

Standard Summary Project Fiche

1. Basic Information

1.1 Project number: RO-2002/000-586.01.01

1.2 Title: Continued support for "Children First" -
Strengthening and diversification of the child protection activities

1.3 Sector: Strengthen Democracy and the rule of Law and Human Rights

1.4 Location: Romania, all regions

2. Objectives

2.1 Overall Objective:

The 2002 Phare Programme has as overall objective to assist the Romanian authorities in the implementation of the National Strategy for Child Protection. It aims to improve and strengthen the child protection system in Romania in line with the principles emphasized within the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

2.2 Project purpose:

Programme specific project purpose is to decrease the number of children residing in large old style residential institutions by:

(i) closure of large old style residential institutions, through development and implementation of modern integrated child protection services, such as family type homes, day care centers, recuperation centers, foster care networks and maternal centers. Priority will be given to projects that will close institutions for children up to the age of three, homes for handicapped children (camin spital) and any other large "old style" institution with more than approximately 100 children.

(ii) public awareness campaign aimed at prevention of institutionalisation by informing the society about available child protection alternatives (such as maternal centers, foster care, national adoption) and access to social assistance.

2.3 Accession Partnership and NPAA priority

The 2001 Accession Partnership mentions the need for Romania to complete the reform of the child care system in accordance with the National Strategy on the Protection of Children in Need.

Taking into account the strategic objectives formulated by the Government for child protection field, ANPCA defined within NPAA the following short and medium term priorities:

- The development and diversifying of integrated community services for child protection ;
- The restructuring/closing down of the residential institutions for child protection ;

3. Description

3.1 Background and justification:

In 1997, the Romanian Government launched a child protection reform programme. This reform was aimed at decentralising the responsibility for child protection, including the responsibility for residential children's homes, to the County level and at developing alternative child welfare services to support families and children in difficulties to prevent child abandonment and protect children at risk. In 1997, the responsibility for residential children's homes (Casa de copii and leagan as they were then called) was transferred from central public administration (Ministries of Education and Health) to the Judet (county) Council Specialised Public Services for Child Protection (SPSCPs). SPSCPs were also given responsibility for the development of alternative child welfare services to provide alternatives to placing children in the institutions.

In July 2000, responsibility for the remaining residential institutions for children - all residential special schools, camin spital (hospitals for handicapped children), homes for severely handicapped children and dystrophic centres - was also transferred to the SPSCPs.

In April 2001 a revised Government Strategy was produced for the years 2001-2004, which focusses on de-institutionalisation and prevention of institutionalisation.

3.2 Linked activities

Phare 1999: Development of child welfare services (25 M€)

Phare 2001: Development of child welfare services (10 M€)

The Phare 1999 and 2001 programmes on child protection consist of three components:

1. Children First grant scheme
2. Technical Assistance
3. Public Awareness Campaign

Children First grant scheme (19 + 7,5 M€)

The Children First grant scheme aims to contribute to the de-institutionalisation of children and closure of "old-style" institutions by developing of alternative child protection services at the level of the counties/sectors of Bucharest. 110 projects, out of which 23 targeting closure of institutions and 82 development of services, are being implemented.

This activity will be continued under Phare 2001. The Phare 2001 projects are expected to lead to the closure of around 30 such institutions. About 160 such institutions remain to be closed

Public Awareness Campaign (2.6 + 1 M€)

The public awareness campaign for the prevention of child abandonment and institutionalization is targeting families at risk, potential adoptive families, professionals in the field of child protection as well as the general public, in order to modify their perception on children in difficulty, their problems and the alternative intervention solutions to solve

this problems. The campaign is up and running since end 2001 and will continue until October 2002, with the slogan "Casa de copii nu e acasa" (a children home is not home):

- 7 TV spots informing about existing alternative child protection services, such as maternal centres, day care centres, domestic adoption and on prevention and re-integration of children.
- Radio spots giving a very clear message along the line of the TV spot messages.
- Approximately 40 talkshows are part of the campaign in order to reinforce the message.
- A toll free line, with trained staff, was set up as part of the campaign.
- Between May and July 2002, per county meetings with professional groups (priests, teachers, mayors, doctors, social workers) are organised.
- Advertisements in the written press and billboards.
- Edelweiss competition for talented children in institutions, means to bring to the public, the voice of the children speaking for themselves, saying "A Children Home is Not a Home". The 27 most talented children selected in this competition will receive a scholarship for 1-3 years.

The campaign will be continued under Phare 2001.

Phare 1999 Twinning component

The twinning component of the Phare programme advises the Ministry of Labour and Social Solidarity on a better targeted family allowances system and to better place child protection in a broader social assistance framework (implementation April 2001/October 2002).

