



Swiss-Maltese Co-operation Programme 2007-2017

Annual Report for the period 29 April 2008 to 30 April 2009

INTRODUCTION

The expressed intention of the Swiss Federal Council that Switzerland should contribute up to one billion Swiss francs to reduce economic and social disparities within the enlarged EU was given substance in the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed between Switzerland and the Council of the European Union on 26 September 2006.

Immediately after the signature of that MoU, Malta took up contact with the Swiss authorities to initiate discussions on the Bilateral Framework between Malta and Switzerland concerning the implementation of the Swiss-Maltese Cooperation Programme. Following meetings held in Malta in February 2007 and July 2007 between the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and the Planning and Priorities Coordination Division of the Office of the Prime Minister, agreement between the two sides was reached and Malta signed the Bilateral Framework Agreement on 20 December 2007.

The Agreement has a commitment period of five years and a disbursement period of ten years, starting from the approval date of the Swiss Contribution by the Swiss Parliament, i.e. 14 June 2007. It entered into force on 29 April 2008, which is the date of the notification confirming that both Malta and Switzerland had completed their respective approval procedures.

Switzerland has committed an allocation of CHF 2.994 (€1.841) million for Malta. Health was to be the thematic focus of the Swiss-Maltese Cooperation Programme, with an indicative financial allocation of CHF 2.794 (€1.718) million. Up to CHF 0.15 (€0.092) million would be retained by Switzerland to cover its administration costs of the Programme. The remaining CHF 0.05 (€0.031) million has been allocated to technical assistance and the Maltese administration of the Programme including preparation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

By 30 April 2009 the following important results were achieved:

- Three project outlines for the implementation of the Swiss-Maltese Contribution were forwarded to SDC in April 2008;
1. On 16 February 2009 SDC confirmed that the proposal entitled "Acquisition of a Positron Emission Tomography (PET) / Computerised Tomography (CT) Scanner" had been approved subject to certain conditions;
 2. The Maltese authorities were compiling the final proposal on the conditionally approved project. This would also address the issues raised by SDC in its letter of 16 February 2009. This final project proposal was expected to be submitted to SDC in the near future;
 3. Discussions on the Technical Assistance Fund Agreement have been successfully concluded. This Agreement was signed on 1 March 2009.

PROJECT IDENTIFICATION

In terms of article 3.2 of Annex 1 to the Bilateral Framework Agreement, responsibility for the identification of projects to be financed by the Swiss-Maltese Contribution lay with Malta, although Switzerland could offer Malta project proposals as well.

In terms of article 4 of the same Annex, Health was to be the focus area within the Human and Social Development theme that was to apply to the Swiss-Maltese Cooperation Programme.

In light of the above provisions, the Maltese authorities proceeded to identify three project proposals entitled as follows:

- Acquisition of a Positron Emission Tomography (PET) / Computerised Tomography (CT) Scanner
- Upgrading of the Health Care Transportation Fleet Services
- Adjustable Beds

Project outlines were elaborated and they were forwarded to the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) in April 2008.

In their submission, the Maltese authorities indicated that the PET/CT scanner was the highest priority. Such a system provides essential imaging modality, particularly in the field of oncology. It also has applications in cardiovascular and neurological diseases. Nowadays, all PET scanners being sold are so-called hybrid machines with Computed Tomography (CT) being incorporated in the same machine. This allows for overlay of the metabolic information obtained through PET on to the anatomical structures as depicted by CT, increasing the accuracy of the technique.

This type of imaging was not available in Malta and cancer patients that required a scan had to go to overseas centres, if they could afford to. No patients were sent abroad through the Maltese National Health Service. This was therefore causing a disparity of care to Maltese patients.

Accordingly, the objective of this project was to provide the Maltese population with ready access to PET/CT imaging in Malta. This was to be used mainly on cancer patients, with a small percentage of cardiac and neurological patients to be scanned as well.

In December 2008, Switzerland forwarded to the National Coordination Unit (NCU) a set of technical questions concerning the PET/CT scanner project outline. The Maltese authorities transmitted their replies concerning these issues to SDC in January 2009. Following this, the PET/CT scanner proposal received conditional approval and SDC notified the NCU of this important development by means of a letter dated 16 February 2009.

