

## DEVELOPMENT OF RURAL AREA BY NGOs PARTICIPATION. CASE STUDY CĂLĂRAȘI COUNTY, ROMANIA

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### Abstract

*In the era of globalization, the civil society was recognized as the “third” essential sector regarding its positive influence on the state, but also on the community it represents. The purpose of this study is to analyze and evaluate the way in which members of rural communities perceive the influence of existing NGOs in the commune, on its development. In this sense, we initiated an survey of opinion based on interviews, on a number of 379 respondents from four rural localities in Călărași county, located in different areas of the county and with a different number of NGOs established in the locality, both in number as well as in structure, and we considered the questions: Are there NGOs in the commune? and Do you think that the existence of NGOs can influence the development of your commune?, as edifying to capture the inhabitants' perception on the development of the rural area through the involvement of organized communities, respectively, of NGOs. It should be mentioned that, through this approach, we proposed that, in addition to gather information about the objective of the study, we would also inform the population about the role and importance of the activity carried out by these organizations, to promote the interests of the community they belong to. The research was based on the method of questionnaire survey and  $\chi^2$  test. Analyzing the answers, it is found that the opinions are very different between the communes (significance threshold very significant), in the sense that those from Modelu and Grădișteea communes know about the existence of NGOs in the community, those from Dragalina commune know about this aspect in a percentage of approx. 50%, while those from Borcea commune do not know or do not know about the existence of these organizations. We find out that more than half of the respondents with higher education are aware of the existence of NGOs in the locality; those with secondary and high school education answered in percentage of 47.87% and those with primary education 30%. The existence of the community organized in the form of an NGO is evaluated differently, significantly, also by male respondents under 45.6% and female respondents in percentage of 56.4%. Through their participatory level, NGOs can support the development of human resources in the rural areas, through training and counseling actions to assist the unemployed workforce in order to reduce unemployment and exploit opportunities on the labor market.*

**Key words:** community, development, rural area, NGO, civil society

### INTRODUCTION

Community development is a long-term process, which normally requires both financial resources and sustainable local partnerships, in which civil society plays a fundamental role [21]. In most European countries, including Romania, civil society registered a notable evolution, through involvement in rural development, through participation in the elaboration of local strategies for a sustainable development [6, 7]. For the development of rural areas, it is necessary to mobilize the decision-making factors at the central, regional and national level, respectively, local authorities, civil

society representatives, national profile organizations but also, implicitly, the formation of a viable partnership between these entities, with the aim of captures the main challenges at the local level, to identify development priorities and solutions, to design integrated measures and strategies [3,12]. These strategies must emphasize the links between the participating factors, with the aim of generating positive results on local, regional and national development [19, 13]. In this sense, it must aim at intensifying the strengths of the community, under all economic, social, environmental aspects and reducing vulnerabilities, weak points [7, 23, 26]. Since within the local communities we

encounter significant differences regarding the experience of cooperation, conflict, institutional culture, it is very important that the existing local realities are taken into account within the partnership [28].

The concept of civil society emerged in the late 18th century, when philosophical and political theorists began to distinguish between the state and the rest of society as a result of the transition from the medieval to the modern era [10, 22]. Over time, this concept has taken on different forms. Civil society includes non-political associative forms that are not part of a fundamental institution of the state or the business sector [5, 3].

Thus, non-governmental organizations - NGOs (associations or foundations, trade unions, employers' unions) are civil society "actors" who intervene alongside the decision-makers and institutions of the rule of law, in the sense of defending the rights and interests of the groups of citizens they represent. It is therefore seen as an increasingly important agent for promoting good governance through transparency, effectiveness, openness, responsiveness and accountability [2, 15, 26].

Civil society can reach the stage of good governance through: policy analysis and *advocacy*; regulation and monitoring of state performance and by influencing the behavior of civil servants; developing social capital that enables citizens to identify and express values, beliefs, civic norms and democratic practices; mobilizing the vulnerable and marginalized sectors of the masses for their active participation in politics and public affairs; development activity aimed at the well-being of communities [1, 8, 21].

In our country, citizens' participation in the social-political life of the local community and as a whole is quite low. The main cause would be the concept according to which the state is obliged to do everything for [5, 9].

The concept of public-private partnership expresses, in general, a way of cooperation between public authorities and the private sector, non-governmental organizations or companies, with the aim of achieving projects

aimed at local development from all points of view [8, 10].

The sustainable development of rural areas is one of the main objectives of the European Union. It is necessary to promote a general harmonious evolution, contributing to the reduction of disparities between the development levels of different regions [1, 22].

