

## Executive Summary

At the start of the evaluation process, the evaluator based her preliminary views on an very early stage of the first draft of the OP. Three drafts of the Operational programme have been appraised by the evaluator in the course of the evaluation process. The first comments were made on the basis of the April 2006 version of the Administrative Capacity Development Programme 2007-2013. This document was amended and redrafted in October 2006. The first draft of the evaluation report was based on this version of the OP: A considerable redraft and reformulation of objectives took place in November and December 2006 which resulted in a reformulation of the OP's objectives, priority axis as well as the indicative operations.

**This January 14<sup>th</sup>.2007 Version B of the evaluation report is based on this version.**

The OP has been redrafted and updated and it takes into consideration the consultations between the evaluator and the MA, as well as the outputs of the various debriefing meetings.

The following key evaluation questions were addressed during the course of the evaluation process:

*To what extent does the OP identify the appropriate means for addressing the issues confronting the problems and opportunities of the Romanian public administration?*

*To what extent does the OP define strategic axis, priorities and objectives and to what extent does it reflect an informed opinion as to whether these are relevant and can actually be achieved to best contribute to a well functioning, modern public administration?*

Administrative capacity development projects are most successful if the objectives are very specific and focused. In line with the EU Strategic Guidelines, it was advised to concentrate funds on a few areas where socioeconomic impact was more evident. The OP now defines three areas of focus for interventions within the OP. These areas are: health, education and labour and social solidarity. The criteria that were used for the selection of these sectors have now been added to the OP and the justification for the selection of sectors has been strengthened. The focus of the analysis has been strengthened in the revised December 06 version of the OP by the insertion of the problem analysis and by further justification of priorities through a sector analysis. The criteria of selection are relevant and justified. **The sectoral focus is not, however reflected in the strategy, nor on priority axis, nor on some areas of intervention level, or on the level of indicators.**

The needs identified in the OP are in line with the EU strategic Guidelines as well as the priority areas set out in Public Administration Reform Programme (PAR), thus providing a continuity and synergy with the previous programmes on capacity building. **The concern about the needs is that they are not underpinned by the specific capacity needs of the priority sectors.**

The OP builds on the results of the previous programmes. A table of lessons learned, including lessons from previous evaluations have been inserted as well as the implications for the ACD OP as suggested previously. The problem analysis of this version is based on a problem tree where the hierarchy of problems can be seen. The problem tree ensures that more coherency is introduced in the OP on both the problem analysis and the priority axis.

An improved SWOT analysis is provided by the new December 06 version of the ACD OP.

The priority axes are no longer defined so as to distinguish between central and local interventions. The new distinction is between organisational effectiveness and service delivery. The SWOT reflects this new approach. The new version of the SWOT is designed to reflect the analysis sector, although no sectoral reference is included. The SWOT are real strengths, real weaknesses, and real threats. It now provides a valid assessment of the situation covered by the programme..

The objectives have been changed in line with the Lisbon agenda. The changes are in line with the discussions between the MA and the evaluator. A new key area in Priority Axis2 (PA2) was introduced for strengthening the absorption capacity for development funds, which is relevant due to the increased pressure on the Romanian public administration to absorb EU funds. The first two priority axes are now supported by three key areas of intervention. The key areas strategic responses to the problems identified in the analysis chapter and the SWOT analysis. The strategy is consistent, and the priority axes reflect justified needs. Some areas of interventions cover a wide range of areas that are although consistent with the objective of the priority axes, but are over ambitious.

The OP shows a logical link to the SWOT and the sectoral analysis. Strategy concentrates on issues that are relevant in the selected sectors as well as public administration as a whole. The selection of the priorities also been defined on this basis.

The entire revision uses the problem/ objective tree to improve the coherence of the document and therefore there is more linkage between the problems identified and the areas of interventions chosen. The new version adequately defines the areas of interventions. The content of the key areas in most cases has been retained with a better formulation of the objectives and also a better link to the overall and specific objectives. This formulation of key areas is more adequate from a customer point of view and to enhance service delivery of public administration bodies.

Cross-cutting objectives are in general relevant in the case of ACD OP, equal opportunities is addressed in more detail on Programme Complement level. The issue of the Information Society is missing from the document.

Better indicators and clearer target figures are provided in OP, nevertheless, the sectoral focus of the OP is not reflected in indicators. The reformulation of certain indicators was advised in the framework of a workshop to better serve monitoring needs. It was also advised to collect data on a sectoral basis in order to show the difference performances in the sectors. A working group was created within the MA ACD, consisting of staff from the Programming, Contracting, Monitoring and Evaluation Units for the definition of indicators.

The financial table does not contain any allocation of resources in the priority sectors, nor is the calculation of allocation of resources set between priority axes and interventions.

The legislative background for management structures are set down, but no management arrangement are elaborated at this stage, therefore it is difficult to comment on the implementation procedures, and whether the human resources and training planned are sufficient for this task. Coordination with relevant stakeholders is a key success factor for this OP, therefore strong coordination arrangements are advised on the implementation level.