The next step would be the final project proposal in terms of articles 2.3 and 2.4 of Annex 2 to the Bilateral Framework Agreement. The NCU and the Health Division within the Ministry for Social Policy were currently working on this document which should take account of Switzerland's requests contained in the letter granting conditional approval. It was worth noting that the most recent estimates suggested that the cost of the PET/CT system would absorb all the funds under the Swiss-Maltese Contribution allocated to the Health focus area.

The Project Agreement would be signed following the approval by Switzerland of the final proposal.

THE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FUND

The Technical Assistance Fund Agreement, including a Technical Assistance Proposal and accompanying budget, was signed on 1 March 2009. The Technical Assistance Fund amounts to CHF 50,000 (€30,750) and would be used by the Maltese Authorities for the administration of the Swiss-Maltese Cooperation Programme.

The following activities have been identified as eligible for support under the Technical Assistance Fund.

- *Hiring of Consultants for the Monitoring and for the Review of the Project financed by the Contribution and of the Cooperation Programme*

In order to monitor and review the Health project to be financed under the Swiss-Maltese Grant, the services of an expert might be required. The expert would be expected to provide assistance and professional advice before, during and after the implementation of the project thus providing the Executing Agency with necessary expertise. The expert may also be called upon to report on progress during Annual Meetings if necessary.

- *Participation in Meetings with Swiss Authorities held outside of Malta*

Participation in meetings with the Swiss authorities outside Malta would contribute towards a better understanding of the Swiss-Maltese Cooperation Programme and its implementation. The international nature of these meetings would also be beneficial for Malta and would contribute towards increased interaction with beneficiaries from other countries, for example. These meetings would also provide a useful platform for the exchange of experiences and best practices, and more generally, networking amongst participating officials.

- *Organisation of Annual Meetings*

The convening of annual meetings would be required to ensure the efficient and effective implementation of the Swiss-Maltese Cooperation Programme. Annual meetings should serve to keep track of progress in the implementation of the Programme, providing a suitable forum within which any problems or issues encountered could be discussed and potential solutions proposed.

- *Publicity*

The aim of publicity activities would be to provide the general public with information about the Swiss-Maltese Contribution and the support provided by Switzerland through the Cooperation Programme.

These activities would give publicity at Programme, not project, level. Publicity at project level would be carried out separately by the Executing Agency.

No claims for payment from the Technical Assistance Fund were made during the reporting period.

FINANCIAL TABLE ILLUSTRATING ACTUAL AND ESTIMATED DISBURSEMENTS

NB: Figures in Euro based on a conversion rate of CHF 1.6261

Acquisition of a Positron Emission Tomography (PET) / Computerised Tomography (CT) Scanner					
Year / Quarter	Actual Realised Payments		Future Estimated Expenditure		Total Expenditure (Cumulative)
	Swiss Funds	Malta Funds	Swiss Funds	Malta Funds	
2009					
Quarter 1	-	-	-	-	-
Quarter 2	-	-	-	-	-
Quarter 3	-	-	-	-	-
Quarter 4	-	-	-	-	-
2010					
Quarter 1	-	-	-	-	-
Quarter 2	-	-	€1,030,935	€181,930	€1,212,865
Quarter 3	-	-	-	-	-
Quarter 4	-	-	-	-	-
2011					
Quarter 1	-	-	-	-	-
Quarter 2	-	-	€515,467	€90,965	€1,819,297
Quarter 3	-	-	-	-	-
Quarter 4	-	-	-	-	-
2012					
Quarter 1	-	-	-	-	-
Quarter 2	-	-	€171,822	€30,321	€2,021,440
Quarter 3	-	-	-	-	-
Quarter 4	-	-	-	-	-
2013					
Quarter 1	-	-	-	-	-
Quarter 2	-	-	-	-	-
Quarter 3	-	-	-	-	-
Quarter 4	-	-	-	-	-

