

## EVALUATION OF NGOs WITH AGRICULTURAL PROFILE FROM LEGAL AND MANAGERIAL POINT OF VIEW. CASE STUDY

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### **Abstract**

*The members of an associative structure contribute to its success, an aspect that must be taken into account from the very beginning of the establishment procedure, by co-opting the right persons, those creative, entrepreneurial persons with similar ideas, interests and needs, who see the association as an opportunity to do things better. The purpose of this paper is to analyze and interpret the perception of members of agricultural NGOs in Călărași county regarding the conduct of activities in the legal and managerial spheres, by surveying a number of 95 associated members coming from 21 agricultural associations in Călărași county, correlated with the influence of short and medium-term results and activities carried out on the members of these associative structures. In forming the research sample, the condition was established that the associative structure to be active, an aspect verified by submitting the balance sheet for the year 2023 and subsequently confirmed by telephone by representatives of these structures, when setting up a meeting to apply the questionnaire. In the analysis and interpretation of the information collected on the basis of the questionnaire, the theoretical  $\chi^2$  test was used. Developing entrepreneurial culture, by facilitating access of the population in the rural communities to vocational training courses, information seminars, counseling and dissemination of information of real interest for the rural area, employment services, through viable partnerships between profile NGOs and local decision-makers can be a solution for the sustainable development of rural areas*

**Key words:** questionnaire, survey, legal, managerial, NGO, perspectives

### **INTRODUCTION**

At the European level, including in Romania, non-governmental organizations - NGOs have registered an evolution and recognition in recent years, through their involvement in rural development, through participation in the development of local strategies, through intervention with decision-makers and state institutions to defend the rights and interests of the groups of citizens they represent [14, 16].

The low participation and involvement of citizens in the socio-political life of their community is based on an old, undemocratic concept, which considers it is the obligation of the state to do everything for the development of the rural community [1,5]. That is why, emphasis must be placed on cooperation between public authorities, the private sector and NGOs, in a public-private partnership that proposes, develops and implements projects aimed at local

development from an economic, social and cultural perspective [2, 6, 11].

The association expresses the relationships that are established between different entrepreneurs in the same field of activity in order to carry out a common, long-term action, to achieve a common goal, whatever it may be. This is the concrete form of manifestation of cooperation in a horizontal plane, and the relationship between cooperation and association is the relationship from part to whole. [3, 4, 18]. Beyond the advantages offered by belonging to an associative form, in Romania, it is necessary to overcome some barriers that stand in the way of the development of associative forms. These barriers relate to the existence, at the level of cooperatives, of members with their own behavioral traits, who have a certain level of education and professional training and who give up their individual beliefs with difficulty in order to think collectively and in the interest of all members [8,10,11].

Beyond these functional and social barriers, association and cooperation are modern forms of organizing the means of production and marketing, which can bring Romanian agriculture to the same level as European agriculture, and can help agricultural producers to meet the competitive demands of the market.

The members of an associative form must have common objectives and attitudes oriented towards tolerance, entrepreneurial spirit, generosity, the desire to know as much as possible and to be open to technology and the implementation of new, modern techniques for obtaining agricultural products. Unlike other fields of activity, in the agricultural sector, the need for association is much greater, given the specifics of the activity, but also the multiple relationships that farmers establish upstream and downstream of agriculture. Their union in association forms helps them to have greater negotiating power in the relationships they establish with suppliers, buyers or authorities responsible for this field [4, 9].

In the near future, taking into account the remarkable evolution at the international level, civil society in our country will also have a much more important role than at present in rural development, but, although many organizations in this sphere actively participate in actions taken at the local, national and even international levels, their activity is not promoted properly [7, 18].

The purpose of this paper is to analyze and interpret the perception of members of agricultural NGOs in Călărași county regarding the conduct of activities in the legal and managerial spheres.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

A number of 95 associated members from 21 agricultural associations in Călărași county have been interviewed regarding the influence of short and medium-term results and activities carried out by the members of these associative structures.

The survey was based on a questionnaire where the questions for members of agricultural associations were structured by two levels,

respectively, 2 filter questions and 6 grid-type questions, with 3 pre-established answers, respectively: *total agreement*, *partial agreement*, *disagreement*.

