

The role and importance of public relations at non-governmental organizations

Simona Duhaln, „Vasile Alecsandri” University of Bacau, Romania

Abstract

Phenomenon of globalization during the twentieth century, has increased the importance of nongovernmental organizations. Their development has gained to the whole world providing an important part of social, educational, cultural and welfare services that the community felt. Voluntary and non-profit activity which it carries led, implicitly, to increasing importance in public relations sector, compared with profit business.

Keywords

fundraising activities, communication, non-governmental organizations, persuasion, public relations

JEL Codes: M 31

For nongovernmental organizations it uses specific terminology: non-governmental organizations (NGOs), private voluntary organizations, nonprofit organizations, secondary associations (family, ethnic and nationality), voluntary associations, pressure groups. Non-governmental organizations are organizations from civil society who are proposing solutions for society's problems. They provide an important part of social, educational, cultural and welfare services that community felt as necessary in terms of development and its functionality. Thus, non-profit sector involved in solving critical problems for society respectively those not receiving sufficient attention from corporate for profit or institutions of government administration.

Specific features of non-governmental organizations

- **significant level of structure.** NGOs are institutionalized entities, have establishment, program work, full-time employees or employees with temporary work, plan their goals, objectives and the measurable goals by various efficiency indicators.
- **active in the civil society and private sector.** From an institutional perspective NGOs are separate entities from government, which means that they are not government agencies and not controlled by government, even if they receive government funding.
- **not generate income through work.** Unlike other organizations of private sector, NGOs do not aim at profit for owners or directors which means that additional revenue will be spent to carry out the organization. If, however, profit is being unavoidable it can not distribute to those who manage or directs the organization, but constitutes an additional source of launching new projects, initiatives, programs or activities that are complementary.
- **developing activities of self-treatment and economic self.** Non-profit organizations manage and control their own activities, which means that set their own procedures and independent of external control.
- **support voluntary - volunteering - filantropism activities.** A feature of the management organization is the voluntary participation of citizens in the declared mission and assumed of

Status and Civic Action Program. Terms like "charity" or "volunteer organizations" derives from the characteristics of non-profit organizations.

Despite or rather because their action field to sectors, they reflect the variety of issues and concerns of ordinary people more accurately than political parties and market, which not able to reflect reality, s any public authorities could not understand.

Types of organizations to build a civil society

Types	Modern or secular	Traditional based on religion or ethnicity
Groups based on affinity (social, recreational)	Sports Clubs Hobbies	Lodge Order
Civic associations	Self-help groups Associates for development of society Voluntary organizations Citizenship education groups Professional Organizations Unions	Religious charitable organizations Ethnic self-help society
Political associations	Pressure groups Groups of voters Citizen lobbies	Pressure groups based on religious or secular state Religious groups and ethnic minority rights

Public relations within non-governmental organizations

Public relations serve to establish and maintain a climate conducive to communication, understanding and cooperation between an organization and its public. Can I have different goals from persuading the public for an organization favor, to change organization attitudes towards public, to support the functioning of a society to promote the interests of a company. Public relations activities at non-governmental organizations differs from other sectors, in terms of persuasive components of at least five reasons:

- to communicate and transmit reliably messages relating to activities, initiatives, projects under the participatory citizenship, solidarity and altruistic;
- to create conditions for social adhesion which programs and action oriented to community and people;
- to capture attention and interest policy and administrative makers to promote programs to support ideas and projects that advocate;
- public relations activities are not subject to the existence of endogenous crisis by nonprofit organization but are caused by external factors objective in case content for the NGO campaigning in public;
- primary mission of public relations achieved for the benefit NGO is to encourage social participation around the ideal of sustained public without ignoring the other dimensions of organizational public relations (reputation, credibility, transparency, adherence).

As regards credibility and honesty of government organizations, the role of public relations gained importance. Regain credibility among the public and maintaining it in a climate of competition and sensitivity are some of the primary reasons that require public relations activities. Consequently, public relations can not be excluded from activities involving fund raising from outside the organization.

Public relations is the need for NGOs to maintain a close relationship with the public to achieve its objectives. Foundations and charities organizations use the campaign to raise funds and acquire their advanced methods of lobbying in collaboration with government institutions.

Regardless of the operating field, issue of promoting and maintaining social trust are major targets for non-governmental organizations and to achieve these goals will present various strategies for public relations.

