Guidance document on ex-ante evaluation 2014-2020	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Documents related to operational programs	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Previous analyses conducted for the improvement of socio-economic related indicators in Romania	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Result indicators 2014+, pilot study in 12 European regions, DG Regio	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Documents related to the draft OP	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Partnership Agreement 2014-2020	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Common Strategic Framework	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

The main recommendations provided by the Evaluator in the draft (feedback) reports are presented in Annex 13 of the current Report.

6.2.2. Answer to the evaluation question

Findings

The Programme aims at addressing the most basic needs in terms of food for a selected target group and to cover school supplies needs for the most deprived pupils. The scope of these operations is to contribute at the Europe 2020 headline target - *Reduction of population at risk of poverty or social exclusion* with 580,000 people.

As already stated in Chapter 5, the planned result should be an estimated number of 2.5 million persons reached annually by the first type of action and about 700,000 pupils annually⁷, by the second one, taking into consideration the allocation for the first operation (food supplies) of 465,8 million € and for the second operation (school supplies) of 27 million €.

Another important aspect that influences the contribution of results to the Programme objectives is that the distribution of food supplies to the end recipients will happen twice per year, excepting year 2014 where the distribution took place once due to the late approval of OPAD (October 2014), while the school supplies will be distributed at the beginning of each school year starting with 2015.

Reaching over 2.5 million persons / year although relevant, secures only a moderate to low contribution to the envisaged change. From the perspective of the stated program goal, *increase the food security for the most deprived*, supplying food packages equivalent of €26/year, could only partially contribute to the decrease of the food insecurity for the most disadvantaged.

On the other hand, the OP mentions that the high dropout rate among pupils of primary and secondary education is mainly due to lack of financial resources. Likewise, **the contribution of reaching over 700,000 pupils with a school stationary package equivalent to €5.5/year, in order to tackle the high drop-out rate for the target population, although relevant for the identified need, is moderate to low.**

Table 22: Contribution of the Programs result to its goals

Type of Action	Value of the package per year	Number of distributed packages per year	Estimated number of persons (million persons)	Program goal	Contribution
Food supply	€26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ 1 in 2014 and ▶ 2 for 2015-2020 	2.5	Support basic food provision to the most deprives	<i>Moderate to low</i>
School supplies	€5.5	1 starting with 2015	0.7	Support basic school equipment to the most deprived children	<i>Moderate to low</i>

These results underline that due to the limited contribution, OP AD partially contributes to the EU objective of reducing the population at risk of poverty or social exclusion with 580,000 persons and it will not completely eradicate poverty within the target groups described in *Government's Decision 799/2014 on the implementation of Operational Programme Aid to the Most Deprived*.

Conclusions and recommendations for EQ 4.2

Conclusions	Recommendations
C15. Reaching over 2.5 million persons, although relevant, secures only a moderate to low contribution to the OP envisaged change, especially as a food package equivalent to €23 distributed twice per year from 2015 and once per year in 2014.	R15. No specific recommendations

⁷ Depending of the calculations of the Ministry of Education and Scientific Research

<i>Conclusions</i>	<i>Recommendations</i>
C16. Reaching approximately 700.000 pupils with a school stationary package equivalent to € 5.3 distributed once per year starting with 2015, in order to tackle the high drop-out rate for the target population, although relevant for the identified need is moderate to low.	R16. No specific recommendations

6.3. EQ 4.3: Influence of external factors

EQ 4.3	To what extent are results influenced by external factors, including other existing instruments?
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6.3.1. Description on the evaluation process for EQ 4.3.

The analyses performed under this evaluation sub-questions aimed at assessing *the extent to which program results could be influenced by external factors such as changes in the economic context, demographic and social context as well as other policy instruments.*

The tables below summarize the data analysis and collection tools and the primary and secondary sources of information applied to answer to this question:

Table 23: Data analysis and data collection tools used in the ex-ante evaluation

Data analysis / collection tools	OP AD (August 2014) First Draft Evaluation Report	OP AD (October 2014) Second Draft Evaluation Report	OP AD (October 2014) Final Evaluation Report
Data analysis tools			
Analysis of the relevant reports: IMF staff report for Romania 2014, FAO country specific profile, 2014	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Analysis of relevant international statistics: World Value Survey, Demographic Risk Map	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Analysis of the relevant national policy instruments as well as the last draft versions of the OP HC 2014-2020	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Data collection tools			
Desk research	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Table 24: Primary and secondary sources of information

Source of information	Primary sources	Secondary sources
Minutes of the interviews	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
OP related documents	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Country Reports on Romania, IMF and the EC, World Value Survey, Demographic Risk Map	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Impact Assessment Study carried out in the context of a review of the "Food Distribution programme for the Most Deprived Persons of the Community"	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Available draft OP's	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Previous analyses conducted for the improvement of socio-economic related indicators in Romania	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Studies on the construction of a system of monitoring and evaluation of the World Bank	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Other monitoring systems / indicators in similar	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Source of information	Primary sources	Secondary sources
programs (e.g. France)		
Relevant academic articles	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

At the time of answering this evaluation question there was available only one impact assessment study , included in the Commission Staff Working Document (SEC(2008) 2436/2). This study was carried out in the context of a review of the "Food Distribution programme for the Most Deprived Persons of the Community" in 2008. No other ex-post analyses were carried out at European or national level; therefore the evaluation team did not have available more recent data to be used.

The main recommendations provided by the evaluator in the draft (feedback) reports as well as their status of implementation are presented in Annex 13 of the current report.

6.3.2. Answer to the evaluation question

Findings

The expected results could be influenced by factors related to the country economic context, demographic and social context, as well as other national policy instruments.

- ▶ **Economic factors** – As per the latest conclusions of the IMF and EC Staff Visit to Romania, the country **displays a relatively positive trend for the GDP growth, thus cautiously it can be considered that no negative influence may be caused by the overall economic context.**
- ▶ **Demographic and social factors** - Romania displays a negative demographic trend. While the recorded population in 2005 was 21.3 million, according to the estimations of the latest census, the population is 19.9 million.

This negative dynamic implies **a potential drop of the total number of pupils in the coming years.** On the other hand, it implies an increased number of elders which might trigger **an increase in the target group for the food supply action.**

The interviews with the Programmer revealed that these factors are closely considered especially by annually updating the targeted population inside the target groups categories established.

The weak development of social capital (defined as trust and civic engagement)⁸ in Romania reflected by the low number of consolidated NGO's that could support similar interventions, can hinder additional potential impacts of the intervention such as community cohesion, enhancement of social inclusion of local level, empowerment of the civil society, etc.

- ▶ **Other instruments** - A detailed description of the interaction between OP AD and other policy instruments can be consulted in section 4.2 of this report.

For the purpose of this analysis it can be specified that interventions of OP HC 2014-2020 could increase the value added of OP AD especially by enforcing the coordination between the two programmes in the area of social inclusion and education.

Moreover, the national policy instruments, already in place, such as Croissant and milk programme (Law 6/2012), Money for high-school programme (GD 1488/2004) to name a few, could equally increase the value added of this intervention. However, it should be noted that the exact effectiveness of these programmes is little known given that no evaluations have been carried out so far.

A presentation of the external factors considered can be seen in the table below.

Table 25: Influence of the external factors

⁸ According to the World Value Survey (2005-2009) only 0.8% of Romanians declared they are an active member of charitable/humanitarian organisations, while 3.1% of Polish and 11.8% of French declared so

OP results	External factors			Qualitative Assessment
	Economic context	Demographic and social context	Other Instruments	
Reaching 2.5 million persons with food supply	<p>GDP growth in Romania has picked up. According to the stated conclusions of the IMF and EC Staff Visit to Romania, the economy has continued to recover and is now expected to grow by 2.8 percent this year. Fiscal imbalances have been reduced and the current account deficit has remained low. Moreover, the Romanian economy has an estimated expansion of 3.5% in 2013 mainly due to exports, offsetting thus a fall in the domestic economic demand.</p>	<p>Romania faces a high demographic risk. According to the Demographic Risk Map⁹, out of the 8 Romanian Regions, except North East and North West, display very fast aging coupled with a high population shrinking. Nonetheless, 4 (Centre, South West Oltenia, South East) out of 8 regions in Romania are facing a high regional demographic location risk, measured as composite indicator combining demographic aspects with labour supply (regional labour force participation rate), human capital (education attainment and age structure as a ration of younger to older), labour productivity (measured by gross value added (GVA per hour worked) and R & D Performance (patenting activity in high-tech sectors per million labour force).</p> <p>Social capital in Romania is low. According to the GINI country report¹⁰ coming out of a communist past, Romania displays weak social relations, interactions and ties, illustrated by a low level of generalised social trust, a low level of frequency and membership of associations explained by weak tradition of non-governmental organisations, poor structural opportunities for participation and poor individual resources.</p>	<p>Operational Programme Human Capital 2014-2020</p> <p>Social canteens programme (Law 208/1997)</p> <p>Croissant and milk programme (Law 6/2012)</p> <p>Money for high-school programme (GD 1488/2004)</p> <p>Provision of free text books – policy intervention (Law 1/2011, Art 69)</p>	<p>No significant influence resulting from the economic context;</p> <p>Moderate influence is identified in relation to the demographic situation</p> <p>Potential positive influence by the mentioned policy instruments</p>
Reaching 700.000 pupils with school supplies				

Conclusions and recommendations for EQ 4.3

Conclusions	Recommendations
C17. The economic context shows a moderate positive trend. Cautiously it can be considered that no significant influence will be exercised for the two actions.	R17. No specific recommendation.
C18. The changes in the demographic situation of Romania might moderately influence both actions: a reduction in the number of pupils will reduce the targeted population for the action related to school supplies and an increase of the number of elders might enlarge the targeted population for food supply.	R18. No specific recommendation.
C19. The implementation of the national policy instruments could highly increase the OP value added if a proper coordination will be pursued	R19. The Programmer should closely consider the coordination with both OP HC and the national policy instruments, by indicating the

⁹ For additional details see: <http://www.demographic-risk-map.eu/index.aspx>

¹⁰ For additional details see: <http://www.gini-research.org/articles/cr>

<i>Conclusions</i>	<i>Recommendations</i>
especially with OP HC 2014-2020. However, the effectiveness of the national policy instruments such as Croissant and milk programme (Law 6/2012), Money for high-school programme (GD 1488/2004) is not known at this point given the lack of evaluations.	complementarities and synergies to be pursued, in the form of accompanying measures.

7. EQ 5: Involvement of relevant stakeholders

7.1. EQ 5. Involvement of relevant stakeholders

EQ 5	To what extent is ensured the involvement of relevant stakeholders?
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7.1.1. Description on the evaluation process for EQ 5

The analyses performed under this evaluation sub-questions, are aimed at assessing:

- ▶ Whether the OP provides a description of the measures taken to involve in the programming process all relevant stakeholders, as well as, if the case, competent local and regional authorities
- ▶ Whether the OP has been subject to a consultative process and stakeholders were informed throughout the programming process, while also having the possibility to influence the content of the document.