2014					
Quarter 1	-	-	-	-	-
Quarter 2	-	-	-	-	-
Quarter 3	-	-	-	-	-
Quarter 4	-	-	-	-	-
2015					
Quarter 1	-	-	-	-	-
Quarter 2	-	-	-	-	-
Quarter 3	-	-	-	-	-
Quarter 4	-	-	-	-	-
2016					
Quarter 1	-	-	-	-	-
Quarter 2	-	-	-	-	-
Quarter 3	-	-	-	-	-
Quarter 4	-	-	-	-	-
2017					
Quarter 1	-	-	-	-	-
Quarter 2	-	-	-	-	-
Quarter 3	-	-	-	-	-
Quarter 4	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL			€1,718,224	€303,216	

Technical Assistance Fund					
Year / Quarter	Actual Realised Payments		Future Estimated Expenditure		Total Expenditure (Cumulative)
	Swiss Funds	Malta Funds	Swiss Funds	Malta Funds	
2009					
Quarter 1	-	-	-	-	-
Quarter 2	-	-	€2,460	-	€2,460
Quarter 3	-	-	-	-	-
Quarter 4	-	-	€6,518	-	€8,978
2010					
Quarter 1	-	-	-	-	-
Quarter 2	-	-	€5,289	-	€14,267
Quarter 3	-	-	-	-	-
Quarter 4	-	-	€1,353	-	€15,620
2011					
Quarter 1	-	-	-	-	-
Quarter 2	-	-	€2,460	-	€18,080
Quarter 3	-	-	-	-	-
Quarter 4	-	-	€4,551	-	€22,631
2012					
Quarter 1	-	-	-	-	-
Quarter 2	-	-	-	-	-
Quarter 3	-	-	-	-	-
Quarter 4	-	-	€1,353	-	€23,984
2013					
Quarter 1	-	-	-	-	-
Quarter 2	-	-	-	-	-
Quarter 3	-	-	-	-	-
Quarter 4	-	-	€1,353	-	€25,337
2014					
Quarter 1	-	-	-	-	-
Quarter 2	-	-	-	-	-
Quarter 3	-	-	-	-	-
Quarter 4	-	-	€1,353	-	€26,690

2015					
Quarter 1	-	-	-	-	-
Quarter 2	-	-	-	-	-
Quarter 3	-	-	-	-	-
Quarter 4	-	-	€1,353	-	€28,043
2016					
Quarter 1	-	-	-	-	-
Quarter 2	-	-	-	-	-
Quarter 3	-	-	-	-	-
Quarter 4	-	-	€1,353	-	€29,396
2017					
Quarter 1	-	-	-	-	-
Quarter 2	-	-	-	-	-
Quarter 3	-	-	-	-	-
Quarter 4	-	-	€1,353	-	€30,749
TOTAL		-	€30,749	-	

AUDIT

The Internal Audit and Investigations Directorate (IAID) in the Cabinet Office within the Office of the Prime Minister has been appointed as Audit Organisation for the projects to be implemented under the Swiss-Maltese Cooperation Programme. IAID is a public institution of recognised professional reputation and in line with the International Standards Board (IAASB) of the International Federation of Accountants.

In view of the fact that no substantive activities or financial transactions were executed, no financial audits on the Swiss-Maltese Cooperation Programme were carried out during the reporting period.

STRATEGIES AND ACTIVITIES TO INFORM THE GENERAL PUBLIC ABOUT THE SWISS-MALTESE CO-OPERATION PROGRAMME AND THE PROJECT/S IMPLEMENTED

Publicity was key to generate public awareness of the Swiss-Maltese Contribution. With the aim of providing the general public with information about the Contribution and the support provided by Switzerland through the Cooperation Programme, a list of potential activities to be undertaken has been defined by the NCU. These include:

- Billboards;
- Press releases;
- Articles in newspapers;
- Interviews on local radio and/or TV stations;
- Publicity on local radio.

The above should constitute publicity at Programme level and would be financed through the Technical Assistance Fund. All publications would refer to the Technical Assistance Fund as a "Swiss-Maltese Grant".

The Executing Agency responsible for the implementation of the project(s) in the Health focus area would carry out publicity at project level.

Annex 1

National Coordination Unit

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Executing Agency

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Annex 2 – Tenders, contract awards and successful bidders

No tenders were launched by the cut-off date of this Annual Report, i.e. 30 April 2009.