The Pre-Accession Adviser has advised on the following subjects:

- Better targeted family allowances
- The new social assistance law
- The Minimum Income Guaranteed Law
- How to improve the decentralised financial arrangements for child protection
- How to improve the use of statistics

A number of seven judets have been selected as part of the project and have been analysed and assisted in their efforts to have an integrated approach in implementing the reform (de-institutionalisation and prevention of institutionalisation).

Phare 2001 Twinning Light:

Development and/or improvement of the national standards for child protection services, such as family type homes, emergency reception, maternal centers, foster care, will be done under a Phare 2001 Twinning Light project.

Activities from other donors linked to the implementation of Phare

The UK Department for International Development (DFID) is providing Technical Assistance to NACPA. Main objectives of this programme are the strengthening of the NACPA's institutional capacity and to provide training to the local authorities (Judet level) in drafting local child protection strategies and training on closure of large old style institutions.

3.3 Results:

The expected results of this Programme are:

- (i) Reduced number of children residing in large old-style institutions and increased number of children re-integrated into their natural or extended family, or benefiting from child protection services such as foster care, family type homes or other suitable manners of care. Closure of at least 30 large old style institutions and creation of alternative child protection services.
- (ii) Increased awareness at local level on the rights of the child as well as on available child protection services, among both general population and professionals;

3.4 Activities:

Activities to be developed within this Phare Programme include:

- Children First Fund. The specific objective of this grant scheme is to support the development of alternative childcare services in Romania that will enable old style large institutions to be closed. Priority will be given to projects that will close institutions:
 - for children up to the age of 3,
 - camin spital and
 - any other large old style institutions with more than 100 children
- Technical assistance, which will assist the NACPA in selection and monitoring of the projects under the Children First Fund. The Technical Assistance will also provide training aimed at improving the quality of project proposals submitted by local authorities. This assistance will be focused particularly on local authorities which have not benefited from Phare1999 or Phare 2001 grants where large numbers of children remain in old-style institutions.
- Public Awareness Campaign to promote alternative child protection services and inform the Romanian society about the negative effects of institutionalisation.

3.5 Lessons learned:

The main difficulty in implementing the Phare 1999 Child Protection Programme was the fact that there was no unitary approach in formulating county strategies and the lack of good national standards for child protection services.

As the Local Technical Assistance foreseen under the Phare 1999 Child Protection Programme, which was supposed to provide training on county strategies, has not been contracted due to failed tenders, an agreement has been reached that this training will be organised and financed by the UK Department for International Development, in cooperation with the EC, before the call for proposals for the Phare 2001 Children First grant scheme.

This will be followed by a training on closure of institutions, and a training on designing and implementing Phare projects, provided by the Phare Technical Assistance. At all trainings,

DPC directors, that have implemented the reform successfully and closed institutions, will participate as resource persons (implementation June/July 2002).

Development and/or review of the national standards for child protection services, following experience gained under the Phare 1999 child protection programme, such as family type homes, emergency reception, maternal centers, foster care, will be done under a Phare 2001 Twinning Light project.

4. Institutional Framework

In order to improve the co-ordination of the reform process and reinforce the central level, through Emergency Ordinance no. 292/2001, a new central structure was created – *National Authority for Child Protection and Adoption* – by taking over the responsibilities of the National Agency for Protecting Children's Rights.

The year 2002 represents the moment of a real decentralisation of the system of funding of child care activities, creating the possibility of a unitary management of the issues, by the transfer of financial resources from the state budget directly to the budget of the County Councils leads, on the one hand, to the elimination of a former intermediary link, and, on the other hand, to the possibility of planning at the beginning of the budgetary year the use of all financial resources (those from the local budgets and those transferred from the central budget) and, most importantly, offers the persons with responsibilities in the field at local level the possibility of correlating these resources with the needs identified locally.

For this year, the amount of 215 billion lei was specified within the NACPA budget for the financing of four National Interest Programmes, as follows:

"Closure of old type institutions for children with handicap/ special needs, which cannot be restructured/ rehabilitated", with a budget of 144 billion lei;

"Social integration of street children", with a budget of 50 billion lei;

"Social and vocational integration of children/young persons in the care institutions that have turned 18 years of age", with a budget of 14.5 billion lei;

"The training of human resources in the child protection system", with a budget of 6.5 billion lei.

The above mentioned national interest programmes in the field of the protection of the rights of the child were approved during the Government session on the 4th of April 2002. The financing of the National Interest Programmes shall be achieved following an evaluation and selection process of the projects submitted by the private bodies authorised to operate in the child protection field, based on the conventions concluded with these, as well as with the County/Local Councils in the administrative territorial area of which these programmes shall run.

Another particular aspect of the institutional framework in child welfare activities is the putting into force the Social Assistance Law at the beginning of year 2002.