At the national level, the application of the Common Agricultural Policy is aimed at, which involves a set of measures planned and promoted by local and central public administration authorities, in partnership with various private or public "actors". This policy aims to ensure a dynamic and sustainable economic growth, through the effective exploitation of agricultural potential, to improve living conditions and promote diversity and quality, respecting the variety of agricultural traditions of Europe and, implicitly, of Romania [2, 23, 28].

NGOs are privately established organizations from groups of people with common interests, who support and promote the interests of society and support the development of different communities [8, 10]. They are also considered main organizations or people's organizations, established to help others. These community organizations are typically formed by groups of individuals who have joined together to promote their interests, such as women's associations, youth clubs, cooperatives and farmers' associations [1, 15].

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

The purpose of this study is to analyze and evaluate the way in which members of rural communities perceive the influence of NGOs existing in the commune on its development. Starting from the hypothesis that, through representatives of civil society, citizens can express their point of view and support for the local economic and social development strategy of the community in which they live, playing an active role in the creation of a democratic European model, we initiated a survey of opinion based on interviews in four rural localities in Călărași county, located in different areas of the county and with a

different number of NGOs established in the locality, both regarding the number and structure, and we considered the questions: *In the commune there are NGOs? and Do you think that the existence of NGOs can influence the development of your commune?*, as edifying to capture the inhabitants' perception on the development of the rural area through the involvement of organized communities, respectively, of NGOs. It should be mentioned that, through this approach, we proposed that, in addition to gathering information related to the objective of the study, we would inform the population about the role and importance of the activity carried out by these organized structures, for the promotion of the interests of the community of which they are a part, being considered organizations of people, established to help others. The research was based on the method of questionnaire survey and  $\chi^2$  test.

The questions were structured on 2 levels, respectively, 4 filter questions and 2 grid-type questions, with 3 or 4 predetermined answers, to simplify the process of completing and analyzing the answers but also so that the respondents could choose the one that reflects better their perception of that question.

A number of 379 people responded to the interview-questionnaire study and the answers were analyzed taking into account the following aspects: locality, age, education, gender and occupational profile. 379 people were surveyed, from 4 localities of Călărași county, respectively, Modelu, Grădiștea, Dragalina and Borcea. the sample was organized into 5 age groups: up to 30 years, 31-40 years, 41-50 years, 51-60 years, over 60 years.

Regarding the criterion regarding the level of studies, we structured as follows: primary school, secondary, high school and higher education; by gender: male and female; according to the occupational status, we structured the respondents into: farmer; employee; unemployed; without occupational status and pensioners.

In order to determine the cumulative distribution function, applied in this case to statistical distributions, through the  $\chi^2$  ("hi-

square") concordance test, which is applied to grouped data, also called frequency data, by associating the columns and rows of a table with two entries, crossed, in which the information is presented according to one or more segmentation variables and calculated after compiling the contingency tables. [18, 27]. The steps taken to evaluate the results of the questionnaire through the  $\chi^2$  test are: the formulation of the null hypothesis, which determines the causal link between the two variable-questions; choosing the significance threshold, determining the number of degrees of freedom of the table, according to the formula  $(r-1)*(c-1)$ . The theoretical value of  $\chi^2$  was taken from the distribution table and the results obtained were compared [17, 25], and the existence/non-existence of association between variables was determined; the contingency coefficient C, was calculated to measure the degree of association between the variables of the contingency table [24]. The calculated  $\chi^2$  was compared with the theoretical  $\chi^2$  for different probability thresholds and the correlation was established according to the degree of closeness of C to 1.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

In the 50 communes of Călărași county, 445 NGOs are established, according to the List of NGOs (List of NGOs, published in 2022 [27]. According to the objective pursued, they were in the number of 114 (25.6%), community, 54 sports (12.2%), 37 (8.3%) agricultural and 240 (53.9%) other objectives. Most NGOs are located in Călărași municipality (235, respectively 52.8%) and in Oltenita town (48, respectively 10.8%), Lehliu Gară (12, respectively 2.7%) (Table 1). In the four localities where the case study was carried out, as shown in table 2., there are 32 NGOs, most of them in the "community" category, 13 in the "sports" category and "agricultural"-7 and in the category "others" -5.

Modelu commune, being located on the left bank of the Danube river and Borcea branch, represents one of the localities in Romania with a particularly attractive, advantageous and beneficial geographical position [20].

