



**HELLENIC REPUBLIC
MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS**

“HELLENIC AID”

**YDAS-2 DIRECTORATE
FOR REHABILITATION & DEVELOPMENT**

**HELLENIC AID
ACTION PLAN
FOR COORDINATION AND
HARMONIZATION**

Athens, November 2004

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1.	GENERAL GUIDING PRINCIPLES
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The **Greek Action Plan for Coordination and Harmonization** outlines the basic **approach and guiding principles of the Greek Development Policy** as well as the **plans of HELLENIC AID** for better Coordination, Harmonization and Alignment which is one of the main priorities for the coming years. At the same time, it constitutes the contribution of Greece to the upcoming **2nd High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness** to be held in Paris in early March 2005.

The **final objective** of this Action Plan is to support intensive Greek efforts for the fulfillment of the **MDGs**, and especially to poverty eradication, by enhancing the **effectiveness** of its development cooperation and by further strengthening the **cooperation** with partner countries.

The operational principles of the Development Policy of HELLENIC AID all promote partnerships, ownership, coordination, alignment, harmonization and complementarity. The aim of this Action Plan is to review the main procedures of the Greek Development Policy System and to formulate additional measures and/or procedures while building on a process of **an ongoing improvement**.

Coordination, Harmonization and Alignment are tasks that actually embrace gradually all aspects of development policy activities in compatibility with the Good Practice Papers (G.P.P.) initiated by the DAC.

The Action Plan is structured around **the international commitments** deriving from the following:

- The **Millennium Development Goals** (2002) and especially reducing, by half, extreme poverty and hunger by the year 2015;
- The **Barcelona Process** (2000): The Member States of the European Union committed themselves to “reach concrete steps in the coordination of policies and the harmonization of procedures before 2004”;
- The **Monterrey Conference** (2002), which highlighted the importance of building partnerships amongst donors and developing countries as a means of making more effective progress towards the MDGs;
- The **Rome Declaration** on Harmonization (February 2003), the key elements of which are:
 - Aligning development on partner countries’ national development strategies, priorities and systems;
 - Streamlining donor policies, practices and procedures to facilitate harmonization;
 - Implementing Good Practice Papers on Harmonizing Donor Practices for Effective Aid Delivery of the DAC;
 - Intensifying delegated cooperation;
 - Increasing flexibility of country based staff to manage country programmes;
 - Promoting stronger partnerships with governments and among donors in country analytic Work providing budget , sector support when possible and appropriate;

- Promoting harmonization in global and regional programmes.
- The **DAC Good Practice Paper** “Harmonizing Donor Practices for Effective Aid Delivery.
- The **Marrakech Memorandum** on Managing for Development Results (February 2004).

2.	SPECIFIC GOALS OF THE ACTION PLAN
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The HELLENIC AID Action Plan identifies the following main areas where aid effectiveness has to be enhanced:

- Firstly, and most importantly, the alignment of Greek development policies, practices and procedures **with our partners’ priorities**.

Cooperation with recipient countries, is pursued through **partnerships, that is in accordance with the principle that policy planning and the selection of programmes is their responsibility in relation to their needs and the sustainability of the projects and programmes. The final objective is ownership of aid on behalf of the recipients. Furthermore continuous dialogue with mutual trust, is always a guiding principle between HELLENIC AID and recipient countries.**

- Secondly, coordination and agreement concerning priorities, practices, and procedures with other **donors** with alignment being always the ultimate step.

Cooperation with the International Organizations, the EU and other donors is pursued in three ways: **co-ordination, coherence and complementarity** of policies and actions, always in a spirit of **responsibility, transparency and efficiency to achieve common long-term objectives.**

Greece’s immediate **objective is to intensify** such cooperation with donor countries, with regard to **capacity building focused on targeted needs**, as defined by the recipient countries, so that jointly and in a coordinated manner, sustainable development and good management of environmental resources are promoted.

- Thirdly, coordination, coherence and complementarity concerning priorities, practices and procedures within the Greek System, in order to enhance the efficiency of Greek assistance and adjust our procedures.