The tables below summarize the data analysis and collection tools and the primary and secondary sources of information applied to answer to this question:

Table 26: Data analysis and data collection tools used in the ex-ante evaluation

Data analysis / collection tools	OP AD (August 2014) First Draft Evaluation Report	OP AD (October 2014) Second Draft Evaluation Report	OP AD (October 2014) Final Evaluation Report
Data analysis tools			
Checks that the OP describes the process through which the relevant stakeholders were involved in the programming process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Consultation of meeting minutes and support documents from meetings with relevant stakeholders	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Representativeness of target groups among relevant stakeholders invited to consultations	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Data collection tools			
Documentary analysis	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Interview with the Programmers, National Authority for Child Rights Protections and Adoption, Ministry of Education and Scientific Research	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Table 27: Primary and secondary sources of information

Source of information	Primary sources	Secondary sources
Minutes of the interviews	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
OP relevant sections	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Meeting minutes and support documents from meetings with relevant stakeholders	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Other relevant documents	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

The main recommendations provided by the Evaluator in the draft (feedback) reports as well as their status of implementation are presented in Annex 13 of the current report.

7.1.2. Answer to the evaluation question

Findings

With respect to the involvement of relevant stakeholders in the programming process, the Operational Programme specifies that, in order to set the target group and to draft the OP, a series of meetings have been held with:

- ▶ Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Care and Elderly People – Direction of Social care and Social inclusion
- ▶ National Agency for Employment
- ▶ National Authority for Child Rights Protection and Adoption
- ▶ Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (for the food package delivered)
- ▶ Agency for Payments and Interventions for Agriculture (organiser of previous PEAD scheme)
- ▶ National Association of Retired People in Romania (representatives of target group)
- ▶ County Councils (local authorities – implementation partners)
- ▶ Association of Communes of Romania
- ▶ Red Cross Romania (civil society)
- ▶ Ovidiu Ro Association (representative organisation of Roma people).

The OP mentions that discussions took place with the above-mentioned partners, and that their proposals were analysed. Minutes of meetings with stakeholders and a summary of their proposals were put at the Evaluator's disposal for analysis.

Stakeholders' input for the programme referred to aspects such as: to increase the variety of the food package (Retired People Association), to introduce aid in the form of school supplies for children above 6 years old (Ministry of Labour), to consider young people above 18 years old which leave the public social care system to be a disadvantaged group.

Another suggestion received was to include in the target group the retired people with an income of 500 lei (instead of 400 lei), but after consultation with the National employment Agency it was concluded that doing this would increase the target group by 350,000 people.

With respect to frequency of food supply, consultations with the Association of Romanian Communes suggested that food supply happened once a year, as this activity required a large human resources mobilisation and it is a very logistically demanding operation. The Red Cross mentioned that they do not dispose of storage places but they can organise the provision of hot meals.

Five proposals of partners are mentioned to have been proposed for approval to the Ministry of European Funds, and they refer to:

- ▶ Introduction of aid in the form of school supplies for children above 6 years old
- ▶ Introduction of a category which includes the youth above 18 years old which leave the child care system
- ▶ Introduction in relevant legislation of another eligible category of target group, named "other social categories established through Local Council Decision", for people that find themselves in difficult situation because of natural disasters
- ▶ Reduction of flour quantity and substantial increase of meat quantity from the food package
- ▶ Introduction of 400 lei cap for unemployed people that receive unemployment support.

Concerning the representativeness of target groups among stakeholders, all **target groups were represented in the consultative process**, as illustrated in the table below.

Table 28: Representativeness of target groups among relevant stakeholders invited to consultations

Target Group	Relevant institution consulted	Type of institution (public institution / NGO)
Unemployed people or people with very low income	National Agency for Employment	Public
Retired people	National Association of Retired People in Romania	Public
Roma people which are Romanian citizens	OvidiuRo Association	Non-governmental Organisation
Disabled persons	Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Care and Elderly People	Public
Children and Young people	National Authority for Child Rights Protection and Adoption	Public

With respect to the involvement of relevant stakeholders in programme implementation, the programme makes reference to a **Coordination Committee** that will support implementation, which will include the following stakeholders: Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Protection and Elderly, Ministry of Education and Scientific Research as well as partner organisations that will secure goods distribution. This Committee will gather twice a year and will aim at solving potential implementation matters.

Conclusions and recommendations for EQ 5

<i>Conclusions</i>	<i>Recommendations</i>
C20. The Operational Programme provides a description of the measures taken to involve in the programming process relevant stakeholders, including competent local and regional authorities, by mentioning the meetings held with them and the proposals received from them with respect to the OP.	R20. No specific recommendation
C21. The OP has been subject to a consultative process through which stakeholders were informed about the programme and their feedback was received and considered in the programme.	R21. No specific recommendation
C22. The programme makes reference to a consultative committee that includes the relevant stakeholders.	R22. No specific recommendation

8. EQ 6: Programme Performance

8.1. EQ 6. Monitoring and data collection procedures

EQ 6	What is the adequacy of the operational programme’s monitoring procedures and data collection procedures necessary for evaluation?
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8.1.1. Description of the evaluation process for EQ 6

The analyses performed under this evaluation sub-questions, are aimed at assessing if:

- ▶ The monitoring procedures and mechanisms are adequate to support a solid and effective management of the OP
- ▶ The monitoring mechanisms are efficient and the administrative burden is low
- ▶ There is capacity to collect, store, manage and report the data needed for Programme monitoring and evaluation

The tables below summarize the data analysis and collection tools and the primary and secondary sources of information applied to answer to this question:

Table 29: Data analysis and data collection tools used in the ex-ante evaluation

Data analysis / collection tools	OP AD (August 2014) First Draft Evaluation Report	OP AD (October 2014) Second Draft Evaluation Report	OP AD (October 2014) Final Evaluation Report
Data analysis tools			
Analysis of monitoring and data collection procedures	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Data collection tools			
Desk research	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Interviews	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Table 30: Primary and secondary sources of information

Source of information	Primary sources	Secondary sources
Minutes of the interviews	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
OP relevant sections	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
European Evaluation Helpdesk: Draft ideas on minimum requirements for the Evaluation Plan. Working Paper for the Good Practice Workshop: From Ongoing Evaluation towards the Evaluation Plan. Vienna, 14 May 2012.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Ex-ante evaluation guideline	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Administrative and statistical data	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
OP Monitoring procedures	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

The main recommendations provided by the Evaluator in the draft (feedback) reports as well as their status of implementation are presented in Annex 13.

8.1.2. Answer to the evaluation question

Findings

The goal of the monitoring system is to continuously provide management and main stakeholders of the OP AD with indications of the extent of achievement of objectives and progress in the use of allocated funds, based on systematic collection of data regarding programme indicators. Given the scale of the operations implemented at national level and the number of people receiving aid in the form of food or school supplies, it is essential that an effective monitoring is carried out at programme level. For this, the OP refers to data collection activities and to monitoring and evaluation systems at programme level.

Monitoring and evaluation

Reporting

In accordance with Article 13 of Regulation (EU) 223/2014 each Member State shall submit an **Annual Implementation Report** for the operational programme implemented in the previous financial year. The report has to be drafted in line with the delegated act adopted by the Commission, which lays down the content of the annual and final implementation report, including the list of common indicators.

Moreover, Art. 13.5 of the abovementioned Regulation provides that Member States shall submit a **final report** regarding the implementation of the operational programme by 24 September 2024.

In this respect, the OP AD explicitly mentions that **annual implementation reports** will be submitted to the EC by 30th of June of each year, and the **final implementation report** will be submitted by 30th of September 2023, which is **one year earlier** than the deadline allowed by regulation.

Evaluation

Ex-ante, interim and ex-post evaluations are also mentioned by the Regulation:

- ▶ For the **ex-ante evaluation** a list of elements to be appraised is provided, list which was embedded in the requirements for ex-ante evaluation of the OP AD.
- ▶ **Interim evaluations** done by the Member States are optional, and the managing authority shall carry out a structured survey on end recipients in 2017 and 2022. The OP is in line with these requirements, mentioning that the MA will conduct a study on the target group on a format agreed by the Commission.
- ▶ According to Article 17 (1) of Regulation (EU) 223/2014, The Commission shall present a **mid-term evaluation** of the Fund to the European Parliament and to the Council by 31 December 2018.
- ▶ **Ex-post evaluation** is to be carried out by the Commission with the assistance of external experts.

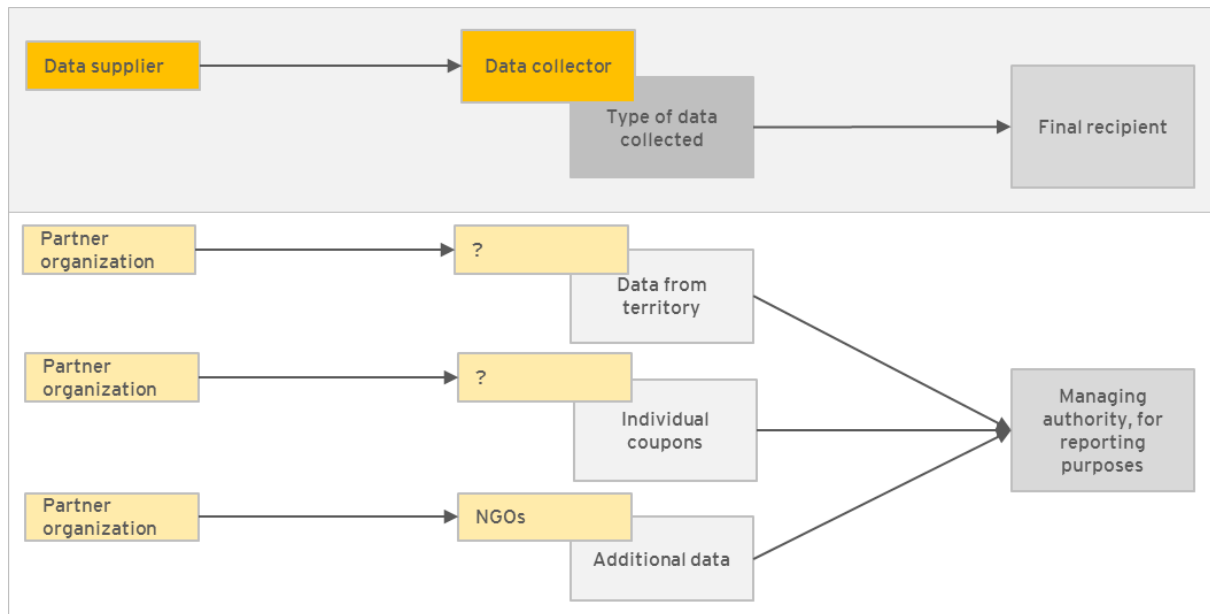
Structures

In terms of **institutional set-up**, the **managing authority** of the OP AD will be the same as for the Human Capital OP which could facilitate the coordination between the interventions. The **audit authority** will be the Audit Authority of the Courts of Accounts; an independent authority which has this function for all operations in Romania which are co-financed from structural and investment funds. The **Certifying and Paying Authority** is part of the Ministry of Public Finance and it is also a CPA for the other EU financed programmes.