The role of public relations is to target well-defined objectives for non-governmental organizations such as:

- develop communication channels between the organization and beneficiaries;
- to win public acceptance for the organization's mission;
- create and maintain a favorable climate for fund raising;
- to ensure and maintain public interest in the organization towards the mission;
- inform and motivate organizational staff involved (employees, volunteers, board members).

Even if we talk about non-profit, reputation, credibility and prestige of NGO win with similar efforts those made in a profit sector. Keyword this time is "communication", whether they resort to advertising, public relations or other media to communication.

Public relations tools at a nongovernmental organization may use are varied:

- press release. Press releases advantage organization that allows them to create positive publicity through the media. The only risk which have this press release is that the company d'ont have certainty that the subject appears in the press. Also shall appearing in news media be interpreted freely, which could distort the original meaning.
- stories. An organization can not write a story or an article for print media and can not do a story for television, but may invite journalists to carry out an exclusive story about the event that the company considers it extremely important. This tool is advantageous in that it is much easier to control.
- interviews and press conferences. Press conferences have an air of importance and credibility that used the media means to present information on the organization.
- creating events. Enables raising funds from various companies by engaging in such actions designed to create a positive image among the public.

With the increase in the magnitude of non-profit sector has also increased interest from the media to the activities of nongovernmental organizations. The number of articles in the press has grown considerably, and time for television or radio broadcasts dealing the subjects relating to projects, programs and initiatives by charitable nature.

Given the process of communication, public relations activities play an important role in the proper management of messages to be transmitted to the target audience. Since work by nongovernmental organizations aimed at fundraising, public relations specialist will be to streamline messages transmitted.

Nongovernmental organizations actions aimed at key issues for the community, such as health, education, environment, culture. How they are managed by public relations professionals must take into account the public's right to information, but also the right to privacy of those concerned with the problem in question.

Privacy policy and ethical principles in the communication / information

Public relations specialist must comply with confidentiality rules and principles of morality and for transmitting information in connection with work done by nongovernmental organizations such as:

- to support communication networks of nongovernmental organizations and their external environment, emphasizing transparency in the relationship with the media;
 - to protect privacy of those who benefit from services offered by nongovernmental organizations;
- provide concrete information from reliable sources and authorized.

National legal framework governing public relations:

Article 30 of the Romanian Constitution, "Freedom of expression", provides:

1. Freedom of expression of thoughts, opinions or beliefs and freedom of any creation, by words, writing, pictures, by sounds or other means of communication in public are inviolable.
2. Censorship of any kind is prohibited.
3. Press freedom and freedom involves setting up of publications.
4. No publication may be suppressed.
5. The law may impose mass media the obligation to make public their financing source.
6. Freedom of expression can not harm the dignity, honor, privacy of person and the right to own image.
7. Are prohibited defamation of the country and the nation, any instigation to a war of aggression, national hatred, racial, class or religious, incitement to discrimination, territorial separatism or public violence and obscene conduct contrary to morality.
8. Civil liability for information or creation made public returns is to the publisher or producer, the artistic performance, the owner of the copying facilities, radio or television, under the law. Press offenses are established by law.

Article 31 of the Romanian Constitution, "Right to information", provides:

1. Person's right to access any public information can not be restricted.
2. Public authorities, according to their competence, are obliged to provide correct information to citizens in public affairs and matters of personal interest.
3. Right to information should not be prejudicial to the protection of young or national security.
4. Mass media, public and private, are obliged to provide correct information to the public.
5. Public radio and television are autonomous. They must ensure social and political groups important exercise of the antenna right. Organization of these services and parliamentary control over their activities are regulated by organic law.

Concluzii

Public relations help create an environment conducive to combining the public interest by volunteering and philanthropic support coming from charitable organizations. For the nonprofit sector, public relations construct, maintain and ensure the functioning of raising resources to meet social objectives of the organization.

Regardless of how the act and differences between them, all nongovernmental organizations involved in fundraising, mobilizing volunteers and various supporters, organizing special events, have an active role in the media and administers a headquarters. Activities begin to differ greatly in terms of actions that NGOs operating in different areas are involved. These

areas ranging from human rights protection, children, environment, animals to spread the peace in the world.

References

1. Coman, C. (2006), *Relațiile publice. Principii și strategii*, Ed. Polirom, Iași
2. Teodorescu, Gh., *Relații publice sectoriale – organizații non-profit (suport de curs)*, Iași
3. www.cărtiaz.ro
4. www.cdep.ro
5. www.markmedia.ro
6. www.praward.ro
7. www.pr-romania.ro