

Terms of Reference for project evaluation

Project Title	Integration of refugees from Ukraine in Romania
Project number	H-ROM-2023-3088
Country	Romania
Implementing Organization	AIDRom
Donor	Brot für die Welt
Project Duration	September 2023 – August 2025
Evaluation Duration (as anticipated)	Mid-January – End of March 2025

1. Introduction and background of Aidrom

AIDRom is an ecumenical organization of five Churches, founded in 1991, representative at both confessional and ethnical levels in Romania: The Romanian Orthodox Church, the Reformed Church (Hungarian), the Evangelical CA Church (German), The Evangelical Lutheran Church (Hungarian and Slovakian) and the Armenian Church. AIDRom has been constituted as a platform for financing, communitarian development and inter-confessional and inter-ethnical dialogue. According to its mandates, AIDRom has been empowered ab initio to be operative by financing projects, consultancy, expertise transfer, action for increasing the managerial capacity, and implementing projects at the community level. Through the programs of AIDRom and its partners we intend to continue our contributively activity in supplying social services, educational services, socio-professional services, services in the field of human rights and sustainable rural development.

The active involvement of the Orthodox Church and the Lutheran Church in the assistance of the Ukrainian refugees has shown the results of the work done by AIDRom in the process of the training done in the last 4 years within the projects developed through the financial help of Kirchen Helfen Kirchen. From the beginning of the war, AIDRom has supported over 60.000 refugees, through the financial support of our partners.

The current project, implemented in 01.09.2023-31.08.2025 period, aims for social integration and improving living conditions for Ukrainian refugees in Bucharest. Activities include counselling, health and social services, Romanian language classes, support to job seekers, etc. The current project is a continuation of the 12 months project financed by Bread for the World and of the EU projects financed within the European Fund for Refugees /AMIF 2020-2023 through the General Inspectorate of Immigration from Romania.

The evaluation shall inform a follow-up project as AIDRom aims to continue the assistance of Ukrainian refugees, but also for asylum seekers, and of the third country nationals, done with professionalism by the AIDRom team, but on the other side to strengthen the Church's capacity in assisting the vulnerable persons.

From 24 February 2022 to 31 July 2024, 9,227,208 Ukrainian citizens entered Romanian territory: Apart from those using Romania as a transit country to move on to a third country, 4,494 people applied for asylum, 188 people obtained some form of international protection, and 166,720 people benefited from temporary protection. Currently, over 107,000 Ukrainian citizens have chosen to stay in Romania, of which over 47,000 are children. Of the total beneficiaries of temporary protection, 11.95% were children aged 0-6 years, 17.63% were children aged 7-18 years, and 5.16% were people over 65. In July 2024, 4,464 new beneficiaries of temporary protection were registered, an increase of 17.97% compared to June 2024.

Considering that the effects of Government Emergency Ordinance No. 15/2022 regarding the provision of support and humanitarian assistance by the Romanian state to foreign citizens or stateless persons in special situations, coming from the armed conflict zone in Ukraine, with subsequent amendments and additions, ceased on 30 June 2024, an extensive consultation process took place within the Prime Minister's Chancellery. This process involved civil society and other government actors to establish a new mechanism for assisting Ukrainian refugees after 1 July 2024. As a result, on 29 June 2024, Emergency Ordinance No. 96 of 28 June 2024, regarding the provision of support and humanitarian assistance by the Romanian state to foreign citizens or stateless persons in special situations, coming from the armed conflict zone in Ukraine, was published in the Official Gazette.¹

On 23 October 2024, the Council adopted a financial assistance package for Ukraine implementing the G7 commitments. Package Included exceptional macro-financial assistance in the form of a loan of up to EUR 35 billion and a mechanism for channeling windfall proceeds from freezing Russian sovereign assets to help Ukraine repay its loans. The package aims to support Ukraine to cover its urgent financing needs, which have increased due to Russia's intensified aggression against Ukraine. 95% of the profits from freezing Russia's sovereign assets will be allocated to the EU budget and channeled through the loan cooperation mechanism for Ukraine. The remaining 5% will continue to be allocated to the European Peace Facility. On January 13 this year, the Government of Romania presented a report on Romania's response to the humanitarian crisis of refugees in Ukraine.