5. Detailed Budget

	Phare Support					
	Investment Support	Institution Building	Total Phare (=I+IB)	National Cofinancing*	IFI*	TOTAL
Children First Fund	10		10	3.3		13.3
Technical Assistance		1.5	1.5	0.5		2
Public Awareness Campaign		1.5	1.5	0.5		2
Total	10	3,0	13 MEURO	4,3		17,3

* national budget

6. Implementation Arrangements

Given the particular need for continuity in support to the management of the Phare-financed activities in the context of "Children First", it is proposed that where a clear continuity exists in the services to be provided under Phare 2002, technical assistance contracts may be awarded by direct agreement to the contractors who delivered similar services under the Phare 1999 and Phare 2001 programmes. Any such direct agreement contracts will be subject to agreement between the Romanian authorities and Commission services regarding satisfactory performance by these contractors under the earlier programmes.

The decision-making body for the grant-scheme Children First is the Grant Steering Committee that consists of: representatives of the National Agency for Child Protection and independent experts. The EC Delegation has observer status. The Grants Steering Committee selects the projects and will meet on a regular basis in order to make decisions on the whenever modifications in the implementation of projects are needed.

The selected projects will be implemented through financing agreements between the CFCU and the proposing local authority, to be endorsed also by the NACPA concerning technical aspects, as mentioned at § 6.1 and § 9. The decentralised nature of the programme requires local authorities to assume responsibility for management of project funds provided under the financing agreements. Guidelines on financial procedures will be established, taking account of Phare DIS rules for grant schemes, covering:

1. transfer of funds from the CFCU to judet authorities, including a standard format for financing agreements, and payment procedures and arrangements for financial accounting and operational reporting on project implementation, and,
2. arrangements for the financial management of projects by the judet authorities, ensuring clarity as regards the authorities approving and endorsing the local contracts and payments and arrangements for financial control in accordance with national legislation, as well as specific recommendations which may be made by the Commission.

The implementation arrangements, conditions and rules will be further specified in programme documents including technical assistance terms of reference, programme implementation manuals and programme financing agreements between the programme supervising and implementing bodies.

6.1 Implementing Agency

The Central Finance and Contracting Unit (CFCU), established under the Ministry of Public Finances, acting as Implementing Agency, was established and entrusted with tendering, contracting and payments for the projects within the programme.

Implementing Authority

The National Authority for Child Protection and Adoption is acting as Implementing Authority, which will ensure the technical implementation of the Phare Programme 2002.

6.2 Twinning

N/A

6.3 Non-standard aspects

Regarding the Grant Special Fund the procedures stipulated within the Practical Guide for Phare, ISPA and SAPARD, section for grants are applicable.

The non-standards aspects are related to the fact that only SPSPCs may apply. They may individually or as a lead partner in partnership. Any partner must be a local council (of a municipality or village), a non-profit making organisation/institution or an international organisation (the last two must be authorised to develop activities in the field of child protection according to the law). All partner organisations must have their Headquarters within European Union and/or Phare countries.

6.4 Contracts

Given the particular need for continuity in support to the management of the Phare-financed activities in the context of "Children First", it is proposed that where a clear continuity exists in the services to be provided under Phare 2002, technical assistance contracts may be awarded by direct agreement to the contractors who delivered similar services under the Phare 1999 and Phare 2001 programmes. Any such direct agreement contracts will be subject to agreement between the Romanian authorities and Commission services regarding satisfactory performance by these contractors under the earlier programmes.

As with the Phare 1999 and 2001 Phare programmes, the grants component of this programme will be implemented on the basis of grant agreements between the CFCU and local authorities.

7. Implementation Schedule

7.1 Start of tendering/call for proposals

March 2003

7.2 Start of project activity

June 2003

7.3 Project completion

September 2005

8. Equal Opportunity

The field of child protection can be characterised by a much higher participation of women than men in all professions and all functions, throughout the country. In the project, all functions will be scaled and the relevant job descriptions will be prepared. In all reporting, statistics will be submitted on the proportion of men and women working for the Project and how gender issues were dealt with.

9. Environment

N/A

10. Rates of return

N/A

11. Investment criteria

N/A

12. Conditionality and sequencing

The continued support for “Children First” under Phare 2002 depends on the continued commitment of the Government of Romania to prevention of child abandonment and the implementation of reforms leading to closure of large old-style residential care institutions by developing a range of diversified child protection services.

The selected projects must contribute to reducing the number of institutionalised children and closure of large size institutions in particular leagan, camin spital or any other large old-style institution with more than 100 children. **Under no circumstances will the creation of small units in what was a large residential institution be accepted.**

Project proposals under the special fund will have to indicate clearly the number of beneficiaries and especially of de-institutionalised children - ‘de-institutionalised children’ has to be understood as removed from ‘old style’ institutions.