Data collection arrangements

The operational programme makes reference to data collection procedures and describes the process through which information will be collected for reporting purposes. Three categories of data are mentioned to be collected – data from territory, individual coupons and supplementary data. Below is presented visual display of data collection mechanism, in terms of entities providing the data, entities collecting the data and type of data collected.

Table 31: Data collection mechanism



As seen above, data collection flow needs further clarification regarding the specific type of data to be collected. With respect to collection of **individual coupons** after they have been mailed to members of the target group, they will be collected by partner organisations in exchange to the food package, and then transmitted to the MEF.

Additional data will be collected by NGOs, but the OP does not provide details regarding the type of information to be collected, and the bodies/authorities from which data will be collected.

All data will be sent to the Managing Authority, to serve for annual reporting activities at annual level. As mentioned in the OP, the monitoring data will be recorded in the electronic monitoring system at national level.

In terms of **administrative burden**, monitoring activities follow the lines given by the Commission in the Regulation. However, **data collection procedures are still unclear** and they may become burdensome if roles and responsibilities are not clearly defined.

Conclusions and recommendations for EQ 6

Conclusions	Recommendations
Reporting	
C23. Implementation reporting is in line with regulation requirements, with Annual Implementation Reports to be submitted annually before 30 th of June for the previous year, and a Final Report on implementation of the OP AD planned to be submitted before 30 th of September 2023. The deadline for submission of the Final Report is 30 th of September 2024.	R23. No specific recommendation

<i>Conclusions</i>	<i>Recommendations</i>
Evaluation	
<p>C24. The evaluations envisaged for this OP are in line with Regulation (EU) 223/2014, including an ex-ante evaluation, an ex-post evaluation to be carried out by the European Commission and interim studies on the target group to be carried out by the Member State in 2017 and 2022.</p>	<p>R24. No specific recommendation</p>
Structures	
<p>C25. The institutional set-up for the OP is in line with Regulation (EU) 223/2014. The Ministry of European Funds will be the Managing Authority, and the audit authority and certifying and paying authority will be the same as for the other OPs in Romania.</p>	<p>R25. No specific recommendations.</p>
<p>C26. A Coordination Committee will be organised which will supervise the implementation of the programme.</p>	<p>R26. No specific recommendations.</p>
Data collection arrangements	
<p>C27. With respect to data collection for monitoring and reporting purposes, three types of data to be collected are mentioned – data from territory, individual coupons and additional data.</p> <p>However, it is not clear what specific type of information will be collected. In this sense, lack of clarity of data collection procedures may affect the monitoring process and increase the administrative burden.</p>	<p>R27. The Programmer / MA OPHC should detail in the Guideline on indicators the data collection procedures, in terms of flow of data and specific type of information that will be collected.</p>

8.3. Conclusions and recommendations

<i>Conclusions</i>	<i>Recommendations</i>	<i>Responsible body for implementation</i>
EQ 1: Programme contribution to EU objective to reduce poverty		
<p>C1. The OP is consistent with Europe 2020's objective of reducing poverty and risk of social inclusion by addressing those most severely affected by poverty and material deprivation through two types of support including also accompanying measures.</p> <p>Its contribution to this objective is appraised qualitatively as medium to low given the relatively low monetary value of the basket of goods offered, as well as the low frequency of the aid (i.e. once per year in 2014 and twice per year in following period).</p> <p>The Programme equally contains an indicative list of accompanying measures which will be supported by the selected partner organisations, public or private (NGO's proving charitable experience)</p>	R1. No specific recommendations provided	N.A.
EQ 2.1: How is the internal consistency of the proposed operational programme ensured?		
Identification of needs to be addressed		
<p>C2. Section 2.1 adequately presents the current situation, through the use of statistical data as well brief information about the national policy context, namely Romania's commitment towards EU 2020 targets and reducing poverty.</p>	R2. No specific recommendations provided	N.A.
Consistency between types of deprivation and Programme goals		
<p>C3. The two types of material deprivations addressed, namely the lack of food among the most deprived and the lack of school supplies among the pupils coming from the poorest families, are linked to the programme goals.</p>	R3. No specific recommendations provided	N.A.
<p>C4. The accompanying measures are indicated only for food supply action.</p>	R4. No specific recommendations provided	N.A.

Accompanying measures related to school equipment supplies, while not explicitly indicated in the OP, based on the interviews carried out with programme and MESR representatives, counselling activities are current functions carried out at school level.		
Distribution characteristics		
C5. The characteristics of the distribution system for food aid are appropriate for the adequate implementation of the scheme.	R5. No specific recommendations provided	N.A.
C6. The characteristics of the distribution system for material assistance for pupils are based on the current National Programme for school supplies (law 126/2002), yet no clear responsibilities are set in-between the MESR and MEF.	R6. The Programmer should consider clarifying the role of the MESR for the OP implementation.	MEF, MESR
EQ 2.2: What is its relationship of the programme with other relevant financial instruments?		
C7. Overall the appraisal revealed complementarities between the OP food and school supplies operation, and the European and national instruments envisaged by OP AD or the Ex-ante Evaluator. Moreover, the programmes which are complementing the operations supported through OP AD are presented in Section 2.3 of the Programme.	R7. Section 2.3 could make reference as well to other programmes falling under the scope of the programme and targeting the same groups as OP AD, namely Provision of Free Text Books (Law 1/2011, Art 69).	MEF, MESR
C8. Although in the OP AD it is mentioned that Money for High-school Programme is a relevant financial instrument for the Programme's interventions, the complementarity between the two programmes is arguable since the target groups addressed are different.	R8. The programmer should indicate as a brief justification for selecting Money for High-school Programme having regards that the target group envisaged is not subject to the categories included in OP AD.	MEF, MESR
C9. The food supplies operation of OP AD presents a general good consistency with European and national programmes, projects developed by the civil society and OPHC.	R9. No specific recommendation	N.A.
C10. The school supplies operation of OP AD presents a general good consistency with European and national programmes, projects developed by the civil society and OPHC.	R10. No specific recommendation	N.A.

EQ 3: To what extent is there consistency between budgetary resources and the operational programme's objectives?		
C11. This version of the OP does not provide an explicit argumentation for the different financial weight attributed for the two actions.	R11. The Programmers should consider including an explicit argumentation for the financial weight attributed to the two actions of the Programme.	MEF
C12. The interviews with the Programmer revealed that the OP AD will fund the National <i>Programme for School Supplies Provision</i> . However; this is not made explicit and detailed in the Programme.	R12. The Programmer should clarify whether the financial allocation for School Supplies action will be on top of the current allocation for the National <i>Program for School Supplies Provision (law126/2002)</i> or the OP financial allocation will replace the national funding.	MEF, MESR
C13. While the average amounts of money allocated per person for both food supply and school supplies are relatively small, these amounts are higher than the previous programming period allocations.	R13. No specific recommendation.	N.A.
C14. The accompanying measures presented in the OP as a part of the Food supply action will not be financed through OP AD however their financial source is generally indicated, except for the measure regarding basic hygiene education, supporting the access to healthcare and social services, guiding for employment and support for job search	R14. The Programmer should clarify how the accompanying measures regarding basic hygiene education, supporting the access to healthcare and social services, guiding for employment and support for job search will be financed.	MESR, MEF
EQ 4.2: To what extent do results contribute to programme objectives?		
C15. Reaching over 2.5 million persons, although relevant, secures only a moderate contribution to the OP envisaged change, especially as a food package equivalent to €23.	R15. No specific recommendations	N.A.
C16. Reaching 680,000 pupils with a school stationary package equivalent to €15, in order to tackle the high drop-out rate for the target population, although relevant for the identified need, is moderate.	R16. No specific recommendations	N.A.
EQ 4.3: To what extent are results influenced by external factors, including other existing instruments?		
C17. The economic context shows a moderate positive trend. Cautiously it can be considered that no significant influence will be exercised for the two actions.	R17. No specific recommendations	N.A.