The current population of Modelu commune is over 10,052 inhabitants, being among the large communes in Romania, with demographic stability.

Located in the central-southern part of Călărași county, Grădiștea commune is located on the north bank of the Danube, west of Călărași municipality, having as a touristic objective, Lake Galățui. According to the last census, the population of the commune is approximately 5,000 inhabitants, increasing by 10% compared to the previous census, as a result of the attractiveness of the commune due to its proximity to the city [14].

Dragalina commune is located in the north of the county, on the border with Ialomița county, and on its territory there are several important road and railway junctions. Also, the Bucharest-Constanța highway passes through the commune. The current population of the commune is about 8,500 inhabitants [11]. Located on the left bank of the Danube and crossed by the Borcea branch, Borcea commune is located in the east of Călărași county, being adjacent to Constanța and Ialomița counties. By size and population of approximately 8,900 inhabitants, it is one of the largest municipalities in the county [4].

Table 1. Size and structure of the number of NGOs, by locality and type of activity, in Calarasi county

Localities	NGOs no	Localities	Total NGO		of which, by activity			
					Community	Sports	Agricultural	Others
	NGO/local	No	No	%	No	No	No	No
Călărași	235	1	235	52.8	55	25	9	146
Oltenița	48	1	48	10.8	12	5	-	31
Lehliu Gară	12	1	12	2.7	4	-	-	8
Gradiștea, Modelu	10	2	20	4.5	9	4	3	4
Chirnogi	8	1	8	1.8	4	1	-	3
Dragalina, Fundulea	7	2	14	3.1	4	3	1	6
Dorobanțu	6	1	6	1.3	-	1	3	2
Borcea, Budești, Curcani, Dor Mărunt, Mănăstirea, Ștefan Cel Mare	5	7	35	7.9	13	6	6	10
Belciugate, Sărulești	4	2	8	1.8	4	-	-	4
Ciocănești, Cuza Vodă, Dâlga, Independența, Jegălia, Mitreni, Ulmeni	3	8	24	5.5	2	5	11	6
Alexandru Odobescu, Chiselet, Ciocănești, Dichiseni, Dragoș Vodă, Rasa, Răzvani, Roseți, Siliștea, Unirea, Vlad Tepeș	2	11	22	4.9	1	3	3	15
Rest of communes	1	13	13	2.9	6	1	1	5
Total	x	50	445	100.0	114	54	37	240
	x	X	x	100.0	25.6	12.2	8.3	53.9

Source: Processed according to: List of NGOs in Călărași [16].

Table 2. Structure of NGOs in the studied localities

Localities	Total NGO		of which, by activity			
			Community	Sports	Agricultural	Others
	No	%	No	No	No	No
Modelu	10	2.25	6	2	-	2
Grădiștea	10	2.25	3	2	3	2
Dragalina	7	1.6	3	2	1	1
Borcea	5	1.1	1	1	3	-
Total Calarasi county	445	100	114	54	37	240
	x	100	25.6	12.2	8.3	53.9

Source: Processed according to: List of NGOs in Călărași, <http://www.listainstitutii.ro/ong-uri-din-calarasi?act=1&pag=23#>[16].

The structure of NGOs in the studied localities by activity is presented in Table 2. Analyzing the answers to the question “Are there NGOs in the commune?” it is found that the answers are very different between the communes (significance threshold very significant), in the sense that those from

Modelu and Grădiştea communes know about the existence of NGOs in the community, those from Dragalina commune, about 50% know these aspects, while those from Borcea commune do not know or do not know about the existence of communities (Table 3).

Table 3. Evaluation of correlation between knowing the existence in the commune of some NGOs and residence commune of the respondents

Commune	MU	Are there NGOs in the commune ?			Total	
		Yes	No	I do not know	No	%
Modelu	No.	64	21	13	98	25.86
Grădiştea	No.	61	13	23	97	25.59
Dragalina	No.	42	22	23	87	22.96
Borcea	No.	22	43	32	97	25.59
Total	No.	189	99	91	379	100
	%	49.86	26.12	24.02	100	X
CHIINV (Chi theoretical)	≥	8.53	1.,61	12.57	16.79	22.46
CHIINV (Chi calculated)	16.04					***

Source: Own calculations.

As for the correlation between the age of the respondents and the answers to this question, it was found to be different, respectively, significant. The majority of respondents, 189, respectively, 49.86% answered affirmatively.

A number of 190 respondents answered No or I do not know, of which 34 are up to 30 years old and 35 of them are over 61 years old (Table 4).