Romania was and is the space of safety and tranquility for the waves of Ukrainian refugees, and this can be seen in the resources allocated for ensuring basic needs, as well as for their protection and inclusion in our communities: over 500 million euros allocated from the budget of state and international partners, 6 ministries involved in the National Plan of medium and long-term measures, over 20 laws amended and adopted for the management of displaced persons from Ukraine, over 1,500 local authorities and 300 non-governmental organizations involved in providing direct support to refugees in Ukraine. From the beginning of the crisis in February 2022 until now, Romania has developed a coordination and collaboration mechanism between all parties actively involved in crisis management. The Government of Romania, through its ministries and institutions, civil society through NGOs, foundations, the private sector and citizens, UN agencies coordinated and complemented each other for the reception, support and integration of Ukrainians.

¹ Source: https://protectieucraina.gov.ro/1/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/Monthly-report_-july-English.pdf

2. Objective of the mid-term evaluation

The main objectives of the evaluation are:

1. To assess the project performance and achievements, intended and unintended results, identify factors that positively and negatively affect progress, and long-term effects on beneficiaries and actors involved.
2. To establish concrete lessons learned on which approaches and activities work or do not work and why. Reaching impact and outcome in an effective way.
3. To formulate recommendations for the way forward, including possible changes in the organization approach. Evaluate the lobbying and advocacy strategy for engaging additional donors and building a network, identifying any areas for improvement or notable positive aspects.

The results of the evaluation will be used by the AIDRom project team and Brot für die Welt to develop the appropriate strategy for the new project phase and also aim to benefit the overall work of AIDRom. The findings from this evaluation will support the project in steering interventions effectively toward expected results and enable timely adjustments in collaboration with beneficiaries, partners, and donors.

The evaluation should be based on the OECD-DAC criteria (relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, sustainability) and consider the guidelines for evaluations provided by BfdW. Cross-cutting issues especially gender and inclusion, should be taken into consideration too. This evaluation is also a valuable learning opportunity, allowing the project team to critically observe various project cycle management (PCM) processes, including implementation tools, intervention design, management techniques, and communication practices.

Stakeholder involvement in the evaluation is crucial to ensure that different perspectives are considered and reflected in assessment results. Determining the relevant stakeholders represents a crucial step in the assessment process. Obtaining consent from those with a legitimate interest in evaluating the program - either from beneficiaries, program managers, members of the target group, etc. – is an essential step for conferring the feeling of "ownership"/"adherence" and responsibility for results and evaluation recommendations.

Direct target group:

- Ukrainian refugees

Indirect target group:

- Ukrainian families who remained in Ukraine

Stakeholders:

- Other NGO's: IOM, Novapolis, Ateliere fara Frontiere (Workshops without Borders), Salvati Copiii – Save the Children, Fundatia Icar – Icar Foundation, CNRR – National Romanian Refugees Council, JRS Romania, Terres des Hommes
- Romanian Government, GII – General Inspectorate of Immigration, City Hall of Bucharest

AIDRom anticipates certain challenges carrying out this evaluation:

- There is a certain fluctuation and movement of Ukrainian refugees which might affect the availability of those direct beneficiaries who have benefitted from the project. AIDRom will compile an interview list and pre-check availability (ruling out that have travel plans in the coming months or alternatively if feasible and in agreement with the consultant carry out a certain number of interviews through WhatsApp)
- Language barriers: AIDRom will seek to find an evaluator who speaks Ukrainian and Romanian. Alternatively, AIDRom can support the consultant in seeking a translator (costs should be part of the evaluation budget submitted by the consultant).