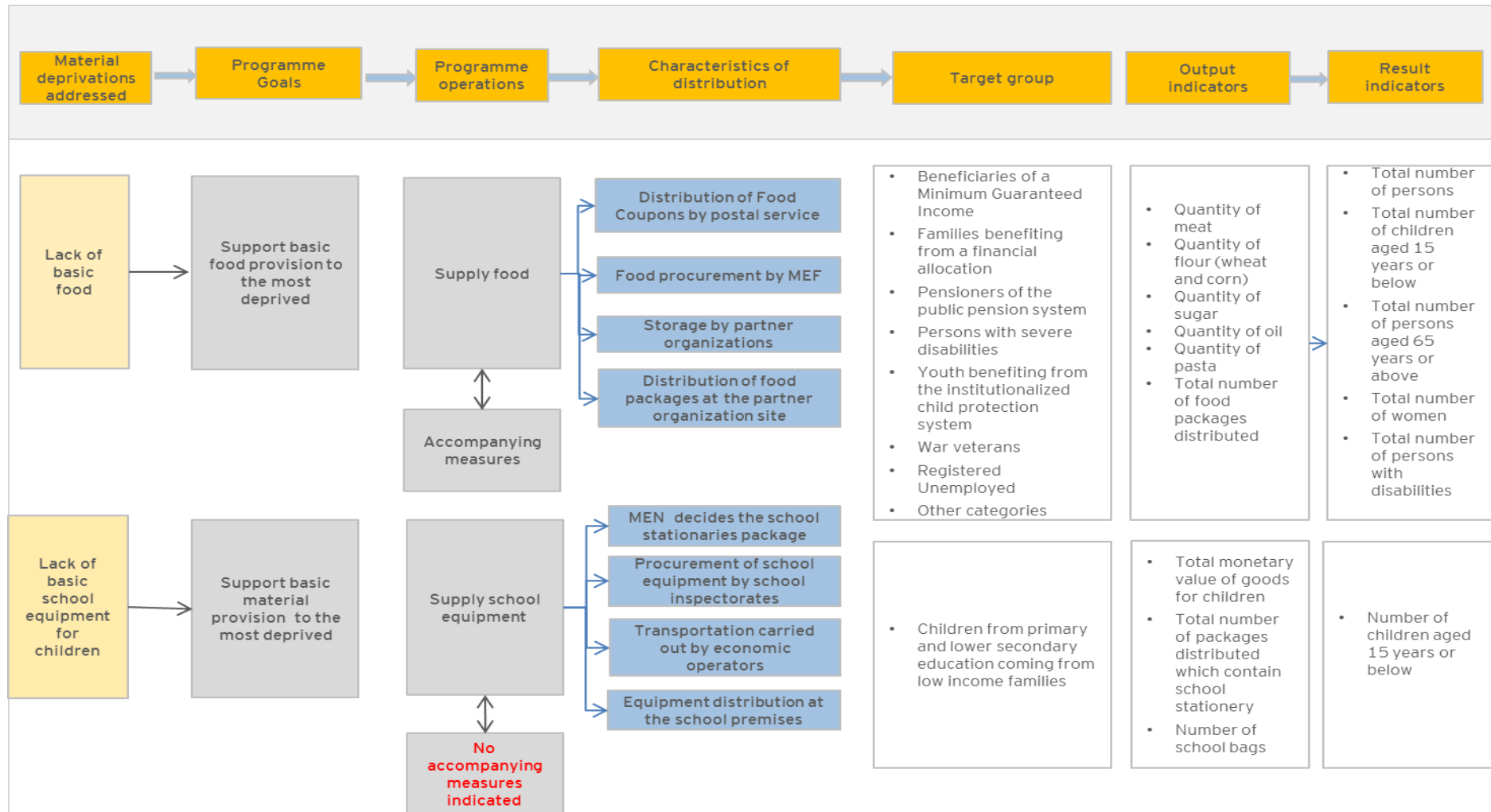
C18. The changes in the demographic situation of Romania might moderately influence both actions: a reduction in the number of pupils will reduce the targeted population for the action related to school supplies and an increase of the number of elders might enlarge the targeted population for food supply.	R18. No specific recommendations	N.A.
C19. The implementation of the national policy instruments could highly increase the OP value added if a proper coordination will be pursued especially with OP HC 2014-2020. However, the effectiveness of the national policy instruments such as Croissant and milk programme (Law 6/2012), Money for high-school programme (GD 1488/2004) is not known at this point given the lack of evaluations.	R19. The Programmer should closely consider the coordination with both OP HC and the national policy instruments, by indicating the complementarities and synergies to be pursued, in the form of accompanying measures.	MEF
EQ 5: To what extent is ensured the involvement of relevant stakeholders?		
C20. The Operational Programme provides a description of the measures taken to involve in the programming process relevant stakeholders, including competent local and regional authorities, by mentioning the meetings held with them and the proposals received from them with respect to the OP.	R20. No specific recommendation	N.A.
C21. The OP has been subject to a consultative process through which stakeholders were informed about the programme and their feedback was received and considered in the programme.	R21. No specific recommendation	N.A.
C22. The programme envisage a consultative committee that includes the relevant stakeholders	R22. No specific recommendation	N.A.
EQ 6: What is the adequacy of the operational programme's monitoring procedures and data collection procedures necessary for evaluation?		
C23. Implementation reporting is in line with regulation requirements, with Annual Implementation Reports to be submitted annually before 30 th of June for the previous year, and a Final Report on implementation of the OP AD planned to be submitted before 30 th of September 2023. The deadline for submission of the Final Report is 30 th of September 2024.	R23. No specific recommendation.	N.A.
C24. The evaluations envisaged for this OP are in line with Regulation (EU) 223/2014, including an ex-ante evaluation, an ex-post evaluation	R24. No specific recommendation.	N.A.

to be carried out by the European Commission and interim studies on the target group to be carried out by the Member State in 2017 and 2022.		
C25. The Institutional set-up for the OP is in line with Regulation (EU) 223/2014. The Ministry of European Funds will be the Managing authority, and the audit authority and certifying and paying authority will be the same as for the other OPs in Romania.	R25. No specific recommendations.	N.A.
C26. There is a Coordination Committee organised which can supervise the implementation of the programme, which can identify possible weak points in the implementation and contribute to its improvement	R26. No specific recommendations.	N.A.
C27. With respect to data collection for monitoring and reporting purposes, three types of data to be collected are mentioned – data from territory, individual coupons and additional data. However, it is not clear what specific type of information will be collected. In this sense, lack of clarity of data collection procedures may jeopardise the monitoring process and increase the administrative burden.	R27. The Programmer / MA OPHC should detail in the Guideline on indicators the data collection procedures, in terms of flow of data and specific type of information that will be collected.	MEF, MA OPHC

Overall, the objective of the evaluation - to bring value added and to improve the quality of the Operational Programme negotiated with the European Commission – was reached, through the iterative evaluation process and implementation by the Beneficiary of recommendations provided by the evaluators, in the process of OP refining.

9. Annexes

Annex 1. Logic of intervention at OP level and its operations



Annex 2. Guidelines on Programme indicators

Annex 3. Proposed evaluation plan for the programme

Annex 4. Evaluation methodology used for each evaluation question (evaluation framework)

Relevant evaluation question	Evaluation hypothesis	Methods and Instruments	Analyses performed	Primary sources	Secondary sources
Q1. To what extent does the Programme contribute to Union's objective to reduce with at least 20 million the number of people that live in poverty or at poverty and social exclusion risk until 2020?	1) The Programme contributes to the EU 2020 Strategy objective of reducing by at least 20 million the number of people living in poverty or are at risk of poverty and social exclusion by 2020, given the national specificity in terms of poverty, social exclusion and material deprivation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Documentary analysis ▶ Interviews with MEF 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Analysis of the extent to which the Programme contributes to reaching the EU target, transposed at national level through the National Reform Programme, of reducing with 580,000 people the number of people living in poverty or are at risk of poverty and social exclusion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Minutes of the interviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Europe 2020 Strategy ▶ OP section corresponding to the needs assessment and types of material deprivation to be addressed through the Programme ▶ National Reform Programme 2011-2013 ▶ National Reform Programme 2014 ▶ Partnership Agreement 2014-2020 ▶ Position of the Commission Services on the development of Partnership Agreement and programmes in Romania for the period 2014-2020 ▶ Council Recommendations for the National Reform Programme 2014 ▶ Consultative documents related to this OP
Q2. How is the internal consistency of the proposed operational programme ensured?	<p>1) The programme appropriately identifies and justifies the corresponding types of material deprivation existing at national level</p> <p>2) The programme adequately justifies the types of material deprivation chosen to be addressed through the OP AD</p> <p>3) The programme contains an appropriate description of characteristics of the distribution of material assistance to be provided, of further measures as well as national programs that are to be supported</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Documentary analysis ▶ Interviews with MEF representatives ▶ Interviews with the MLFSPEMARD and APIA representatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Analysis of the identified types of material deprivation and of the justification underlying the selection of material deprivation types covered by OP AD ▶ Analysis of the distribution of material assistance to be provided, of additional measures and national programs to be supported ▶ Analysis of consistency between the program objectives and selected types of material deprivation through a matrix of internal consistency 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Minutes of the interviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ EU Regulation No 223/2014 ▶ Socio-economic analyses ▶ Statistical data ▶ Results of the „Food distribution programme for the most deprived persons in the European Union” (PEAD) ▶ Consultation protocols of the stakeholders and documents related to consultation activities ▶ Consultative documents related to the OP ▶ Documents related to the draft OP ▶ Similar operational programs of other Member States (MS)
What is its relationship of the programme with other relevant financial instruments?	<p>1) The Programme is coherent with other national EU financial instruments/ benefits is kind, food and material provided as part of social benefits in preventing and combating poverty and social exclusion risk indicated by law assistance</p> <p>2) The Programme is coherent</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Documentary analysis ▶ Interviews with the MLFSPE, MEF ▶ External coherence matrix of the operational programme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Analysis of external coherence of the program with other relevant financial instruments at national level/ benefits in kind, food and material provided as part of social benefits in preventing and combating poverty and social exclusion risk indicated by law assistance, in the form of a matrix ▶ Analysis of external coherence of the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Minutes of the interviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Relevant national financial instruments resulting from the Social Welfare Act no. 292/2011 ▶ European Programme for Employment and Social Innovation ▶ Other relevant European financial instruments ▶ Consultative documents of this operational program ▶ Documents related to the draft OP

Relevant evaluation question	Evaluation hypothesis	Methods and instruments	Analyses performed	Primary sources	Secondary sources
	with other EU financial instruments (European Programme for employment and social innovation, etc.).		program with other EU financial instruments, in the form of a matrix		
Q3. To what extent is there consistency between budgetary resources and the operational programme's objectives	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Allocation of budgetary resources correspond with programme's objectives/ types of material deprivation of the program 2) Allocation of budgetary resources for each objective/ type of material deprivation concerned correspond to the size/weight as is represented by selection of indicators from the list of common indicators that will be provided by the European Commission before 17 of July, 2014 (according to Act. 13 (6) from EU Regulation 223/2014). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Study of working papers and relevant guidelines developed at EU level ▶ Interviews with the Managing Authority for the period 2014-2020 and period 2007-2013 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Analysis of the financial allocation for each type of material deprivation addressed by the programme ▶ Analysis of financial allocation in relation to the common indicators selected: to what extent financial allocation for a type of material deprivation corresponds to the budget actually achieved (based on information available in the current programming period in APIA's reports) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Minutes of the interviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Reports of the programme stakeholders consultations ▶ Documents related to the EU policies ▶ Guides and thematic reports by the European Commission ▶ APIA reports on food aid "program providing food to the most deprived persons" (PEAD) ▶ Support documents related to the drafting process of the OP
Q4. How will the estimated outputs contribute to results?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) There is a clear description of how operations and selected partner organizations contribute to achieving results 2) Selection of output indicators relevant for programmed operations 3) Selected output indicators are able to lead to the achievement of results 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Checking relevant literature ▶ Documentary analysis ▶ Statistical database ▶ Workshop with the representatives of the MEF, MLFSPE and MARD 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Analysis of the logic of intervention, of the way in which OP AD operations have contributed to the results and data establishing these relationships ▶ Analysis of the output indicators' relevance selected to achieve the results. ▶ Assistance will be provided for a guide of indicators, which will include at least the following: guide tag, measurement unit and explicative definition, available information sources or the data collection methodology, including data collection calendar. The content of this guide will be validated during a workshop with key stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Minutes of the workshop 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Guidance document on ex-ante evaluation 2014-2020, DG REGIO ▶ Result indicators 2014+, pilot study in 12 European regions, DG REGIO ▶ Partnership Agreement 2014-2020 ▶ Documents related to operational programs ▶ Previous analyses conducted for the improvement of socio-economic related indicators in Romania ▶ Studies on the construction of a system of monitoring and evaluation of the World Bank ▶ Other monitoring systems/indicators in similar programs ▶ Common Strategic Framework ▶ Evaluation of other relevant interventions for the prior programming period
To what extent do results contribute to programme objectives	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Selected result indicators are relevant for meeting program objectives/ types of material deprivation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Documentary analysis ▶ Statistical database ▶ Workshop with the representatives of MEF, MLFPSE and MARD 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Analysis of the relevance of the result indicators selected to achieve the program objectives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Minute of the interviews and workshop 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Guidance document on ex-ante evaluation 2014-2020, DG REGIO ▶ Documents related to operational programs ▶ Previous analyses conducted for the improvement of socio-economic related indicators in Romania ▶ Result indicators 2014+, pilot study in 12