The filter questions aimed at classifying the respondent in an age category and classifying his/her farm in a certain size range, taking into account the fact that the members of these structures are persons who carry out activities in the agricultural field. The age groups were structured in five stages, starting with the group up to 35 years old, up to the group over 65 years old. The size of the respondent's farm was included in five stages: starting with < 10 ha, up to > 200 ha.

The associative structures were evaluated statistically and quantitatively, through the lens of a set of specific conditions for achieving the results obtained in the short and medium term, respectively, through the lens of the activities carried out in legal, managerial terms.

In forming the research sample, the condition was established that the associative structure be active, an aspect verified by submitting the balance sheet for the year 2023 and subsequently confirmed by telephone by the representatives of these structures, when setting up a meeting to apply the questionnaire.

The study included 21 agricultural associations, of which one association also obtained a notice of recognition of the quality of producer group.

For the selection of associations, we consulted the database of the Călărași County Council, based on which reporting is made to the MARD regarding professional/employer/union associative structures in agriculture, which are registered at the town halls, as well as the database of the Agricultural Directorate and the County Directorate of Statistics in Călărași, for the associations established under Ordinance 26/2000 [12,13]. It should be noted that the associations subject to the study have a number of members ranging between 21 and 119 associates.

In the analysis and interpretation of the information collected on the basis of the questionnaire, the theoretical Chi, Hi or  $\chi^2$  test was used, theoretically, a concordance test

applied to statistical distributions for which we can calculate the cumulative distribution function [15].

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The associations are legal entities without patrimonial purpose that operate in different sectors of agriculture, as follows: three of the associations have as their object of activity "Auxiliary activities for animal husbandry", according to CAEN 0162, which includes animal husbandry activities, as well as auxiliary services related to the performance of this activity; 6 associations have as their object of activity the defense of the economic and commercial interests of cereal producers in relation to suppliers of raw materials and materials, as well as potential clients; 2 associations promote the activities of their members, who mainly deal with beekeeping, in relation to the state and the input market and the sale of bee products; 10 associations identify sales markets for agricultural products, develop and propose legislative projects, under the terms of the law; facilitate meetings between market partners, thus promoting collaboration with organizations and institutions in the territory

Following the processing of the questionnaire applied to representatives of agricultural associations in Călărași county, from the information presented in Table 1, a number of 95 people answered the questions. By age category, the share is held by the 36-45 age group, respectively, 28.4% of the total, followed by the 45-55 age group, with a percentage of 26.3%

Table 1. The structure and share of respondents according to age

Age group	No of respondents	%
< 35 years old	22	23.2
36-45 years old	27	28.4
45-55 years old	25	26.3
56-65 years old	14	14.7
>65 years old	7	7.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Questionnaire regarding the evaluation of agricultural associative structures, in Călărași county [17].

An important percentage is also the respondents under 35 years of age, 23.2%, a positive aspect, which signifies the fact that young people from rural areas are involved in the activities of associative structures, in the conditions in which they demonstrate and support that the employed population from rural areas has a tendency to age. The age category over 56 years, stratified into 2 groups, records a cumulative percentage of 22.1%.

Following the processing of the questionnaire applied to the representatives of agricultural associations in Călărași county, from the information presented in Table 1, a number of 95 persons answered the questions. By age category, the share is held by the age group 36-45 years, respectively, 28.4% of the total, followed by the group 45-55 years, with a percentage of 26.3%.

From Table 2, it results that 52.6% of respondents who are part of agricultural associations own farms with sizes below 50 ha, respectively, 20% own farms smaller than 10 ha and 32.6% belong to the 10.1-50 ha category; 25.3% own farms in the 50.1-100 ha category and 17.9% farms between 100.1-200 ha; over 200 ha, they occupy a percentage of 4.25%.

Table 2. The structure of the respondents according to the size of the farm

Size of farm	MU	Total	
		No.	%
< 10 ha	No	19	20.0
	%	100	X
10.1 -50 ha	No	31	32.6
	%	100	x
50.1 ha-100 ha	No	24	25.3
	%	100	x
100.1 ha -200 ha	No	17	17.9
	%	100	x
>200 ha	No	4	4.2
	%	100	x
Total	No	95	100.0

Source: Questionnaire regarding the evaluation of agricultural associative structures, in Călărași county [17].