3. Key questions for the evaluation

The evaluation should be based on the OECD-DAC criteria (relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, sustainability) and consider the guidelines for evaluations provided by BfdW.

The following questions should be assessed:

⇒ Relevance

- Is the project's intervention logic valid and relevant?
- How relevant is the project to the needs of the direct beneficiaries? What are the needs of the target group?
- Does the project approach the relevant target group?
- In how far is considered the gender balance / gender-specific needs in the project and in the activities?
- Which groups are particularly marginalized and vulnerable, and how effectively does the project and AIDRom support meet their specific needs?
- How relevant are national and regional policies and strategies to AIDRoms mission, and how should these be incorporated into future planning?

⇒ Coherence

- In how far is the project aligned with the regional and national policies and strategies, as well as with donor strategies?
- Has the project created synergies with other initiatives of this kind?
- How effectively does the project coordinate with other stakeholders (e.g., local authorities, Universities, NGOs) to ensure a unified approach toward shared objectives?
- In what ways does the project address cross-cutting issues (e.g., gender, climate change, or social inclusion) in alignment with broader development?
- How consistent is the project design with the needs and expectations of the beneficiaries, and does it adapt to evolving priorities within the community or sector?

⇒ Effectiveness

- To what extent are the objectives and indicators of the project reached achieved?

- What have been the external and internal obstacles to the achievement of the project objectives?
- Which external and internal factors are supportive of the effective achievement of the project objectives?
- To what extent have the project activities contributed to gender equality?
- Was the project effective in addressing the needs of beneficiaries?

⇒ Efficiency

- Does the project management structure respond to the needs of the project?
- How adequate are monitoring and reporting mechanisms?
- Do stakeholders actively participate in the implementation of the project?
- Were the objectives achieved in a cost-effective and efficient manner?
- What potential improvements can be identified to enhance the efficiency of the project?

⇒ Impact

- Are there already any broader changes visible on beneficiaries and target groups to which the project has contributed?
- To what extent do the project activities contribute to achieving the overall project goal?
- What additional outcomes and impacts (both intended and unintended, positive and negative) have been achieved?
- To what extent do the project activities improve perspectives for refugees to live and work in Romania?
- Does the project have an impact on inclusion?

⇒ Sustainability

- Are the project results and achievements likely to be durable and to what extent?
- What are the major factors which influenced the sustainability of the project?
- Are the achievements within the target groups sustainable in the medium to long term? To what extent can the activities, results, and effects be expected to continue after donor support ends?
- What opportunities exist to strengthen sustainability at the target group level, and what are the implications for future project implementation?

4. Evaluation design/methods

The overall evaluation design and specific methodology and work plan should be defined and prepared by the external evaluator. Proposals for a methodology need to be based on OECD-DAC standards.

The methodology includes a qualitative and quantitative approach. The review of the following documents needs to be considered: the project proposal, the annual progress

reports, the internal project documentation, and relevant external documents (for example national strategy, information on other relevant initiatives, narrative report, etc.).

The evaluation must include field visits with key informant interviewers and focus groups and ensure the participation of all relevant stakeholders, target groups, and beneficiaries.

The direct target group is Ukrainian refugees. The indirect target group includes Ukrainian families who remained in Ukraine. Stakeholders include the Romanian Government, in particular the General Inspectorate of Immigration and the City Hall of Bucharest as well as other organizations working with refugees such as IOM, Novapolis, Ateliere fara Frontiere (Workshops without Borders), Salvati Copiii – Save the Children, Fundatia Icar – Icar Foundation, CNRR – National Romanian Refugees Council, JRS Romania, and Terres des Hommes.