Relevant evaluation question	Evaluation hypothesis	Methods and instruments	Analyses performed	Primary sources	Secondary sources
					European regions, DG REGIO ► Partnership Agreement 2014-2020 ► Common Strategic Framework
To what extent are results influenced by external factors, including other existing documents?	1) There is a clear description of how other factors and also other policies (contextual factors such as developments related to the labor market, demographic changes, changes in regional competitiveness or other policies) contributes to the program and how they influence program results	► Documentary analysis ► Statistical database ► Interviews with the representatives of MEF, MLFSPE	► The analysis of the extent to which program operations could be influenced by external factors such as changes in the economic context, demographic or social and/or other policies	► Minutes of the interview	► OP related documents ► Previous analyses conducted for the improvement of socio-economic related indicators in Romania ► Studies on the construction of a system of monitoring and evaluation of the World Bank ► Other monitoring systems/indicators in similar programs ► Impact Assessment Study carried out in the context of a review of the "Food Distribution programme for the Most Deprived Persons of the Community" ► Relevant academic articles
Q5. To what extent is ensured the involvement of relevant stakeholders?	1) There is a description of the measures taken to involve all stakeholders, and if required, local and regional authorities and other public authorities in the preparation of operational program 2) The program was subject to a consultative process and stakeholders were involved throughout the programming, being informed, consulted and given the opportunity to influence the content of the document	► Documentary analysis ► <input type="checkbox"/> Interviews with the representatives of MEF and relevant actors (MLFSPE, MARD)	► Analysis of the measures taken to involve stakeholders: to what extent was the program subject to a consultative process and stakeholders were involved throughout the programming, being informed, consulted and given the opportunity to influence the content of the document?	► Minutes of the interview	► Consultation protocols of the stakeholders and documents related to consultation activities ► Consultative documents of this operational program ► Documents related to the draft OP
Q6. What is the adequacy of the operational programme's monitoring procedures and data collection procedures necessary for evaluation?	1) The monitoring and management mechanisms used are appropriate and sufficient to support a strong and effective program management 2) Monitoring mechanisms applied are effective and administrative burden are low 3) There is the capacity to collect, store, manage and report data concerning the monitoring and evaluation of the Programme	► Documentary analysis ► Interviews with the representatives of the managing authorities of the 2014-2020 programming period (APIA, MARD) ► Workshop with the representatives of MFE, MLFSPE and MRAD (Q4 correlation)	► Analyzing of the extent to which the procedures used have internalized the lessons learned from the implementation of similar operations in the current programming period (Annual European Distribution Program) ► Analyzing of the extent to which the monitoring procedures facilitate in due time the collection of data so that they can be used to make decisions, reporting and evaluation. ► Assistance to support the elaboration of an evaluation plan, which will include, at least the following aspects: evaluation	► Minutes of the interviews and workshop	► OP monitoring procedures and data collection ► Relevant technical assistance documents ► Statistical and administrative data ► Guidance document on ex-ante evaluation 2014-2020, DG REGIO ► <i>European Evaluation Helpdesk: Draft ideas on minimum requirements for the Evaluation Plan. Working Paper for the Good Practice Workshop: From Ongoing Evaluation towards the Evaluation Plan. Vienna, 14 May 2012.</i>

Framework Agreement for evaluating the Structural Instruments during 2011-2015
Lot 1 - Evaluations

Subsequent Contract n. 16 - Ex-Ante Evaluation of Operational Programme Aid for the Most Deprived 2014-2020

Relevant evaluation question	Evaluation hypothesis	Methods and instruments	Analyses performed	Primary sources	Secondary sources
			themes, the main methodologies, the evaluation calendar, the needed human and financial resources, as well as the information / data needed to carry out the assessments included in the evaluation plan. The content of the evaluation plan will be validated during a workshop with the main stakeholders.		

Annex 5. Key documents and information sources

Document
Relevant documents at European level
Strategy Europe 2020
Common Strategic Framework
EU Regulation 223/2014
The recommendations of the Council for the National Reform Programme 2014
Position of the Commission Services on the development of Partnership Agreement and programmes in Romania for the period 2014-2020
Consultative documents relevant for this Operational Programme
Other relevant European financial instruments
Guides and thematic reports of the European Commission
European Evaluation Helpdesk: Draft ideas on minimum requirements for the Evaluation Plan. Working Paper for the Good Practice Workshop: From Ongoing Evaluation towards the Evaluation Plan. Vienna, 14 May 2012.
COMMISSION STAFF WORKING DOCUMENT: Impact Assessment Study carried out in the context of a review of the "Food Distribution programme for the Most Deprived Persons of the Community"
EC: Results of "Programme for food supply to most disadvantaged people in the Community" (PEAD)
Operational Programmes of other Member States
Relevant documents at national level
The Partnership Agreement 2014 – 2020
National Reform Programme 2011-2013
National Reform Programme 2014
Relevant national financial instruments resulting from Social Care Law no, 292/2011
APIA Reports regarding food aid from "Programme for food supply to most disadvantaged people in the Community " (PEAD)
Implementation documents (for OP AD)
Socio-economic analyses
Relevant stakeholders consultation protocols
Consultative documents of this OP
Evaluations of other relevant interventions in previous programming period
Monitoring and data collection procedures of the OP
Relevant Technical assistance documents

Annex 6. The list of members of the Steering Committee

Nr. Crt.	Member of the Steering Committee	Institution
1.	Amalia Dobrescu	MEF, DG APE
2.	Alin Mihai	MEF, DG APE
3.	Claudia Măgdălina	MFE, DG APE
4.	Diana Iacob	MEF, DG APE
5.	Alina Banoiu	MA SOPHRD
6.	Gabriela Dobre	MA SOPHRD
7.	Adrian Simion	MEF, DPPITA
8.	Raluca Stoian	MEF, DG SCTA
9.	Manuela Balamat	MEF, DG SCTA
10.	Georgeta Constantinescu	MEF, DPPITA
11.	Marinica Stoian	MESR, DGPE
12.	Marcel Constantin	MESR, DGBFSHR

Annex 7. Synthesis of the data collection tools

Evaluation Tool	Stakeholders involved	Evaluation questions addressed
Desk analysis		Q1, Q2, Q3, Q4, Q5, Q6
Interviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Ministry of European Funds; ▶ Ministry of National Education; ▶ National Authority for Child Rights Protection and Adoptions ▶ Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Protection and Elderly ▶ NGO's 	Q1, Q2, Q3, Q4, Q5, Q6
Workshops	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Representatives of the team in charge with the elaboration and implementation of the Operational Programme ▶ Managing Authority 	Q4, Q6

Annex 8. Master interview guideline

Introduction

Can you briefly describe your involvement in the elaboration process of OP Aid to the Most Deprived?

Topic 1: Strategic consistency

- ▶ How will the Programme contribute to achieving the EU target transposed at national level through the National Reform Programme, namely to reduce the number of people living in poverty or at risk of poverty and social exclusion with 580,000?

Respondents: MEF

Topic 2: Internal consistency

- ▶ How is the Programme logic of intervention structured?
 - In your opinion, does the Programme justify properly the types of material deprivation chosen to be addressed by the Programme? Are there any other types of deprivation that are not included in the program and should have been addressed?
 - In your opinion, does the Programme presents an adequate description of the distribution of material assistance to be provided, of the additional measures and of the national programs to be supported?
 - Are the accompanying measures included in the Programme the most relevant ones? What other additional measures could be introduced?
- ▶ What lessons can we draw from the implementation of the similar Programme in the 2007-2013 programming period?

Respondents: MEF, MLFSPE, MESR, APIA, Social Partners (eg. Red Cross)

- ▶ What is the relationship of the Programme with other relevant instruments/ policies/ programs?
 - In your opinion, is the Programme consistent with other national financial instruments/ in-kind aid, food and materials provided as part of social benefits for the prevention and combating poverty and social exclusion risk, indicated by social assistance law?
 - In your opinion, is the Programme coherent with other EU financial instruments (European Programme for employment and social innovation, etc.)

Respondents: MEF, MLFSPE, MESR, APIA, Social Partners (eg. Red Cross)

Topic 3: Financial allocation

- ▶ What is the reasoning behind the financial allocation of the program, 398.2 million EUR assigned to the action on the distribution of food and 70.2 million EUR allocated for school supplies?
- ▶ In your opinion, the allocations of the budgetary resources correspond to the Programme's objectives: *increasing food security for the deprived, reducing school abandonment among children from deprived families*
- ▶ In your opinion, the allocation of the budgetary resources for each objective corresponds to the size of the problem?

Respondents: MEF

Topic 4: Contribution of the Programme's achievements to results

- ▶ What external factors could influence the Programme and in what manner?

Respondents: APIA, MLFSPE, MARD, Social Partners (eg. Red Cross)

Topic 5: Involvement of the parties involved

- ▶ Please describe how you were involved/ consulted in the process of elaboration the Programme.

Respondents: APIA, MLFSPE, MESR, MARD, Social Partners (eg. Red Cross)

- ▶ Please describe the consultative process of the Programme and how stakeholders were involved in the process of elaborating the Programme.

Respondents: MEF

Topic 6: The Operational Programme and data collection monitoring procedures

- ▶ Are the monitoring and management mechanisms used appropriate and sufficient to support a strong and effective Programme management?
- ▶ Are the monitoring mechanisms applied effective? Are the administrative barriers are low?
- ▶ Is the capacity to collect, store, manage and report data concerning the monitoring and evaluation of the Programme ensured?
- ▶ What lessons can we draw from the implementation of the similar Programme in the 2007-2013 programming period?

