

# INTEGRATED SAFEGUARDS DATA SHEET CONCEPT STAGE

**Report No.:** ISDSC8824

**Date ISDS Prepared/Updated:** 01-Jun-2014

**Date ISDS Approved/Disclosed:** 20-Nov-2014

## I. BASIC INFORMATION

### A. Basic Project Data

|   |  |                              |                              |
|---|--|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| <b>Country:</b>                                       | Romania  | <b>Project ID:</b>           | P148585                      |
| <b>Project Name:</b>                                  | Romania Secondary Education Project (P148585)                      |                              |                              |
| <b>Task Team Leader:</b>                              | Janssen Edelweiss Nunes T  |                              |                              |
| <b>Estimated Appraisal Date:</b>                      | 15-Dec-2014  | <b>Estimated Board Date:</b> | 17-Feb-2015                  |
| <b>Managing Unit:</b>                                 | GEDDR  | <b>Lending Instrument:</b>   | Investment Project Financing |
| <b>Sector(s):</b>                                     | Secondary education (75%), Tertiary education (25%)                |                              |                              |
| <b>Theme(s):</b>                                      | Education for all (75%), Education for the knowledge economy (25%) |                              |                              |
| <b>Financing (In USD Million)</b>                     |  |                              |                              |
| <b>Total Project Cost:</b>                            | 250.31   | <b>Total Bank Financing:</b> | 250.31                       |
| <b>Financing Gap:</b>                                 | 0.00   |                              |                              |
| <b>Financing Source</b>                               |  |                              | <b>Amount</b>                |
| Borrower  |  |                              | 0.00                         |
| International Bank for Reconstruction and Development |  |                              | 250.31                       |
| Total   |  |                              | 250.31                       |
| <b>Environmental Category:</b>                        | C - Not Required   |                              |                              |
| <b>Is this a Repeater project?</b>                    | No   |                              |                              |

### B. Project Objectives

The Project Development Objective is to improve the transition from upper secondary into tertiary education of Romanian students, particularly those students from disadvantaged groups.

### C. Project Description

The proposed Project is to be implemented over a period of five years, between 2015 and 2019, and would be financed by a loan of US 275.26 million. The proposed Project is organized around four components as follows:

- Component 1 – Improving the Quality and Relevance of Upper Secondary Education
- Component 2 – Supporting the Needs of Newly Enrolled Tertiary Education Students
- Component 3 – Strengthening the Institutional Capacity to Implement and Monitor Programs for Education Quality Improvement
- Component 4 – Supporting Results-Based Education Quality Improvements

#### Component 1- Improving the Quality and Relevance of Upper Secondary Education

The objective of this component is to improve the quality and relevance of upper secondary education through a decentralized approach. This subcomponent would support grants for high schools with high shares of students from disadvantaged groups, with the aim at facilitating the transition from upper secondary into tertiary education. The selection criteria for high schools to benefit from this component is that they need to serve a significant numbers of students who are: from Roma communities; from minorities; from low income families; living in rural areas; at risk of leaving school early; and performing low in tests/exams including the Bacculaureate. These target groups will be identified during project preparation. At the end of the proposed Project, it is expected an increase in the average completion rate and the Bacculaureate passing rate, as well as in the share of graduates of technological upper secondary education schools who continue into tertiary education.

This component would finance technical assistance to targeted high schools on the preparation of proposals for the grants, which should help these schools' representatives identify the local needs in terms of improving the teaching and learning conditions. The grants would be awarded to targeted high schools on the basis of a menu of eligible activities to be further identified. These activities would include, but would not be limited to: counselling; tutoring; remedial classes; extracurricular activities; forums with representatives of the local labor market; outreach to families; teachers training; purchase of teaching and learning materials; equipping laboratories; and minor civil works. Adopting a limit for investments in goods and civil works would be considered at preparation. The feasibility of participation of experienced teachers in activities like tutoring would be explored at preparation.

The preparation of proposals for the grants should include the participation of representatives of teachers, parents, local authorities, in addition to school managers. To increase equity in opportunities in upper secondary education, a set of criterion for the allocation of grants per county would be developed taking into account several factors such as: average income level of families; share of students from Roma communities and minorities; share of students living in rural areas; share of students at risk of leaving school early; and students' performance in tests/exams including the Bacculaureate. The evaluation of proposals would probably take place at the county level with the participation of representatives of Inspectorates and other regional stakeholders, following a good practice of the Romania Rural Education Project (P073967).

#### Component 2 – Supporting the Needs of Newly Enrolled Tertiary Education Students

The objective of this component is to support the needs of students from disadvantaged groups who are at risk of dropping out tertiary education institutions in the first two years of education. These students are those who pass the Bacculaureate with marks close to the cutting point, which is currently set at six (from zero to ten). This component would support grants for tertiary education institutions with the highest shares of students from disadvantaged groups who drop out in the first two years of education. The selection criteria would be defined during project preparation. At the end

of the proposed Project, it is expected a decrease in the drop-out rate of students of the first two years of tertiary education who are enrolled in targeted institutions.

The grants would be awarded competitively to tertiary education institutions on the basis of a menu of eligible activities to be further identified. These activities would include, but would not be limited to: leveling programs; remedial programs; counselling; tutoring; outreach to families; and purchase of equipment and teaching materials to address the needs of students targeted for this component.