Table 4. Evaluation of correlation between knowing about the existence in the commune of some NGOs and the respondents age

Age (years)	UM	Are there NGOs in the commune?			Total	
		Yes	No	I do not know	No	%
up to 30	No	32	17	17	66	17.41
between 31-40	No	61	18	27	106	27.9
between 41-50	No	52	28	23	103	27.17
between 51-60	No	27	14	11	52	13.72
over 60	No	17	22	13	52	13.72
Total	No	189	99	91	379	100
	%	49.86	26.12	24.02	100	X
CHIINV (Chi calculated)		15.07				*

Source: Own calculations.

Table 5. Evaluation of correlation between knowing the existence in the commune of NGOs and the level of respondents education

Education level	MU	Are there NGOs in the commune?			Total	
		Yes	No	I do not know	No.	%
Primary	No	3	1	6	10	2.65
Secondary	No	42	23	21	86	22.69
High school	No	93	59	44	196	51.71
Higher education	No	51	16	20	87	22.95
TOTAL	No	189	99	91	379	100
	%	49.86	26.12	24.02	100	X
CHIINV (Chi calculated)	16.04				**	

Source: Own calculations.

Analyzing these answers, we find out that there is no communication between the generations, an aspect that must be taken into account by the local authorities and especially by the community NGOs and initiated actions for a more effective communication between the young and the elderly. From the information presented in table 5, it is found that there is a correlation between the answers regarding the knowledge of the existence of NGOs in the commune and the level of training of the respondents, the degree of significance is considered as distinctly significant, in the sense that, between the answers there is a significant difference (Table 5).

We find out that more than half of the respondents with higher education answered affirmatively to this question; those with secondary and high school education answered in percentage of 47.87% and those with primary education 30%.

The existence of the community organized in the form of an NGO is evaluated differently, significantly, also by male respondents under 45.6% and female respondents in percentage of 56.4% (Table 6).

Knowing the existence of NGOs in the studied communities is different (very significant) and depending on the professional statute of the respondents (Table 7).

Table 6. Evaluation of correlation between knowing the existence in the commune of some NGOs and respondents gender

Gender	MU	Are there NGOs in the commune ?			Total	
		Yes	No	I do not know	No	%
Male	No	104	70	54	228	60.2
Female	No	85	29	37	151	39.8
TOTAL	No	189	99	91	379	100
	%	49.86	26.12	24.02	100	*
CHIINV (Chi theoretical)	$\geq$	3.21	4.59	5.97	9.19	13.79
CHIINV (Chi calculated)	6.47			*		

Source:Own calculations.

Table 7. Evaluation of correlation between knowing about the existence in the commune of some NGOs and the professional statute of the respondents

Occupation	MU	Are there NGOs in the commune ?			Total	
		Yes	No	I do not know	No	%
Farmer	No	47	18	16	81	21.37
Employee	No	97	52	40	189	49.87
Unemployed	No	7	2	8	17	4.48
No statute	No	31	10	12	53	13.98
Pensioner	No	7	17	15	39	10.30
TOTAL	No	189	99	91	379	100
	%	49.86	26.12	24.02	100	X
CHIINV (Chi theoretical)	$\geq$	13.41	15.97	18.29	23.19	29.57
CHIINV (Chi calculated)	31.07					***

Source:Own calculations.

Affirmative answers of approximately 50% are found among employees, farmers and people without status. Answers of No and I do not know are received by pensioners and employees, totally different categories in terms of their concerns (Table 7).

The answers of I do not know and I do not know correspond to a country-level study that found that few people can define or nominate

an NGO, even if many Romanians are members of a community association [5].

*Do you think that the existence of organized communities can influence the development of your commune?* It was the question that aimed to capture the inhabitants perception of the commune development possibilities through the influence of the activities of NGOs that would support their interests and lead to the cohesion of the commune inhabitants.

Table 8. Evaluation of correlation between NGOs existence and possibility of commune development

Commune	MU	Do you think that the existence of NGOs could led to the development of the commune?				Total	
		Very much	Much	Little	Not at all	No	%
Modelu	No	17	10	29	42	98	25.86
Grădiștea	No	26	35	30	6	97	25.59
Dragalina	No	73	14	0	0	87	22.96
Borcea	No	39	28	19	11	97	25.59
TOTAL	No	155	87	78	59	379	100
	%	40.89	22.95	20.58	15.58	100	x
CHIINV (Chi theoretical)	≥	12.19	14.61	16.23	21.64	27.83	
CHIINV (Chi calculated)		246.8					****

Source: Own calculations.