From the data presented in Table 3, there is an insignificant correlation between the age of the respondents and the size of the farm managed by them. A percentage of 23.2% are under 35 years old, and 11 of them are administrators of farms with areas between

50.1 and 200 ha, an encouraging aspect in terms of comparison with national statistics, according to which the agricultural population is aging. Among those aged between 36-45 years old, 37% own farms with an area of over 50 ha. Farms with an area between 10.1-50 ha are owned by 64% of respondents in the age group 46-55 years old. Those who have farms larger than 200 ha are distributed equally on all categories of age groups.

As it can be seen from the information presented in Table 4, of those who partially agree to the way in which the legal procedures for the functioning and development of the association are applied, most are in the age groups under 35, 46-55 and 56-55; of those who disagree to the mentioned item, over half are under 45.

The  $\chi^2$  test, with a value of 32.19 for the calculated Chi, which falls between the values of 28.19 and 35.82 of the theoretical Chi, shows a distinctly significant link between age and dissatisfaction with the way in which the legal procedures for the functioning and development within the associative structure are applied, knowing that young persons have a different perception of the way in which an organization is organized and managed, compared to the elderly, who find it harder to accept change and innovation in their activity. Regarding the condition regarding the way the activity is carried out within the association and the size of the respondents' farm, Table 5 shows that: most of the respondents express partial agreement with this item and are part of the categories of those with less than 200 ha; the majority of those with total agreement are respondents whose farms that cover an area between 10.1-50 ha, respectively, between 50.1-100 ha, namely 21 respondents out of the 33; regarding the dissatisfied ones, we can state that their distribution is weighted across all categories of farms; the connection through the  $\chi^2$  test between the two variables, through the Chi value calculated at 24.23, is significant, certifying that the size of the farm has an influence on the perception of how the daily activity is carried out within the cooperative/producer group.

From Table 6, regarding the active involvement of members in the association,

analyzed in terms of the respondents' age, the following is noted: the majority of respondents who express partial agreement are 45.26% of the total, followed by those who disagree with the stated item, with a percentage of 29.47%, and by those who fully appreciate the involvement of members in the association with 25.27%; of those who expressed partial agreement, most are part of the group up to 55 years old; Regarding those who express total disagreement regarding this item, the distribution has the same variations, over 50% of those who expressed disagreement being part of the categories up to 45 years old, those who truly want the life of the association to be active, to be visible in the community space and for their voice to be heard when measures are proposed to relaunch and develop the rural space: the analysis made with the chi-square test, through the calculated Chi value of 29.23, highlighted that there is a distinctly significant connection between age and the perception of the active involvement of members in the activity of the association.

Regarding the condition on the active involvement of the organization's members in its life and the correlation with the size of the respondents' farms, from Table 7. it is found that: the respondents who express partial agreement belong to the categories 10.1 to 50 ha, respectively, 14 respondents, the category under 10 ha – 10 respondents and the categories 51-100 ha, respectively, 101-200 ha, 9 respondents each, with a cumulative percentage of about 45% of the total responses; the majority of those with full agreement are the respondents who have their farms on an area between 10.1-50 ha, equal to the number of those with farms of 50.1-100 ha, 7 respondents from each category, totaling a percentage of over 50% of the total of those who expressed full agreement with this item; As for those who express total disagreement with this item, the majority are from the categories of up to 200 ha, with a weighted distribution by farm category; the connection through the  $\chi^2$  test between the two variables is significant, with the calculated Chi value of 25.34, certifying that the size of the farm has an influence on the perception of how the

association members are involved in its activity, respectively, those who have larger farms are also the ones who establish themselves as leaders and try to impose their point of view.

From Table 8, regarding the functional nature of conflict and communication management within the association, analyzed in terms of the respondents' age, the following is noted: the majority of respondents, who express partial agreement, are 51.58% of the total, followed by those who appreciate fully functional conflict and communication management within the organization with 26.32% of the total respondents; those who disagree with the stated item, have a percentage of 22.10%; of those who express partial agreement, most are part of the 36-45 age group, followed by the 46-55 age group and those under 35; those who express total disagreement regarding this item, the groups between 36-45 and under 35 years old stand out, representing 66.67% of the respondents who appreciated this item in this way; The analysis performed with the hi-square test revealed that there is no significant connection between age and the perception of the functionality of conflict management and communication in the association activity.