LOGFRAME PLANNING MATRIX FOR Project „ Strengthening and diversification of the child protection activities”	Programme name and number RO-2002/000-586.01.01	
	Contracting period expires Nov. 2004	Disbursement period expires Nov. 2005
	Total budget: 17,3MEURO	Phare budget: 13MEURO

Overall Objective	Objectively verifiable indicators	Sources of Verification	Assumptions
To assist the Romanian authorities in the implementation of the National Strategy for Child Protection; it aims to improve and strengthen the child protection system in Romania in line with the principles emphasized within the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Accredited services, at local and county level, for monitoring and taking action, in line with the principles emphasized within the UN Convention on the rights of the child 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Central and local Government data ▪ Existing Romanian official statistics ▪ Information From NGOs and Civil Society 	
Project Purpose	Objectively verifiable indicators	Sources of Verification	Assumptions
i) closure of large old style residential institutions, through development and implementation of modern integrated child protection services, such as family type homes, day care centers, recuperation centers, foster care networks and maternal centers. Priority will be given to projects that will close institutions for children up to the age of three, homes for	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Number of large old style institutions closed ▪ Increased number of children who benefit of services adapted to their specific needs ▪ Increased quality of local child welfare services ▪ Elaboration and implementation pilot-models to increase awareness and involvement of general population in the social service provision ▪ Increased number of children fulfilling their rights 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Information from County Councils, NGOs and Civil Society ▪ Central and local government data ▪ Existing Romanian official statistics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Economic conditions in Romania ▪ Sustainability of government efforts at central and local level towards childcare system reforms ▪ Accreditation system of all child welfare service providers in place ▪ Harmonised internal legislation in

<p>handicapped children (camin spital) and any other large "old style" institution with more than approximately 100 children.</p> <p>(ii) public awareness campaign aimed at prevention of institutionalisation by informing the society about available child protection alternatives (such as maternal centers, foster care, national adoption) and access to social assistance.</p>			line with the acquis communautaire in the field
Results	Objectively verifiable indicators	Sources of Verification	Assumptions
<p>i) Reduced number of children residing in large old-style institutions and increased number of children re-integrated into their natural or extended family, or benefiting from child protection services such as foster care, family type homes or other suitable manners of care. Closure of at least 30 large old style institutions and creation of alternative child protection services.</p> <p>ii) Increased awareness at local level on the rights of the child as well as on available child protection services, among both general population and professionals;</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reduced number of children protected in residential institutions ▪ Increased number of children protected within their natural or extended families ▪ Reduced number of "old-style" institutions ▪ Increased quality of the input provided by the staff in the field ▪ Increased number of community members aware and taking action in the field of child protection ▪ Proper implementation of the UN-CRC principles in the adoption process of each Romanian child 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Information from County Councils, NGOs and Civil Society ▪ Central and local government data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Economic conditions in Romania ▪ In depth cooperation and coordination between relevant stakeholders for child's rights, as mention by UN-CRC ▪ Reduced turnover rate of specialised staff within the system
Activities	Means	Costs	Assumptions
1. Children First Fund. The specific	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Financial resources : 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Adoption law

<p>objective of this grant scheme is to support the development of alternative childcare services in Romania that will enable old style large institutions to be closed. Priority will be given to projects that will close institutions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - for children up to the age of 3, - camin spital and - any other large old style institutions with more than 100 children <p>2. Technical assistance, which will assist the NACPA in selection and monitoring of the projects under the Children First Fund. The Technical Assistance will also provide training aimed at improving the quality of project proposals submitted by local authorities.</p> <p>3. Public Awareness Campaign to promote alternative child protection services and inform the Romanian society about the negative effects of institutionalisation.</p>	<p>17,3MEURO</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Human resources: sufficient and properly trained staff from NAPCA 		<p>and secondary related legislation in place</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increased general public sensitivity to child welfare issues
			<p>Preconditions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Commitment of the Government of Romania to prevention of child abandonment and the implementation of reforms

DETAILED TIME IMPLEMENTATION CHART FOR PROJECT NUMBER RO-2002/000-586.01.01

(Strengthening and diversification of the child protection activities)

[illegible]

(Strengthening and diversification of the child protection activities)

CUMULATIVE CONTRACTING AND DISBURSEMENT SCHEDULE (MEURO 17.3)

DATE:

	31/03/03	30/06/03	30/09/03	31/12/03	31/03/04	30/06/04	30/09/04	31/12/04	31/03/05	30/06/05	30/09/05	31/12/05
CONTRACTED	FM signed											
DISBURSEMENT												

NB: 1. All contracting should normally be completed within 6-12 months and **must** be completed within 24 months of signature of the FM.

2 . All disbursements **must** be completed within 36 months of signature of the FM.