In fact, it is important to follow a coherent approach in all phases of the development cooperation process (strategic planning and programming, implementation, monitoring and evaluation) and put the **focus on results for both partner countries and development agencies.** Furthermore it is necessary to use the resulting information in the management and decision-making, as well as in reporting and accountability in a feed back process.

- Fourthly, dissemination of harmonization and aid effectiveness principles to all actors implementing projects in developing countries through discussions, seminars, workshops and discussion of success case studies..

3.	DEVELOPMENT POLICY OF HELLENIC AID
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- In order to **better coordinate and increase efficiency and effectiveness the Greek development strategy has both Sectoral and Geographical Priorities.**
- The Sectoral Priorities are:
 - **basic and secondary education infrastructure and vocational training;**
 - **basic health infrastructure;**
 - **micro-credit and income generation;**
 - **water supply and sanitation;**
 - **environment, energy and agriculture;**
 - **institution building and support for democratization and human rights;**
 - **women trafficking;**
 - **culture.**

The current Geographical Priorities are:

- **the Balkans (Albania, Serbia and Montenegro , Bosnia - Herzegovina, F.Y.R.O.M, Bulgaria, Romania);**
 - **the Black Sea area (Armenia, Georgia);**
 - **the Middle East (Turkey, Syria, Lebanon, Palestinian Areas, Jordan);**
 - **Iraq and Afghanistan;**
 - **sub-Saharan Africa (Ethiopia, Eritrea, Sudan).**
- Especially for **sub-Saharan Africa**, where poverty is at stake, the policy aims at an annual increase in the percentage of aid allocated to this region of **20% to 25%**.
 - As for the Balkan Countries the aim to enhance their stability. In this framework, the Greek Development Policy has put in place a comprehensive programme, the “**Greek Plan for the Economic Reconstruction of the Balkans (ESOAB) for the years 2002-2006**”, with a budget of 550 MEUROS. The philosophy of this development programme is based on the principles of partnership aiming at promoting the European orientation of the Balkan countries, as well as their economic development and welfare. The “ESOAB” complements, in a targeted way, the efforts of other regional initiatives such as the “Stability Pact for South –Eastern Europe”. For the implementation of the ESOAB, a Bilateral Economic Cooperation Programme for each state has been drawn up, with local ownership being the basic principle.
 - Publication of an **Annual Report to the Greek Parliament** on development cooperation activities of Greece.

- Public support for development assistance is deemed to be high for actions relating to both emergency situations and development projects to developing countries, despite the fact that public awareness on North-South issues needs to be further stimulated.
- Creation of HELLENIC AID Web-site in order to promote information.
- Publication of **HELLENIC AID Guide offering instructions to Greek NGOs** and other civil society bodies seeking official co-financing for development projects.
- HELLENIC AID convenes frequent ad hoc **inter-ministerial meetings** on various issues like Environment, Water, Poverty etc. **for further coordination, cohesion and planning.** In such meetings special consideration is **given** to sectoral analysis documents, prepared by DAC, E.U. and multilateral donors like the World Bank;
- **HELLENIC AID has been disseminating to all Authorities concerned (Ministries, other Public Agencies and Greek Embassies in priority countries) the DAC Good Practice Paper “Harmonizing Donor Practices for Effective Aid Delivery”** and intends to provide in a rather systematic way in the future more information and working documents prepared by DAC .
- Greater emphasis shall be given on discussing lessons learnt and success stories, on sharing of information sources like websites and on setting up of regular meetings that enable implementing Ministries, NGOs and other bodies to be better informed of similar activities in their sector or within a given partner country. We underline the need for complementarity of actions among the various participants in Greece by organizing meetings on a more regular basis and by making certain that all share and serve the same country strategy and common sectoral objectives, while allowing for flexibility in the phase of implementation.