Regarding the condition on the functionality of conflict management and communication within the association and the correlation with the size of the respondents' farm, from table 9 it is found that: the respondents who express partial agreement with this item are distributed by age groups, most of them belonging to the categories 10.1 to 50 ha, respectively, 17 respondents, the category under 10 ha and 50.1-100 ha having an equal number of such appreciations and in the category 100.1-200 ha, a number of 11 respondents; the majority of those with total agreement are the respondents who have the farm on an area between 10.1-50 ha, and 50.1-100 ha, totaling a percentage of 60% of those who made appreciation in this way; Regarding those who express total disagreement with this item, the distribution is weighted by farm categories, with the highest percentage being recorded in the farm categories between 10.1-50 ha, respectively, in the 50.1-100 ha and

under 10 ha category; the connection through the  $\chi^2$  test between the two variables is significant, the calculated Chi value of 25.11 certifying that the size of the farm has an influence on the perception of how conflict management and communication within the association they belong to is functional.

From Table 10, it is found that most respondents are from the category of those who express partial agreement on the way in which activities are carried out that lead to group cohesion within the association; those who express total agreement with the mentioned item represent only 16.8%, in one age category, with no such appreciations being recorded; the majority of those who express disagreement are respondents from the age categories 36-55 years, to which are added the extremes, respectively, the category under 35 years old but also those from the category of pensioners, over 65 years old, the latter category exceeding half of the number of respondents in this category.

The  $\chi^2$  test, through the calculated Chi value of 32.12, which falls between the theoretical Chi values of 28.19 and 35.82, shows a distinctly significant link between age and perception regarding the way in which activities are organized that lead to the cohesion of members within the associative structure.

Regarding the condition on the way in which activities leading to group cohesion are organized within the cooperative/producer group and the correlation with the size of the respondents farms, from Table 11, it is found that: most of those who express partial agreement are part of the categories of over 50.1 ha, compared to the number of respondents in these categories, noting that they have decision-making power within the organization, with a percentage of approximately 50% among respondents with this option; the majority of those with total agreement are respondents who have farms on an area between 10.1-50 ha, which leads to the conclusion that they are also those who organize and participate in such actions, totaling 50% of the appreciations with this qualification for this item; regarding those who express total disagreement with this item,

we can state that the majority fall into the categories with farms of up to 10 ha, 50.1-100 ha and 101.1-200 ha; the connection through the  $\chi^2$  test between the two variables is distinctly significant, the calculated Chi value of 29.71 certifying that the size of the farm has an influence on the perception regarding the organization of group cohesion activities within the association. The quantitative interpretation of the responses included reporting the activities and results on a scale of values that synthesized the responses on 3 levels: disagreement, total agreement and partial agreement.

Thus, the activities were grouped into two levels - legal and managerial, as presented in Table 12. We find that most of the responses **partially agree**, with percentages ranging between 41.05% and 51.58%. **Total agreement** is expressed in percentages

ranging between 16.8% and 34.74% and **disagreement** with the mentioned items is expressed in percentages ranging between 22.10% and 40% of the respondents.

As shown in Table 13, the short-term results, correlated with the specific activities, were defined in 3 categories, which concerned the legal procedures for establishment and development, the functionality of communication and conflict management, and the cohesion of the group. We note that most of the responses fall into the scale of **partial agreement** values, with percentages ranging between 41.05 and 55.8%, while the **total agreement** responses have a very large variation, from 11.6% to 34.74%. The **disagreement** responses were given by respondents ranging between 22.10% and 40%.

Table 3. Analysis of the correlation between the respondents age who are part of the associations and the size of the managed farm

Age	MU	Size of farm (ha)					Total	
		< 10	10.1 -50	50.1 -100	100.1 - 200	>200	No.	%
< 35 years old	No.	3	8	7	3	1	22	23.2
36-45 years old	No.	8	9	6	4	X	27	28.4
46-55 years old	No.	4	12	5	3	1	25	26.3
56-65 years old	No.	2	2	2	7	1	14	14.7
>65 years old	No.	2	X	4	x	1	7	7.4
Total	No.	19	31	24	17	4	95	100
	%	20.0	32.6	25.3	17.9	4.2	100	X
Indicators	Test $\chi^2$	Significance threshold						
	$\leq$	0.2	0.1	0.05	0.01	0.001		
Chi theoretical	$\geq$	21.24*	22.52	25.6.3	31.10	38.19	N	
Chi calculated	21.52							

Source: Questionnaire regarding the evaluation of agricultural associative structures, in Călărași county [17].