Respondents: MA, APIA

Annex 9. List of interviewees

Nr. Crt	Name of the interviewee	Institution
1.	Ioan Silviu Lefter	Red Cross Romania
2.	Daiana Andreianu	Red Cross Romania
3.	Elisabeta Trifan	National Authority for Child Protection Rights and Adoption - MLFSPE
4.	Marinica Stoian	Ministry of Education and Scientific Research
5.	Amalia Dobrescu	Ministry of European Funds

Annex 10. Participants' list to the Kick-off Meeting

Nr. Cr.	Name of the participant	Institution
1.	Amalia Dobrescu	MEF
2.	Alin Mihai	MEF
3.	Mircea Milcu	APIA
4.	Diana Iacob	MEF
5.	Trifan Elisabeta	NACPA
6.	Marinica Stoian	MESR
7.	Victoria Mihaescu	Red Cross Romania
8.	Ioan Silviu Lefter	Red Cross Romania
9.	Andra Daiana Andreianu	Red Cross Romania

Annex 11. List of participants to the workshop regarding Evaluation plan and Guidelines on programme indicators

Nr. Crt	Name of the participant	Institution
1.	Georgeta Terciu	DGSACP
2.	Sonia Drăgulescu	Prefecture, Ilfov County
3.	Amalia Dobrescu	MEF
4.	Diana Iacob	MEF
5.	Manuela Balamat	MEF
6.	Daniel Chițoi	MA OPHC
7.	Raluca Stoian	MEF
8.	Marinica Stoian	MESR
9.	Georgeta Constantinescu	MEF
10.	Mircea Cârlan	MEF
11.	Claudia Magdalena	MEF

Annex 12. Conclusions and recommendations included in the feedback reports

Recommendations provided in the First Draft Evaluation Report submitted in August 2014	Status of Implementation (Yes / No)
EQ 1: To what extent does the Programme contribute to Union's objective to reduce with at least 20 million the number of people that live in poverty or at poverty and social exclusion risk until 2020?	
The Programme should include a more detailed explanation on how ESF, state budget and FEAD financed measures will be integrated, as this can represent a way to initiate the process of social inclusion of the most deprived.	Withdrawn
EQ 2.1 How is the internal consistency of the proposed operational programme ensured?	
<p>The structure of section 2.1 should be revised in order to clearly present the types of material deprivation to be addressed (through the use of headlines) and the corresponding justifications. A possible structure of the section could be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Brief description of the policy context ▶ Type 1 of material deprivation to be addressed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Justification ▶ Relevant vulnerable groups ▶ Type 2 of material deprivation to be addressed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Justification ▶ Relevant vulnerable groups 	YES
A trend of the indicators should be presented as it could be useful for estimating the number of persons belonging to the target group.	NO
The section 2.1 should present only a brief description of the policy context and this should rather be presented at the beginning in order to better ground the purpose of the OP.	YES
The Programme should make explicit the goal related to second type of material deprivation, namely, the lack of school supplies among the pupils coming from the poorest families. A formulation of such a goal could be "securing basic school stationaries for the most deprived pupils". This goal should be accompanied by the corresponding justification in the Section 2.1 of the OP.	YES
The Programmer should consider including accompanying measures for the school stationary supply operation, such as the one envisaged in the HCOP 2014-2020, i.e. under the Specific Objectives, SO 6.2: Boosting the access and participation in quality primary and secondary education and preventing early school leaving, particularly for disadvantaged children/students, through measures such as counselling and mentoring services for both students and parents.	NO
<p>The Programme should argue why coupons are to be used, since eligibility can also be proved on the spot, on the condition that adequate documentation is provided.</p> <p>Also, if eligibility can be proven on the spot, by persons omitted from the target group, the Programme should state how the potential larger number of final recipients will be taken into</p>	YES

Recommendations provided in the First Draft Evaluation Report submitted in August 2014	Status of implementation (Yes / No)
account during the acquisition of goods and how they will be informed.	
According to Art. 26 (2) in Reg. 223/2014, the costs incurred with transport and storage of basic material assistance are eligible costs under OP I and the Programme should clearly state if these fall under the obligation of the suppliers, similar to the provisions included in the procurement documentation of the food aid.	YES
EQ 2.2: What is its relationship of the programme with other relevant financial instruments?	
Section 2.3 could make reference as well to other programmes falling under the scope of the programme and targeting the same groups as OP AD, namely Provision of Free Text Books (Law 1/2011, Art 69) and Fruits in Schools Programme (Law 195/2010, GD 800/2013).	NO
The programmer should indicate as a brief justification for selecting Money for High-school Programme considering that the target group envisaged is not subject to the categories included in OP AD.	NO
EQ 3: To what extent is there consistency between budgetary resources and the operational programme's objectives?	
The Programmers should consider including an explicit argumentation for the financial weight attributed to the two actions of the Programme.	NO
The Programmer should make explicit in the OP whether the financial allocation for School Supplies action will be on top of the current allocation for the National Program for School Supplies Provision (law126/2002) or the OP financial allocation will replace the national funding.	NO
The Programmer should clarify how the accompanying measures regarding basic hygiene education, will be financed	NO
EQ 4.3: To what extent are results influenced by external factors, including other existing instruments?	
The Programmer should closely consider the coordination with both OP HC and the national policy instruments, by indicating the complementarities and synergies to be pursued, in the form of accompanying measures.	NO
EQ 5: To what extent is ensured the involvement of relevant stakeholders?	
The establishment of a mechanism through which the input of stakeholders regarding the programme can be taken into consideration should be considered, in order to ensure an appropriate implementation of the programme.	YES
EQ 6: What is the adequacy of the operational programme's monitoring procedures and data collection procedures necessary for evaluation?	
The Programmer should consider revising the deadline of submission of Final Report from 30 September 2023 to 30 September 2024.	Withdrawn
The Programmer should consider providing more clarity with respect to data collection procedures, in terms of actors involved in their assigned duties, flow of data and specific	NO

Recommendations provided in the First Draft Evaluation Report submitted in August 2014	Status of implementation (Yes / No)
type of information that will be collected.	

Recommendations provided in the Second Draft Evaluation Report submitted in October 2014	Status of implementation (Yes / No)
EQ 2.1: How is the internal consistency of the proposed operational programme ensured?	
The Programmer could consider including accompanying measures for the school supplies operation, such as the one envisaged in the HCOP 2014-2020, i.e. under the Specific Objectives, SO 6.2: Boosting the access and participation in primary and secondary education and preventing early school leaving, particularly for disadvantaged children, through measures such as counselling and mentoring services for both pupils and parents.	Withdrawn
The Programmer should consider clarifying the role of the MESC for the OP implementation.	NO
EQ 2.2: What is its relationship of the programme with other relevant financial instruments?	
Section 2.3 could make reference as well to other programmes falling under the scope of the programme and targeting the same groups as OP AD, namely Provision of <i>Free Text Books</i> (Law 1/2011, Art 69).	NO
The programmer should indicate as a brief justification for selecting <i>Money for High-school</i> Programme having regards that the target group envisaged is not subject to the categories included in OP AD.	NO
EQ 3: To what extent is there consistency between budgetary resources and the operational programme's objectives?	
The Programmers should consider including an explicit argumentation for the financial weight attributed to the two actions of the Programme.	NO
The Programmer should make explicit in the OP whether the financial allocation for School Supplies action will be on top of the current allocation for the National <i>Program for School Supplies Provision (Law126/2002)</i> or the OP financial allocation will replace the national funding.	NO
The Programmer should clarify how the accompanying measures regarding basic hygiene education, supporting the access to healthcare and social services, guiding for employment and support for job search will be financed.	NO
EQ 4.3: To what extent are results influenced by external factors, including other existing instruments?	
The Programmer should closely consider the coordination with both OP HC and the national policy instruments, by indicating the complementarities and synergies to be pursued, in the form of accompanying measures.	NO

Recommendations provided in the Second Draft Evaluation Report submitted in October 2014	Status of implementation (Yes / No)
EQ 6: What is the adequacy of the operational programme's monitoring procedures and data collection procedures necessary for evaluation?	
The Programmer should consider providing more clarity with respect to data collection procedures, in terms of flow of data and specific type of information that will be collected.	NO

Annex 13. Consistency with Social Investment Package

Targeted initiatives under Social investment package	OP AD operations	Consistency (yes/no justification)
Measures to stimulate funding in social investment		
▶ Supporting social enterprises' access to finance: European Social Entrepreneurship Funds	Not applicable	Not applicable
▶ Exploring the use of new financial investments	Not applicable	Not applicable
▶ Social Impact Bonds	Not applicable	Not applicable
Support adequate livelihoods/Improve awareness of social rights		
▶ Ensuring adequate livelihoods	Not applicable	Not applicable
▶ Administrative capacity building and streamlining to provide one-stop shops	Not applicable	Not applicable
▶ Enhancing financial inclusion	Not applicable	Not applicable
▶ Protecting people against financial difficulty	Not applicable	Not applicable
▶ Energy Efficiency	Not applicable	Not applicable
▶ Improving access to information for citizens	Food operation: Accompanying measures	supplies YES – consistency is identified The accompanying measures relating to the food supply operations of OP AD include actions specifically aimed at improving access to information for the members of the deprived communities and vulnerable groups.
Investing in Children/Early Childhood Education and Care		
▶ Improving access to childcare	Not applicable	Not applicable

Targeted initiatives under Social investment package	OP AD operations	Consistency (yes/no justification)
▶ Reducing early school leaving	School operation supplies	YES – consistency is identified The school supplies operation included in OP AD aims at providing school supplies for those pupils enrolled in primary and lower secondary whose parents have a net monthly medium income set at 50% of the minimum net wage/person, thus contributing at the decrease of the ESL rate.

Annex 14. Consistency with national programmes and projects developed by the civil society

LEGEND : S Synergy C Complementarity N Neutrality R Risk of redundancy

Programme	Objectives	Target groups	Operational Programme Aid to the Most Deprived 2014-2020		
			1. Food supplies	2. School supplies	3. Technical Assistance
National programmes or policy interventions regulated through national laws					
1. Social canteens programme (Law 208/1997)	a) preparing and serving two daily meals per person, lunch and dinner, in the limit of the food allowance specified by the regulations; b) paying for the basic food products from the canteens at the prices which they were acquired c) free transportation for individuals receiving home food delivery d) preparation and distribution of food through mobile centres for special situations.	a) children under 18 years old, whose parents have a net monthly medium income under the net minimum income	Neutrality	Complementarity According to Law 208/1997 pupils enrolled in primary and lower secondary education whose parents have a net monthly medium income set at 50% of the minimum net wage/person, targeted by OP AD have as well the possibility to benefit from a free lunch and dinner at the social canteens.	Neutrality
		b) youngsters under 25-26 years old enrolled in education whose situation is according to a)	Complementarity According to Law 208/1997 youngsters over 18 years old who left the child protection system and are in education, targeted by OP AD have as well the possibility to benefit from a free lunch and dinner at the social canteens.	Complementarity According to Law 208/1997 youngsters below the age of 18 years old enrolled in primary and lower secondary whose parents have a net monthly medium income set at 50% of the minimum net wage/person, targeted by OP AD have as well the possibility to benefit from a free lunch and dinner at the social canteens.	Neutrality
		c) persons receiving social assistance or other financial aid	Complementarity According to Law 208/1997 persons receiving social	Neutrality	Neutrality