### Component 3 – Strengthening the Institutional Capacity to Implement and Monitor Programs for Education Quality Improvement

Sub-component 3.1 – Institutional Capacity Development. This sub-component would enhance institutional capacity towards improvements in the quality of upper secondary education. This component would support technical assistance (TA) to help the Ministry of National Education (MoNE) design and implement programs or activities aimed at improving the education quality including: (i) strengthening the MoNE’s monitoring and evaluation capacity; (ii) developing parameters for the revision of the upper secondary education curriculum; (iii) designing and implementing communications campaigns on Project-financed activities targeted to students from disadvantaged groups; and (iv) revising the students’ loan scheme for tertiary education. Other activities to be supported under this component would be identified during project preparation.

Sub-component 3.2 – Project Management. The MoNE would be the main implementing agency of the proposed Project (see Section C). This sub-component would support day-to-day project management activities, such as project audits, as well as operational and staffing costs of the MoNE’s Unit for Externally Financed Projects.

### Component 4 – Supporting Results-Based Education Quality Improvements

This results-based component would disburse against actions, outputs and outcomes, for which a set of Disbursement Linked Indicators (DLIs) would be fully defined at preparation. The DLIs would be selected on the basis of MoNE’s strategic priorities related to the PDO. The set of DLI may include, but would not be limited to: (i) adoption of a revised curriculum for upper secondary education; (ii) certification of teachers and school managers for the implementation of the revised upper secondary education curriculum; (iii) utilization of an improved EMIS to track upper secondary education students and monitor their transition into tertiary education; and (iv) establishment of a mechanism to monitor drop-outs in early years of tertiary education.

#### **D. Project location and salient physical characteristics relevant to the safeguard analysis (if known)**

The project activities would be carried across the country. No significant environmental issues or impacts are envisaged. The population targeted are disadvantaged students including those: from Roma communities; from minorities; from low income families; living in rural areas; at risk of leaving school early; and performing low in tests/exams including the Baccalaureate. No social or cultural issues are envisaged.

#### **E. Borrowers Institutional Capacity for Safeguard Policies**

The MoNE would be the main implementing agency of the proposed Project. High schools and tertiary education institutions identified as beneficiaries of the grants components would implement the Project under a decentralized approach, but with technical assistance of specialists supported by

the Project. The MoNE has successfully implemented World Bank-financed projects in the past and is prepared to play this role again. The MoNE's Unit for Externally Financed Projects (UEFP) has extensive experience with Bank-financed projects, having implemented almost all of the previous operations in Romania, as well as projects financed from other sources (e.g. European Investment Bank, Council of Europe Development Bank, European Union Structural Funds). This unit has the adequate capacity to carry out day-to-day project management activities including those related to environmental and social protection.

Depending on the scope of civil works to be undertaken under the high schools grants component, environmental issues related to rehabilitation of high schools would be tackled through site specific EMP checklists to screen out any potentially non-conforming activities, and this will be elaborated in the Project Operations Manual.

#### **F. Environmental and Social Safeguards Specialists on the Team**

Cesar Niculescu (GENDR)

Mihai Magheru (GSURR)

## **II. SAFEGUARD POLICIES THAT MIGHT APPLY**

| <b>Safeguard Policies</b>                  | <b>Triggered?</b> | <b>Explanation (Optional)</b>   |
|--|-------------------|---|
| Environmental Assessment OP/<br>BP 4.01    | No                | Under the Component 1 – Improving the Quality and Relevance of Upper Secondary Education, the proposed Project will support a grant scheme for eligible activities to be determined during preparation, which could include small civil works, i.e. rehabilitations of high schools. Although minor civil works involving building renovation may be financed, these will be interior and small scale, and do not warrant triggering OP 4.01 or preparation of an EMP. There are some social opportunities (and risks) associated with the Project in terms of changes in some peoples' access to education or options (e.g. programs for disadvantaged students, social and economic opportunities available to Roma students), which should be addressed in the PAD and perhaps even a social assessment (as there will be no environmental assessment to incorporate these aspects). |
| Natural Habitats OP/BP 4.04                | No                |   |
| Forests OP/BP 4.36                         | No                |   |
| Pest Management OP 4.09                    | No                |   |
| Physical Cultural Resources OP/<br>BP 4.11 | No                |   |
| Indigenous Peoples OP/BP 4.10              | No                |   |

|  |    |  |
|--|----|--|
| Involuntary Resettlement OP/BP 4.12            | No |  |
| Safety of Dams OP/BP 4.37                      | No |  |
| Projects on International Waterways OP/BP 7.50 | No |  |
| Projects in Disputed Areas OP/BP 7.60          | No |  |

### III. SAFEGUARD PREPARATION PLAN

**A. Tentative target date for preparing the PAD Stage ISDS:** 31-Jul-2014

**B. Time frame for launching and completing the safeguard-related studies that may be needed. The specific studies and their timing<sup>1</sup> should be specified in the PAD-stage ISDS:**

N.A.

### IV. APPROVALS

|                                  |                                 |                   |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------|
| Task Team Leader:                | Name: Janssen Edelweiss Nunes T |                   |
| <b>Approved By:</b>              |                                 |                   |
| Regional Safeguards Coordinator: | Name: Nina Chee (RSA)           | Date: 20-Nov-2014 |
| Sector Manager:                  | Name: Luis Benveniste (SM)      | Date: 20-Nov-2014 |

<sup>1</sup> Reminder: The Bank's Disclosure Policy requires that safeguard-related documents be disclosed before appraisal (i) at the InfoShop and (ii) in country, at publicly accessible locations and in a form and language that are accessible to potentially affected persons.