4.	COUNTRY PROGRAMMING: A FURTHER STEP TOWARDS ENHANCED COORDINATION AND ALIGNMENT
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- In accordance with wider developments for Coordination and Harmonization, Greece will seek to base gradually its own bilateral development cooperation on **multi-annual planning**, contributing in this manner to **predictability** of aid delivery which is a **step forward** as regards aid effectiveness. This multi-annual planning mechanism shall be designed to be **flexible**, as much as possible, so as to be compatible with a joint programming approach within the DAC framework. The **focus** will be to **align**, to the extent possible, to the recipient country-led planning procedure. Regarding multi-annual bilateral programming certain key inputs, jointly developed in the framework of the E.U. and other donors, shall be utilized, such as social context, the partner country’s policy agenda etc.

- In order to enhance its efforts on the issue of **Harmonization**, Greece will continue to give its support to capacity building in partner countries through the formulation of **Sectoral development strategies**. Every effort shall be made to follow **Sector and /or thematic guidelines (or best practices) developed in the framework of DAC and at EU level** (always within the context of PRSPs or similar policies) so as to achieve the best possible coordination of policies with other donors, in the dialogue with partner countries.
- Country Strategy Papers constitute one of the basic tools of the strategic management of Greek aid, as they outline the strategic framework for the development priorities of partner countries.

The immediate objective of HELLENIC AID is to further align its aid projects/programmes to partner country-owned sectoral strategies and to further align programmes, procedures, and timetables behind the national PRSPs, while reducing the amount of aid provided through stand –alone projects. The intention is to adopt a more integrated and programmatic approach to country programming and budgeting, backed up by more regular consultations with local authorities concerning development cooperation.

5.	COUNTRY LEVEL INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS
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- Greece shares the prevailing view that one **basic element** for alignment and harmonization, and thus aid effectiveness in poverty reduction, is **delegation of competence to the local staff**. The **Rome Declaration** calls for increased flexibility of country based staff to manage country programs and projects more effectively and efficiently, and for intensified donor efforts to work through such means as delegated cooperation.
- HELLENIC AID has been gradually but steadily building development cooperation staff, able to play a leading role in managing and implementing its Aid Programme. Greek Embassies today undertake the role of field representatives for the official Greek Aid Programme.
 However, there is a need to appoint a number of specialized development co-operation personnel (Development Officers) in Greek Embassies in Priority Countries, in order to improve co-operation with the local authorities and partners for the implementation of projects. This would enable HELLENIC AID to better manage pro-actively the challenges and needs of poverty reduction and partnerships and to improve coordination and complementarities within its own aid system, as well as to share experiences, thus increasing its efficiency and effectiveness in the field.
 It is noted that HELLENIC AID is presently sending staff to partner countries only on an ad hoc basis and for a limited period of time - e.g. distributing humanitarian and food aid to the victims, monitoring development projects etc.

- It is anticipated that a number of development officers will be appointed in priority partner countries in the future. Law 2731/99 provides already for the detachment of personnel to Embassies so as to enable them to monitor and co-ordinate the implementation of development co-operation projects

6.	IMPROVING MONITORING, AUDITING AND EVALUATION
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- The recent set up of a monitoring system within HELLENIC AID system already provides consolidated data on the Greek aid programme, its strengths and weaknesses. The immediate target is to intensify work in this area by providing details on sectoral policies and activities implemented, focusing, in particular, on anticipated and actual results achieved, lessons learnt and desirable follow-up actions. The need for adoption of a more systematic monitoring system demonstrates the commitment of HELLENIC AID to **develop an evaluation and continuous learning process within the Greek aid system with the focus being on tangible results.**

In this framework, information is gathered regarding results of projects implemented, and reports are submitted. The monitoring system includes since the beginning of 2004, visits to the projects by experienced staff who complete record reports in which they evaluate competence, effectiveness, development impact, suitability and expected sustainability of projects and programmes in cooperation with local partners.

- **It is in the immediate plans of Hellenic Aid to improve extensively its monitoring auditing and evaluating systems** so as to increase transparency, efficiency of the HELLENIC AID Programme and to create the basic infrastructure for management for development results. Every effort is made to develop a process within the Greek aid system focused on results. The results of the evaluation will be used on a regular basis as a tool for an improved decision making as well as for an effective planning and implementation of projects and programmes.