Programme	Objectives	Target groups	Operational Programme Aid to the Most Deprived 2014-2020		
			1. Food supplies	2. School supplies	3. Technical Assistance
		granted by law and whose income is up to the net monthly income for a single person, taken into account in determining the social assistance	assistance or other financial aid granted by law, targeted by OP AD have as well the possibility to benefit from a free lunch and dinner at the social canteens.		
		d) retired persons	Complementarity According to Law 208/1997 retired persons whose pension is up to 400 lei per month targeted by OP AD have as well the possibility to benefit from a free lunch and dinner at the social canteens.	Neutrality	Neutrality
		e) persons at the age of retirement which are socially isolated, or without legal representative or without income	Complementarity According to Law 208/1997 persons at the age of retirement which are socially isolated, or without legal representative or without income could benefit from a free lunch and dinner at the social canteens. However the complementarity with OP AD is ensured solely with those persons who fulfil the criteria established in the OP AD (e.g. mono-parental families and single persons with a minimum guaranteed income through Law 416/2001).	Neutrality	Neutrality
		f) disabled and chronically ill persons	Complementarity According to Law 208/1997 persons with disabilities, targeted by OP AD have as well the possibility to benefit from a free lunch and dinner at the social canteens.	Neutrality	Neutrality

Programme	Objectives	Target groups	Operational Programme Aid to the Most Deprived 2014-2020		
			1. Food supplies	2. School supplies	3. Technical Assistance
		g) any person who temporarily do not have an income	Neutrality	Neutrality	Neutrality
2. Croissant and milk programme (Law 6/2012)	Providing free dairy and bakery products daily	a) pupils in primary and lower secondary (I-VIII) from public and private schools	Neutrality	Complementarity According to Law 6/2012 all children enrolled in primary and lower secondary education benefit from daily dairy and bakery products . Complementarity with OP AD is ensured for the following target group: pupils in primary and lower secondary education whose parents have a net monthly medium income set at 50% of the minimum net wage/person.	Neutrality
		b) pre-school pupils from public and private kindergartens with a normal programme of 4 hours	Neutrality	Neutrality	Neutrality
3. Money for high-school programme (GD 1488/2004)	Providing monthly financial support from state budget	Pupils enrolled in upper secondary or IVET and whose parents have a gross monthly income of maximum 150 lei per parent in the last 3 months of filling in the application	Neutrality	Neutrality	Neutrality
4. Provision of free text books – policy intervention (Law 1/2011, Art 69)	Increasing access and participation to education	Children enrolled in compulsory education authorised/accredited public or private institutions	Neutrality	Complementarity According to Law 1/2011, Art 69 all children in compulsory education benefit from free text books . Complementarity is thus ensured for children enrolled in primary and lower secondary whose	Neutrality

Programme	Objectives	Target groups	Operational Programme Aid to the Most Deprived 2014-2020		
			1. Food supplies	2. School supplies	3. Technical Assistance
				parents have a net monthly medium income set at 50% of the minimum net wage/person targeted as well by OP AD.	
Programmes or projects developed by civil society					
6. Food Bank Project, Romania Red Cross	Supporting vulnerable groups with basic food	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ People without or with very small incomes, vulnerable people ▶ Families with more than two children ▶ Mono-parental families ▶ Elderly ▶ Persons with disabilities 	<p>Complementarity</p> <p>Food Bank Project aims at providing food support to the following target groups identified in OP AD as well:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ people without or with very small incomes (e.g. beneficiaries of a minimum guaranteed income (Law 416/2001)) ▶ families with more than two children benefitting from a financial allocation ▶ mono-parental families with a minimum guarantee income through Law 416/2001 ▶ elderly, respectively retired persons with a pension up to 400 lei per month ▶ persons with disabilities. 	Neutrality	Neutrality
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Children left in grandparents' care or to other relatives ▶ Youngsters coming from the child protection system 	Neutrality	<p>Complementarity</p> <p>Food Bank Project aims at providing food support to for children enrolled in primary and lower secondary whose parents have a net monthly medium income set at 50% of the minimum net wage/person, target group identified in OP AD as well.</p>	Neutrality

Programme	Objectives	Target groups	Operational Programme Aid to the Most Deprived 2014-2020		
			1. Food supplies	2. School supplies	3. Technical Assistance
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Persons without shelter ▶ Persons with chronic diseases ▶ Persons belonging to different minorities, possible victims of discrimination ▶ Persons in crisis situation (family decease, loss of shelter, job , health due to an accident) 	Neutrality	Neutrality	Neutrality
7. NGO Fund in Romania, Civil Society Development Foundation, Romanian Environmental Partnership Foundation and Resource Centre for Roma Communities	Strengthened civil society development and enhanced contribution to social justice, democracy and sustainable development	Vulnerable groups	Complementarity (detailed per component)	Complementarity (detailed per component)	Neutrality

Programme	Objectives	Target groups	Operational Programme Aid to the Most Deprived 2014-2020		
			1. Food supplies	2. School supplies	3. Technical Assistance
<p>Component 2. Social Justice</p> <p>Sub-component 2.2 Fighting social inequalities, poverty and exclusion</p>	<p>Contribute on medium and long term to the development of the disadvantaged interethnic communities and improvement of Roma situation.</p>	<p>Interethnic communities, including the Roma and most disadvantaged ones</p>	<p>Complementarity</p> <p>Complementarity was identified at the level of the accompanying measures which could be supported through the NGO Fund in Romania.</p> <p>The accompanying measures could refer as well to the collaboration with other NGOs or relevant stakeholders in order to work together and apply pressure on decision-makers for solving local problems or in elaborating community action plans that respond to the needs of the most disadvantaged members of the community.</p>	<p>Complementarity</p> <p>The NGO Fund aims at mobilising the local human, financial and material resources in education and training activities, thus enhancing the OP AD school supplies operation.</p> <p>The target group envisaged by both programmes refers to children enrolled in primary and lower secondary whose parents have a net monthly medium income set at 50% of the minimum net wage/person</p>	<p>Neutrality</p>
<p>Component 4. Welfare and basic services</p>	<p>Increase access to and provision of welfare and basic services to vulnerable groups</p>	<p>Vulnerable groups (children and youth at risk, children with disabilities and/or mental disorders and their families, victims of trafficking and gender-based/domestic violence, elders, rural population, ethnic minorities, migrants, the homeless, those struggling with substance abuse, people facing difficulties that can lead to further social exclusion, such as low levels of education and unemployment, long-term unemployed or underemployment, people who are inactive but not registered as unemployed, people suffering</p>	<p>Complementarity</p> <p>Complementarity was identified at the level of the accompanying measures which could be supported through the NGO Fund in Romania.</p> <p>The measures supported through the later fund aim at providing support for individuals and their families encountering difficulties in transitions during their life span such as: youth leaving care institutions and identifying and testing solutions to increase access to adequate services of vulnerable groups – increase capacity, coordinate with other service providers, prioritization of needs for services, strategic use of resources, optimization of case management, temporary shelter etc</p>	<p>Neutrality</p>	<p>Neutrality</p>

Programme	Objectives	Target groups	Operational Programme Aid to the Most Deprived 2014-2020		
			1. Food supplies	2. School supplies	3. Technical Assistance
		from chronic illnesses etc)			
8. "Future donor" programme, World Vision Romania	1. Education: Increasing access and participation to education 2. Health and child protection: Reducing the risk of exclusion of children in child protection services; Increasing access to health services.	Children whose parents are at risk of poverty from twelve communities in Dolj County	Neutrality	Complementarity "Future donor" programme provides to pupils different educational materials , from textbooks, school supplies and supports different educational projects. Complementarity with OP AD is ensured for the following target group: pupils enrolled in primary and secondary education whose parents have a net monthly medium income set at 50% of the minimum net wage/person from Dolj County.	Neutrality

Annex 15. Consistency with relevant Operational Programmes 2014-2020

LEGEND: S Synergy C Complementarity N Neutrality R Risk of redundancy

Operational Programme	Thematic Objective according to Regulation 1303/2013	Investment Priority according to Regulation 1304/2013	Specific Objectives	Operational Programme Aid to the Most Deprived 2014-2020		
				1. Food supplies	2. School supplies	3. Technical Assistance
Operational Programme Human Capital 2014-2020	TO 9 Promoting social inclusion, combating poverty and any discrimination	IP 9.2 Socio-economic integration of marginalised communities such as the Roma	Specific Objective 4.1 Reducing the number of people at risk of poverty by implementing integrated measures, focusing on marginalized communities	Complementarity Complementarity is ensured at the level of the accompanying measures. OP HC could support actions covering the meal expenses of children from marginalised communities at risk of poverty and social exclusion, targeted as well by OP AD.	Complementarity OPHC through SO 4.1 is supporting actions to increase access and participation to quality education and to reduce ESL by providing integrated services, including teaching materials . Complementarity with OP AD is ensured for the following target group: pupils enrolled in primary and secondary education whose parents have a net monthly medium income set at 50% of the minimum net wage/person	Neutrality
			Specific Objective 4.2 Increasing the number of persons belonging to vulnerable groups overcoming the risk of exclusion	Complementarity Complementarity is ensured at the level of the accompanying measures for the following target groups: persons with low income, elderly with a pension up to 400 lei per month, persons with disabilities at risk of social exclusion, children at risk OPHC could support actions aimed at	Neutrality	Neutrality

Operational Programme	Thematic Objective according to Regulation 1303/2013	Investment Priority according to Regulation 1304/2013	Specific Objectives	Operational Programme Aid to the Most Deprived 2014-2020		
				1. Food supplies	2. School supplies	3. Technical Assistance
				providing social/educational/employment/training services.		
		IP 9.5 Promoting social entrepreneurship and vocational integration in social enterprises and the social and solidarity economy in order to facilitate access to employment	Specific Objective 4.3 Developing social economy, promoting and supporting social entrepreneurship	Neutrality	Neutrality	Neutrality
		IP 9.4 Enhancing access to affordable, sustainable and high quality services, including health care and social services of general interest	Specific Objective 4.4 Improving the quality and access to social services	Complementarity Complementarity is ensured at the level of the accompanying measures. OP HC could support actions with the scope of developing standard integrated intervention instruments for the target groups envisaged as well by OP AD.	Neutrality	Neutrality

Operational Programme	Thematic Objective according to Regulation 1303/2013	Investment Priority according to Regulation 1304/2013	Specific Objectives	Operational Programme Aid to the Most Deprived 2014-2020		
				1. Food supplies	2. School supplies	3. Technical Assistance
			<p>Specific Objective 4.5</p> <p>Improving the quality and access to health care services</p>	<p>Complementarity</p> <p>Complementarity is ensured at the level of the accompanying measures.</p> <p>OPHC aims at providing health services for the target groups envisaged as well by OP AD.</p>	<p>Neutrality</p>	<p>Neutrality</p>
			<p>Specific Objective 4.6</p> <p>Ensuring the transition from institutional care to services offered at community level</p>	<p>Complementarity</p> <p>Complementarity is ensured at the level of the accompanying measures.</p> <p>OPHC could support actions ensuring the transition from institutional care targeting institutionalised persons such as children, persons with disabilities and elderly with a maximum pension of 400 lei per month, envisaged as well by OP AD.</p>	<p>Neutrality</p>	<p>Neutrality</p>