Table 4. Analysis of the correlation between the age of the respondents and the perception of the way in which the legal procedures of operation and development are applied within the association

Age	MU	The application of legal procedures of functionality and development is made without difficulties			Total	
		Disagreement	Partial agreement	Total agreement	no	%
< 35 years old	No	7	11	4	22	23.2
36-45 years old	No	8	7	12	27	28.4
46-55 years old	No	3	10	12	25	26.3
56-65 years old	No	2	9	3	14	14.7
>65 years old	No	3	2	2	7	7.4
Total	No	23	39	33	95	100
	%	24.21	41.05	34.74	100	X
Indicators	Test $\chi^2$	Significance threshold				
	$\leq$	0.1	0.05	0.01	0.001	
Chi theoretical	$\geq$	15.18	23.11	28.19	35.82	**
Chi calculated	32.19					

Source: Questionnaire regarding the evaluation of agricultural associative structures, in Călărași county [17].

Table 5. Analysis of the correlation between the size of the respondents' farm and the perception of the way in which the legal procedures for operation and development are applied within the association

Mărimea exploatației	UM	The application of legal procedures of functionality and development is made without difficulties			Total	
		Disagreement	Partial agreement	Total agreement	No	%
< 10 ha	no	6	8	5	19	20.0
10,1 -50 ha	no	4	14	13	31	32.6
50.1 ha-100 ha	no	5	11	8	24	25.3
100.1 ha -200 ha	no	5	6	6	17	17.9
>200 ha	no	3	X	1	4	4.2
Total	no	23	39	33	95	100
	%	24.21	41.05	34.74	100	X
Indicators	Test $\chi^2$	Significance threshold				
	$\leq$	0.1	0.05	0.01	0.001	
Chi theoretical	$\geq$	18.16	23.01	27.24	33.17	*
Chi calculated	24.23					

Source: Questionnaire regarding the evaluation of agricultural associative structures, in Călărași county [17].

Table 6. Analysis of the correlation between the respondents age and the perception of the active involvement of members in the life of the association

Age	MU	the members active involvement in the life of association is found out			Total	
		Disagreement	Partial agreement	Total agreement	no	%
< 35 years old	No	9	11	2	22	23.2
36-45 years old	No	8	13	6	27	28.4
46-55 years old	No	6	11	8	25	26.3
56-65 years old	No	2	6	6	14	14.7
>65 years old	No	3	2	2	7	7.4
Total	No	28	43	24	95	100
	%	29.47	45.26	25.27	100	X
Indicators	Test $\chi^2$	Significance threshold				
	$\leq$	0.1	0.05	0.01	0.001	
Chi theoretical	$\geq$	15.18	23.11	28.19	35.82	**
Chi calculated	29.23					

Source: Questionnaire regarding the evaluation of agricultural associative structures, in Călărași county [17].

Table 7. Analysis of the correlation between the size of the respondents' farm and the perception of how the members of the association are involved in its life

Size of farm	MU	The members active involvement in the life of association is found out			Total	
		Disagreement	Partial agreement	Total agreement	No	%
< 10 ha	no	6	10	3	19	20.0
10.1 -50 ha	no	10	14	7	31	32.6
50.1 ha-100 ha	no	8	9	7	24	25.3
100.1 ha -200 ha	no	4	9	4	17	17.9
>200 ha	no	x	1	3	4	4.2
Total	no	28	43	24	95	100
	%	29.47	45.26	25.27	100	X
Indicators	Test $\chi^2$	Significance threshold				
	$\leq$	0.1	0.05	0.01	0.001	
Chi theoretical	$\geq$	18.16	23.01	27.24	33.17	*
Chi calculated	25.34					

Source: Questionnaire regarding the evaluation of agricultural associative structures, in Călărași county [17].