Analyzing the collected data, it appears that there is a significant differentiation (\*\*\*) of the degree of appreciation of the link between the development of the commune and the existence of NGOs, from a statistical point of view, is considered to be distinctly significant (Table 8).

It should be noted that the inhabitants of Modelu and Grădiștea communes, which have

the largest number of NGOs in the commune, among the 4 communes studied, least appreciate the development of the commune as a result of the existence and activity of NGOs, while 100% of Dragalina commune residents and 69% of Borcea commune residents greatly appreciate the positive influence of these organized communities on the development of their commune.

Table 9. Evaluation of correlation between the existence of NGOs and possibility of commune development, depending on the respondents age

Age (years0	MU	Do you believe that the existence of NGOs can lead to the commune development?				Total	
		Very much	Much	Little	Not at all	No	%
up to 30	No	21	19	13	13	66	17.41
between 31-40	No	62	24	14	6	106	27.9
between 41-50	No	41	26	21	15	103	27.17
between 51-60	No	18	12	12	10	52	13.72
over 60	No	13	6	18	15	52	13.72
TOTAL	No	155	87	78	59	379	100
	%	40.89	22.95	20.58	15.58	100	X
CHIINV (Chi theoretical)	≥	20.42	23.49	26.16	31.96	39.17	
CHIINV (Chi calculated)		43.36					***

Source: Own calculations.

Some of the respondents to the questionnaire stated that they are consulted by the local public authorities, that there is decision-making transparency and many of them actively participated in the implementation of local projects.

The statistical analysis of the answers, taking into account the age of the respondents, in relation to the correlation between the existence of NGOs and the development of the commune, shows that the perception is different, and the differences between the answers are evaluated as very significant (Table 9).

Thus, in the age category 31-40 years, 84 people answered very much and a lot (79.24%) and in the age category 41-50 years 67 respondents (65%) gave the same answer. These two age groups are the ones who appreciate the activity and impact of organized communities on local development. The least appreciative is the age segment over 60 (very much and much, 19 people, 38%). It should be noted that younger respondents (between 18 and 40 years old) have a different perception of how rural communities should be organized and carry out their activity in the rural area compared to the older ones. In addition, it is more difficult to communicate

effectively with older people who are more conservative about community organization in the form of NGOs, associating these forms of organization as belonging to political structures, which they do not consider beneficial for the social development of the community they belong to. Depending on the

level of training, the statistical distribution of the answers regarding the correlation between the existence of NGOs and the development of the commune, differences between the answers are recorded, being considered very significant from a statistical point of view. (Table 10).

Table 10. Evaluation of correlation between the existence of NGOs and the possibility of commune development, depending on the respondents education level

Education level	MU	Do you think that the existence of NGOs can lead to the commune development ?				Total	
		Very much	Much	Little	Not at all	No	%
Primary	No	3	2	4	1	10	2.65
Secondary	No	20	27	19	20	86	22.69
High school	No	81	43	39	33	196	51.71
Higher education	No	51	15	16	5	87	22.95
TOTAL	No	155	87	78	59	379	100
	%	40.89	22.95	20.58	15.58	100	x
CHIINV (Chi theoretical)	≥	12.20	14.62	16.88	21.62	27.76	
CHIINV (Chi calculated)	35.59				***		

Source: Own calculations.

As the level of education increases, it is found that the assessments are much more favorable regarding the importance of the activity of non-governmental structures in the community, seen as an opportunity for the development of the commune. From the 242 favorable reviews 188, respectively, 77.68% belong to respondents with high school and higher education. These appreciations confirm the statement that “development does not begin with goods, but with the education,

organization and discipline of people”[2]. Analyzing the gender distribution, the difference is statistically significant. Those who most appreciate the importance of organized communities and their impact on rural development are men (60.1%), it being known, however, that the rural mentality, the rural family model is centered on male power, the woman being the one who takes care of the children and household (39.9%) (Table 11).

Table 11. Evaluation of correlation between the existence of NGOs and the possibility of commune development, depending on respondents gender

Gender	MU	Do you believe that the existence of NGOs can lead to the commune development?				Total	
		Very much	Much	Little	Not at all	No	%
Male	No	87	50	46	45	228	60.20
Female	No	68	37	32	14	151	39.80
Total	No	155	87	78	59	379	100
	%	40.89	22.95	20.58	15.58	100	x
CHIINV (Chi theoretical)	≥	4.59	6.15	7.76	11.28	16.18	
CHIINV (Chi calculated)	8.31			*			

Source: Own calculations.