5. Process of the evaluation/time frame

Indicative timetable:

Task	Deadline	Lead
Submission of offers	Friday, 10th January 2025	AIDRom
Selection and contracting	By 24th January	AIDRom
Induction Call	Last week of January	AIDRom, Consultant
Draft inception report	First week of February	Consultant
Kick-off /clarification meeting	First week of February	Consultant / AIDRom
Finalizing inception report	Mid-February	Consultant
Field phase / data collection incl. debriefing of AidROM /report writing	Mid-February – Mid March	Consultant
Submission of draft evaluation report	Mid-March	Consultant
Consolidated feedback on draft evaluation report / capitalization workshop	Second half of March	AIDRom, Consultant
Submission of final report	End of March	Consultant

AIDRom will provide support to the consultant in the following way:

- Timely availability of relevant documentation (project proposal, annual report; any collected data)
- List and contact details of stakeholders / target group representatives to be interviewed
- Logistical support (e.g. provision of meeting space, informing beneficiary representatives) for focus group discussions
- Timely and consolidated feedback on the draft evaluation report
- Timely organisation of (online) kick-off meeting and capitalization workshop via Zoom or Teams.

6. Expected products

The evaluators are required to submit the following documents:

- Inception report in English (5-6 pages), containing the methodology of the mid-term evaluation, evaluation matrix and work plan
- Short PPT (findings, conclusions, recommendations) to be presented at the capitalization workshop.
- Final report in English language (around 30 pages, without annex), detailed data and supporting documentation into annexes. References must be given. All reports should be available in electronic form and forwarded to AIDRom.

7. Key qualifications of the evaluators

The evaluator/evaluation team is expected to meet the following qualifications:

- Master's degree in social science, education, or related discipline;
- Relevant experience, of at least 3 years in conducting project evaluations based on OECD/DAC criteria;
- Proficiency in writing in English;
- Romanian and possibly Ukrainian language skills (or translation);
- Excellent written and oral communication skills;
- Organizational and time management skills.
- Evaluator can be national or international.

8. Content of the evaluators offer

The evaluator's offer should contain:

- Curriculum vitae of all consultants, and professional profile of the evaluation company team/company.
- Technical proposal (Justification of methods, person day distribution, timeline).
- The total budget available for this evaluation is: **15.000 EUR**, 74.550 lei (approximately). The budget should cover all aspects of the evaluation including working time of the evaluator/s, any travel, translation, or other related expenses taken as part of the evaluation, and all communication costs.
- One evaluation example and/or reference letters on a similar assignment.

The offer in electronic form (preferably in one file) should be submitted to:

Niculescu Catalina, Project Manager, Email: catalina.niculescu@aidrom.ro, until **Friday, 10th January 2025**.

ANNEX: Structure of evaluation report

Cover sheet with

- Project title
- Project number
- Implementing organization
- Evaluator (author)
- Report date
- Region/Country
- Possibly project period

Table of contents

List of abbreviations

Summary

- Short presentation of the subject matter of the evaluation, possibly including key framework conditions
- Brief information on the evaluation: Cause and objective, the assessment period
- Key findings
- Key recommendations

1. Short description of the subject matter of the evaluation

- Project/program/instrument (idea, target group, formulated objectives)
- Implementing organisation, term, donors

2. Framework conditions (only as far as relevant to the subject matter of the evaluation)

- Political, economic, ecological, societal, and socio-cultural factors
- Risks to project success, assumptions/prerequisites
- Relevant activities of other organizations/private-sector companies
- Role of government actors

3. Description of the evaluation and the methodology used

- Timing of the evaluation within the course of the project
- Composition/expertise of the evaluation team
- Methodology
- Groups of people involved, number of participants
- Potential difficulties in conducting the evaluation and how to deal with them

4. Results

- 4.1 Relevance
- 4.2 Effectiveness
- 4.3 Efficiency
- 4.4 Impact
- 4.5 Sustainability

5. Recommendations (based on findings, realistic, specific and addressed)

6. potentially: General conclusions (lessons learned)

- for the project type (including exemplary nature)
- regarding the procedures and instruments

7. Appendix

- Travel and working procedure
- Sources (discussion partners, documents, specialist literature, field research etc.)
- Overview chart/map
- Terms of Reference