Table 8. Analysis of the correlation between the age of the respondents and the perception of the functionality of conflict management and communication

Age	MU	Conflict and communication management is functional			Total	
		Disagreement	Partial agreement	Total agreement	No	%
< 35 years old	No	7	12	3	22	23.2
36-45 years old	No	7	14	6	27	28.4
46-55 years old	No	4	13	8	25	26.3
56-65 years old	No	2	6	6	14	14.7
>65 years old	No	1	4	2	7	7.4
Total	No	21	49	25	95	100
	%	22.10	51.58	26.32	100	X
Indicators	Test $\chi^2$	Significance threshold				
	$\leq$	0.1	0.05	0.01	0.001	
Chi theoretical	$\geq$	15.18	23.11	28.19	35.82	N
Chi calculated	15.72					

Source: Questionnaire regarding the evaluation of agricultural associative structures, in Călărași county [17].

Table 9. Analysis of the correlation between the size of the respondents' farm and the perception of the functionality of conflict management and communication

Size of farm	MU	Conflict and communication management is functional			Total	
		Disagreement	Partial agreement	Total agreement	no	%
< 10 ha	no	6	10	3	19	20.0
10.1 -50 ha	No	7	17	7	31	32.6
50.1 ha-100 ha	No	6	10	8	24	25.3
100.1 ha -200 ha	No	2	11	4	17	17.9
>200 ha	No	X	1	3	4	4.2
Total	No	21	49	25	95	100
	%	22.10	51.58	26.32	100	X
Indicators	Test $\chi^2$	Significance threshold				
	$\leq$	0.1	0.05	0.01	0.001	
Chi theoretical	$\geq$	18.16	23.01	27.24	33.17	*
Chi calculated	25.11					

Source: Questionnaire regarding the evaluation of agricultural associative structures, in Călărași county [17].

Table 10. Analysis of the correlation between the age of the respondents and the perception of the way in which activities are organized that lead to group cohesion within the association

Age	MU	Activities that lead to group cohesion are carried out			Total	
		Disagreement	Partial agreement	Total agreement	No	%
< 35 years old	No	7	11	4	22	23.2
36-45 years old	No	14	10	3	27	28.4
46-55 years old	No	11	11	3	25	26.3
56-65 years old	No	2	6	6	14	14.7
>65 years old	No	4	3	X	7	7.4
Total	No	38	41	16	95	100
	%	40.0	43.2	16.8	100	X
Indicators	Test $\chi^2$	Significance threshold				
	$\leq$	0.1	0.05	0.01	0.001	
Chi theoretical	$\geq$	15.18	23.11	28.19	35.82	**
Chi calculated	32.12					

Source: Questionnaire regarding the evaluation of agricultural associative structures, in Călărași county [17].



Table 11. Analysis of the correlation between the size of the respondents' farm and the perception of the way in which the activities are organized that lead to the cohesion of the group within the association

Size of farm	MU	Activities that lead to group cohesion are carried out			Total	
		Disagreement	Partial agreement	Total agreement	No	%
< 10 ha	no	10	7	2	19	20.0
10.1 -50 ha	no	3	20	8	31	32.6
50.1 ha-100 ha	no	13	11	X	24	25.3
100.1 ha -200 ha	no	11	2	4	17	17.9
>200 ha	no	1	1	2	4	4.2
Total	no	38	41	16	95	100
	%	40.0	43.2	16.8	100	X
Indicators	Test $\chi^2$	Significance threshold				
	$\leq$	0.1	0.05	0.01	0.001	
Chi theoretical	$\geq$	18.16	23.01	27.24	33.17	**
Chi calculated	29.71					

Source: Questionnaire regarding the evaluation of agricultural associative structures, in Călărași county [17].

Table 12. Evaluation of the activities and aspects pursued, correlated with the scale of values, within the association

CODE	Activities	Aspects pursued	Value scale		
			Disagreement	Partial agreement	Total agreement
<b>AJ</b>	<b>Legal activities</b>	-aspects related to application of legal procedures of functionality and development	24.21	41.05	34.74
<b>AM</b>	<b>Managerial activities</b>	- members active involvement in organization life	29.47	45.26	25.27
		- functionality of conflict and communication management	22.10	51.58	26.32
		-organization of some activities that lead to group cohesion and some activities of counseling and trainings for the members of the associative structure	40.0	43.2	16.8

Source: Own calculations based on the applied questionnaire [17].