Regarding how they perceive the transparency and involvement in the decision-making process of the organized communities that support their interests, there are significant differences between the responses. That is precisely why NGOs must take into account these differences and, through the activity carried out, devise a strategy to promote the effective and inclusive participation of all

residents, regardless of gender, age, education, ethnicity in the local decision-making process, to make him an integral part of the community.

The evaluation of the communities according to the professional status of the respondents is statistically very significant, the affirmative categories of very much and a lot being 62% to 69% (Table 12).

Table 12. Evaluation of correlation between the existence of NGOs and the possibility of commune development depending on professional statute of the respondents

Occupation	MU	Do you believe that the existence of NGOs can lead to the commune development?				Total	
		Very much	Much	Little	Not at all	No	%
Farmer	no	32	25	15	9	81	21.37
Employee	no	92	40	31	26	189	49.87
Unemployed	no	4	5	5	3	17	4.48
No statute	no	21	13	13	6	53	13.98
Pensioner	no	6	4	14	15	39	10.30
TOTAL	no	155	87	78	59	379	100
	%	40.89	22.95	20.58	15.58	100	x
CHIINV (Chi theoretical)	≥	20.42	23.48	26,24	31.88	39.18	
CHIINV (Chi calculated)	48.58					***	

Source: Own calculations.

The professional category that makes an exception from a very good appreciation of the correlation between the existence of NGOs in the commune and the development of the commune is that of pensioners who appreciate this link in proportion of 25.6%. Further studies could investigate these differences in more detail so that NGOs can offer specific solutions to inhabitants perception of the importance of civil society role in rural development.

## CONCLUSIONS

The evolution of civil society, at national and international level, it is the guarantee that the future will demonstrate the important role of these organizational structures both locally nationally and at the international level. Thus, the role of civil society in rural development will become more importantly, its organizations actively participating in everything that is undertaken at the local, national, regional and international level.

In this sense, from the discussions held with the representatives of the local public authority, to whom we brought to their attention the fact that a significant part of the rural population not only does not know about the existence of organized communities at the level of the commune of which they are a part, but they also do not know the meaning of the terms and, even more so, the activity of community NGOs, we noted that the aim is to establish partnerships for the elaboration of local strategies, the adaptation of policies to specific conditions and to support a sustainable development.

From the discussions we had with NGO representatives, we noticed that they started to be consulted by the public authorities when developing and adopting strategies for a balanced and sustainable development, under the conditions of adequate environment protection. In this context, the establishment of partnerships between civil society and local and national authorities aims to combat poverty, prevent conflicts and protect human rights.

Through the prism of the fact that citizens have the opportunity to express their points of view and their commitment to the economic and social development of the community in which they live, through civil society organizations, we highlight their important role in creating a European democratic model, as factor of change in the rural environment

It should be noted that the inhabitants of Modelu and Grădiștea communes, which have the largest number of NGOs in the commune, among the 4 communes studied, least appreciate the development of the commune as a result of the existence and activity of NGOs, while 100% of Dragalina commune residents and 69% of Borcea commune residents greatly appreciate the positive influence of these organized communities on the development of their commune.

Transparency and media coverage of the activity of these organizations is thus required, because, although they exist and function, their activity is not known at the local level. Through their participatory level, NGOs can support the development of human resources in rural area, through training and counseling actions to assist the unemployed workforce in order to reduce unemployment and exploit opportunities on the labor market. They can also carry out educational programs for children and young people from the rural area, by organizing public events, respectively, meetings, shows, concerts, conferences and symposia with cultural-educational themes.

In order to support young people in order to complete their studies, NGOs can involve parents in actions to combat school absence; they must be made responsible regarding the important role of education and culture in the formation of children.

NGOs can organize camps and creative centers for children and young people, on various themes, such as literature, theater, music, film, folk dances, ancestral customs. The NGOs that form partnerships in the rural area can ensure the access of members of rural communities to professional training courses, information seminars, counseling and dissemination of information of real interest

for the rural environment, employment services and mediation services.

At the same time, they can support the local public authorities in providing the necessary spaces for these activities. Long-term partnerships between NGOs and local public authorities can lead to the implementation of actions to stimulate entrepreneurial culture and sustainable development in rural areas and to the continuous promotion of equal opportunities for unoccupied social categories in rural areas, such as: young people, women or middle-aged people, offering skills applicable in personal, family businesses, enterprises and small farms.

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