Operational Programme	Thematic Objective according to Regulation 1303/2013	Investment Priority according to Regulation 1304/2013	Specific Objectives	Operational Programme Aid to the Most Deprived 2014-2020		
				1. Food supplies	2. School supplies	3. Technical Assistance
		<p>IP 9.6</p> <p>Community-led local development strategies</p>	<p>Specific Objective 5.1</p> <p>Reducing the number of people at risk of poverty and social exclusion by implementing integrated measures, focusing on marginalized communities</p>	<p>Complementarity</p> <p>Complementarity is ensured at the level of the accompanying measures.</p> <p>OPHC could provide integrated packages via CLLD instrument(e.g. supporting meal expenses) for the target groups envisaged as well by OP AD.</p>	<p>Complementarity</p> <p>OPHC through SO 5.1 is supporting integrated measures implemented via CLLD instrument to increase access and participation to quality education and to reduce ESL by providing integrated services, including teaching materials.</p> <p>Complementarity with OP AD is ensured for the following target group: pupils enrolled in primary and secondary education whose parents have a net monthly medium income set at 50% of the minimum net wage/person.</p>	<p>Neutrality</p>
	<p>TO 10</p> <p>Education and skills</p>	<p>IP 10.1</p> <p>Reducing and preventing early school-leaving and promoting equal access to good quality early-childhood, primary and secondary education including formal, non-formal and informal</p>	<p>SO 6.1</p> <p>Increasing access and participation to quality ECEC, especially for disadvantaged children</p>	<p>Neutrality</p>	<p>Neutrality</p>	<p>Neutrality</p>

Operational Programme	Thematic Objective according to Regulation 1303/2013	Investment Priority according to Regulation 1304/2013	Specific Objectives	Operational Programme Aid to the Most Deprived 2014-2020		
				1. Food supplies	2. School supplies	3. Technical Assistance
		learning pathways for reintegrating into education and training	<p>SO 6.2</p> <p>Enhancing access and participation to quality primary and secondary education and preventing ESL, especially for disadvantaged children/pupils</p>	Neutrality	<p>Complementarity</p> <p>OPHC through SO 6.2 supports actions aimed at developing and implementing support schemes to prevent ESL (financial incentives, transportation arrangements or covering related costs, mentoring of both pupils and parents etc.), new learning materials etc.</p> <p>Complementarity with OP AD is ensured for the following target group: pupils enrolled in primary and secondary education whose parents have a net monthly medium income set at 50% of the minimum net wage/person</p>	Neutrality
			<p>SO 6.3</p> <p>Diversification of opportunities to return to education for early school leavers by extending second-chance programmes and ensuring access to vocational programmes</p>	Neutrality	<p>Complementarity</p> <p>OPHC through SO 6.3 supports the development of new learning materials especially for Roma children and those coming from rural areas and disadvantaged communities.</p> <p>Complementarity with OP AD is ensured for the following target group: pupils enrolled in primary and secondary education whose parents have a net monthly medium income set at 50% of the minimum net wage/person</p>	Neutrality

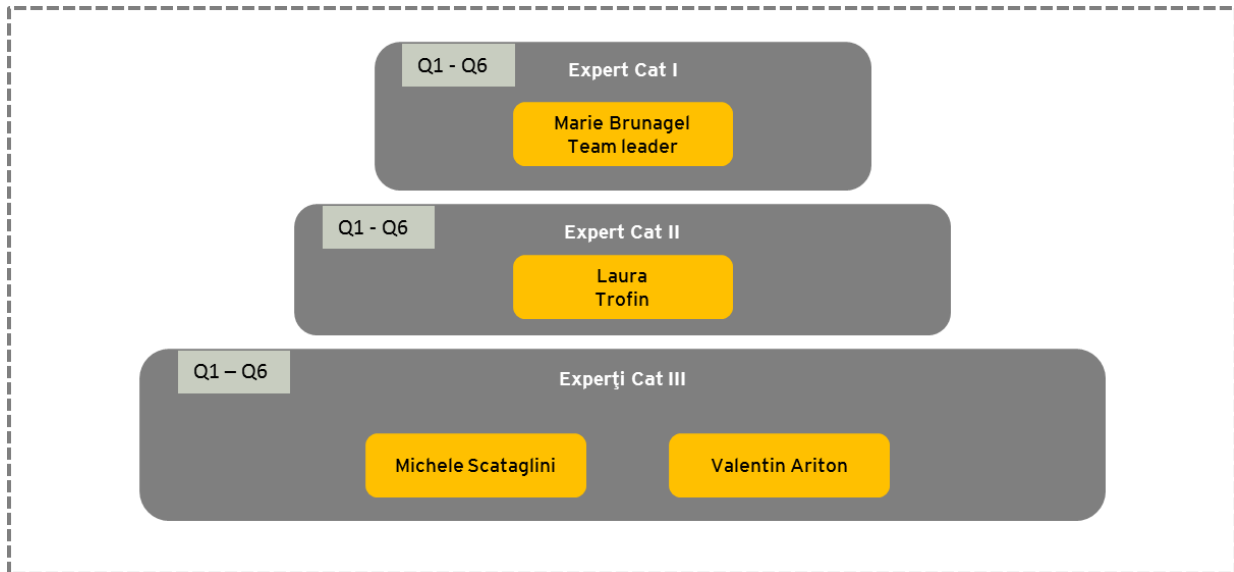
Operational Programme	Thematic Objective according to Regulation 1303/2013	Investment Priority according to Regulation 1304/2013	Specific Objectives	Operational Programme Aid to the Most Deprived 2014-2020		
				1. Food supplies	2. School supplies	3. Technical Assistance
			SO 6.4 Improving the compulsory education system by updating, validating and implementing quality curricula	Neutrality	Neutrality	Neutrality

Annex 16. Definitions of the most frequently used terms/concepts

Term/concept	Definition
<i>Accompanying measures</i>	<p>Activities provided in addition to the distribution of food and/or basic material assistance with the aim of alleviating social exclusion and/or tackling social emergencies in a more empowering and sustainable way, for example guidance on a balanced diet and budget management advice.</p> <p>Source: <i>Regulation (EU) No 223/2014 on the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived</i></p>
<i>Basic material assistance</i>	<p>Basic consumer goods of a limited value and for the personal use of the most deprived persons for example clothing, footwear, hygiene goods, school material and sleeping bags.</p> <p>Source: <i>Regulation (EU) No 223/2014 on the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived</i></p>
<i>Food and/or basic material assistance operational programme (also referred to as “OP I”)</i>	<p>Operational Programme that supports the distribution of food and/or basic material assistance to the most deprived persons, combined where applicable with accompanying measures, aimed at alleviating the social exclusion of most deprived persons.</p> <p>Source: <i>Regulation (EU) No 223/2014 on the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived</i></p>
<i>Most deprived persons</i>	<p>Natural persons, whether individuals, families, households or groups composed of such persons whose need for assistance has been established according to the objective criteria set in <i>Government’s Decision 799/2014 on the implementation of Operational Programme Aid to the Most Deprived</i>.</p> <p>Source: <i>Adapted after the definition from the Regulation (EU) No 223/2014 on the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived</i></p>
<i>Operation</i>	<p>A project, contract or action selected by the Managing Authority of the Operational Programme concerned, or under its responsibility, contributing to the objectives of the Operational Programme to which it relates.</p> <p>Source: <i>Regulation (EU) No 223/2014 on the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived</i></p>

Annex 17. Ex-ante evaluation team, budget and duration

Evaluation Team



Evaluation budget

The total budget of the ex-ante evaluation, including expert fees and incidental expenditure was 289,068.30 lei (without VAT), and 358,444.69 lei (incl. VAT).

Evaluation duration

The ex-ante evaluation process extended over a period of **six months**, from August 2014 to February 2015. The initial duration of the project was of three months, however, given that the OP was still an open topic with the European Commission at the initial end date of the contract, a decision was taken to prolong the project with three more months, up to end of February 2015.

Annex 18. Treatment table

Treatment table regarding the Final Ex-ante Evaluation Report presented in the Evaluation Steering Committee on 24 February 2015, as mentioned in the address MFE DG APE 347/24.02.2015

Recommendations provided by the stakeholders	Status of implementation (Yes / No)
Evaluation Steering Committee	
It was recommended to specify the evaluators involved in drafting the evaluation report.	YES The current report specifies in the data control sheet the evaluators involved in drafting the evaluation report
It was recommended to specify the duration of the evaluation exercise.	YES The current report specifies in the data control sheet the duration of the evaluation exercise
It was recommended to specify the evaluation budget.	YES The current report specifies in the data control sheet the evaluation budget
It was recommended to specify the progress reports and their link with evaluation deliverables.	YES The current report specifies in the introduction chapter the progress reports and their link with evaluation deliverables
It was recommended to specify that the Evaluation Steering Committee has been involved in evaluation design (e.g. in discussing the inception report and the evaluation methodology).	YES The current report specifies in Chapter 2 which describes the ex-ante process and methodology that the Evaluation Steering Committee has been involved in evaluation design (e.g. in discussing the inception report and the evaluation methodology)
It was recommended to attach to the evaluation report the list of members of the Steering Committee.	YES The current report includes the list of members of the Steering Committee in Annex 6
It was recommended to attach to the evaluation report a treatment table with the recommendations of the stakeholders.	YES The current report includes a treatment table with the recommendations of the stakeholders in Annex 18
It was recommended to attach to the evaluation report the design of the evaluation tools.	YES The current report includes for each evaluation question the evaluation tools used and are complemented with Annex 4
It was recommended to specify the sources of primary and secondary data needed for applying the evaluation tools and techniques.	YES The current report includes at each evaluation question the sources of primary and secondary data needed for applying the evaluation tools and techniques.
It was recommended to insert annexes which prove that the most recent information/data available at the source was used in order to answer each evaluation question (annexes with the interviewed stakeholders, the	YES The current report includes annexes which prove that the most recent information/data available at the source was used in order to answer each

workshop participants etc.).	evaluation question (see Annex 5).
It was recommended to define specialised concepts.	YES The current report includes Annex 16 which defines specialised concepts.
It was recommended to number each finding.	NO Having regards that the findings from the previous draft evaluation reports were not numbered, the introduction of this aspect at this point might create confusion among the readers of this evaluation report.
It was recommended that the executive summary should present the main conclusions and recommendations in a balanced and impartial manner and should not include acronyms.	YES The executive summary of the current report has been revised in order to present the main conclusions and recommendations in a balanced and impartial manner. Furthermore it does not include acronyms anymore.
It was recommended to define the limits of findings' validity.	YES The current report defines the limits of findings' validity, where applicable, for each evaluation question.
It was recommended to link the recommendations provided to a responsible body for their implementation.	YES The table with conclusions and recommendations from Chapter 9 includes a new column which evidences the responsible bodies for implementing the recommendations provided.

Annex 19. Internal Quality Assurance Grid for Deliverables