Table 13. Evaluation of short-term results, correlated with the activities carried out within the association

CODE	Results	Condiții/Activități	Value scale		
			Disagreement	Partial agreement	Total agreement
<b>RTS1</b>	<b>The legal procedures of establishment and development are carried out without difficulties</b>	- information/debates and courses related to legislation topics	32.6	55.8	11.6
		-active involvement of initiative group and of the members with experience in the field.	29.47	45.26	25.27
		aspects related to application of legal procedures of functionality and development	24.21	41.05	34.74
<b>RTS2</b>	<b>Communication and conflict management are functional</b>	- elaboration of some procedures related to functionality conflict management and communication	22.10	51.58	26.32
		-sessions of counseling and training on communication with the team and management of conflict situations	32.6	55.8	11.6
<b>RTS3</b>	<b>The group is cohesive</b>	-organization of some activities that lead to group cohesion and of some activities of counseling and trainings for the members of the associative structure	40.0	43.2	16.8

Source: Own calculations based on the applied questionnaire [17].

Table 14. Evaluation of medium-term results, correlated with the activities carried out within the association

CODE	Results	Conditions/Activities	Value scale		
			Disagreement	Partial agreement	Total agreement
RTM1	<b>Day to day activity of the association is carried out without major problems</b>	- The legal procedures of functionality and development are correspondingly applied	24.21	41.05	34.74
		- functionality conflict management and communication	22.10	51.58	26.32
RTM2	<b>The members of the associative structure are actively involved in its life</b>	-organization of some activities that lead to group cohesion and of some activities of counseling and training for the members of the associative structure	40.0	43.2	16.8

Source: Own calculations based on the applied questionnaire [17].

Regarding the correlation of the medium-term results with the specific activities, the quantified responses from the 95 respondents were summarized in 2 categories, respectively, the way the activity is carried out within the association and the active involvement of the associated members in its life. As can be seen from Table 15, the responses of the majority of interviewees fall into the **partial agreement** category, with a distribution between 41.05% and 51.58%, the largest gap being recorded in the **total agreement** response option, in which the distribution is between 16.8% and 34.74%.

## CONCLUSIONS

In the case of associative structures, counseling aims to provide assistance at the establishment but also over time in different situations, such as: court processes, changes in statute and/or constitutive act, European projects. Most respondents mention that they faced with difficulties at the time of establishment and admit that they needed help to overcome them;

Respondents who participated in social activities, such as study visits, community activities, specialized conferences, fairs and exhibitions, usually held annually, appreciated that these activities helped the associative structure a lot in terms of improving relations between members.

When asked about development prospects, most respondents had well-defined objectives to achieve for the development of the organization, among which the most relevant are: accessing external financing for

investments in purchasing equipment and creating storage spaces, increasing the land area owned, facilitating the professional development of members, attracting new members and further supporting their interests in relation to local institutions.

Developing entrepreneurial culture, by facilitating access of the population in rural communities to vocational training courses, information seminars, counseling and dissemination of information of real interest for the rural area, employment services, through viable partnerships between profile NGOs and local decision-makers can be a solution for the sustainable development of rural areas and the promotion of equal opportunities for unoccupied social categories in rural areas, such as: youth, women or middle-aged persons. They can also contribute to the socio-economic relaunch and stabilization of rural areas by promoting agrarian structures integrated into market flows and economically efficient.

In this regard, from the discussions held with the representatives of the local public authority, to whom we informed the fact that a significant part of the rural population not only does not know about the existence of some organized communities at the level of the commune to which they belong, but also does not know the meaning of the terms and, even more so, the activity of community NGOs, we noted, at least in writing, the existence of partnerships for the purpose of developing and adapting local strategies to the specific conditions of rural communities, which support sustainable development.

From the discussions held with the representatives of NGOs, we noted that their consultative role in the community is beginning to be perceived by public authorities, who have begun to invite them to dialogue when strategies for balanced and sustainable development are being developed and adopted, who have understood that, through these organizations, citizens express their agreement and commitment to the economic and social development of their community.

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