

The Civic Bulletin is a non-periodical publication edited by NDI and meant to keep the contact with our civic partners and to help them communicate among each other. **The Civic Bulletin** will be edited whenever we have sufficient new information from you to share. So, if you'd like to see it more often, come and tell us what you've been doing and we'll pass your story to all the members of our small network.

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NDI is leaving, but we stay here

Year 2007 is a year that brings many news to Romania. Among others, the withdrawal of American assistance programs, so also of the NDI program in Romania. Don't be too sad, because things won't remain as such! With almost a year before closing out the NDI program in Romania, we realized its mission isn't yet accomplished and we can't leave the work started by this organization many years ago unfinished. This is how the idea of the Resource Center for Public Participation – CeRe – a Romanian organization, built on the experience of NDI's civic program, came

to life. CeRe will continue to assist NGOs, but will also assist public institutions.

The mission of the Center will be to support NGOs and public institutions in acquiring the principles and applying the methods of public participation.

For a while, CeRe will be supported by NDI, and the team remains the same (Oana, Ioana and Alina). We will keep you posted on the organization's evolution. Wish us good luck!



New partners in the NDI network

As you know from the last seminar, we have three more friends: Pro Democracy Association – Focsani chapter, National Association for Children And Adults with Autism – ANCAAR – Craiova chapter and Natura 2000 Coalition. ANCAAR Craiova, was established in 2003 by a group of mothers with autistic children. PDA Focsani is a regional center of PDA which recently got its legal statute, but has a lot of experience and most importantly the desire to do great things

in Focsani and in the region it coordinates. Natura 2000 is a coalition formed by several environment NGOS. You can learn more about their projects, the obstacles they have to overcome, but more importantly, the successes they are proud of, in this newsletter or directly from them. You can find their contact details on the last page of this bulletin. We wish to welcome them among us and to wish them lots of successes from now on!

About you...

A great success!

The restraining order passed the juridical commission of the Senate

In February, APoWeR's campaign for the introduction of the restraining order in the legislation on domestic violence reported a great success. The juridical commission of the Senate agreed with the arguments brought by the National Coalition of Non-Governmental Organizations Involved in Programs Against Violence to Women, part of which is APoWeR, and included provisions related to the

restraining order in the Penal Procedures Code. In addition, the Coalition is working on a larger project to modify and to add amendments related to the restraining order to the Law 217/2003 on fighting and prevention of domestic violence. The APoWeR members and the other organizations from the Coalition deserve all of our congratulations and we can't wait to hear about the debate in the Senate quorum on this initiative.

Congratulations for ARTI and for the Local Action Plan for Youth!

In the first issue of the civic bulletin we were writing about the youth with initiative from Craiova who were trying to persuade the local authorities to take into consideration "The Local Action Plan for Youth". Now, in the fifth issue of the bulletin, we can say: "Congratulations ARTI! You made it!". After a great deal of effort, ARTI can brag with this victory. Craiova City Hall approved the project put forward by ARTI and decided to allocate 600 million ROL for this plan (a set of public policies on youth that will be implemented through programs of NGOs with the financial support of the City Hall and the Local Council Craiova). The methodology part is final and in June

will take place the first project auction. And this is not all! ARTI managed to persuade the Local Council to allocate, starting July, a sum of money from the local budget on the Law 350/2005 (regarding the nonrefundable financing from public funds for general interest non-profit activities) for the NGOs from Craiova. After a meeting with representatives of NGOs from Craiova in the ONGTlink program (which turned into NGO Forum, due to a wide range of NGOs that participated), a common proposal was written to allocate this sum and for the adoption of a methodology for project auction, according to provisions of the 350 Law. The proposal was presented to the mayor and the Local Council, and, finally, adopted.

Public speech in Craiova

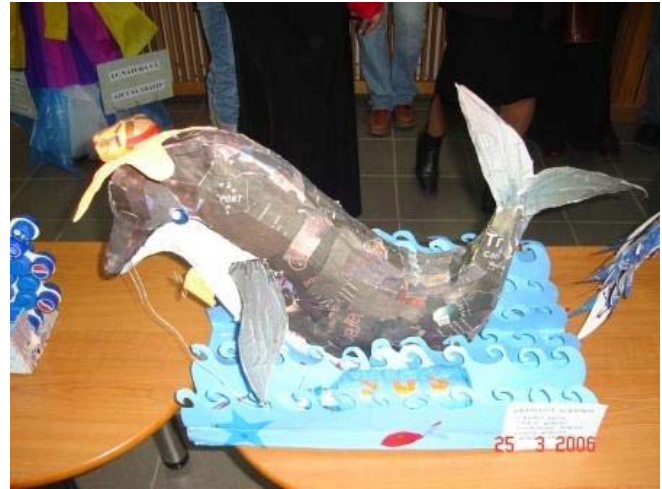
After Cristina Catana, from ARTI, was one of the most loyal participants in NDI's "Women's ToastMasters" Program and came every week to Bucharest to take part in our gatherings, this year she decided to take ToastMasters to Craiova. For those of you who are wondering what is "Women's ToastMasters", in short WTM, it is a series of weekly meetings where women of different ages, working fields or interests, gather to discover together the secrets behind public speech. Now, due to ARTI, women from Craiova have the chance to develop their abilities to speak in public. So here is what Cristina is telling us about the WTM

meetings in Craiova: "We are excited... besides the fact that many women come to WTM, the participants will take a stand in various cases of women in difficulty. This is how the idea of a project emerged, a project that will be implemented by WTM participants, and under the name of ARTI: a study that aims to identify the number of abortions done among young women between 14 and 18 years old over a period of three months. Based on this study, our participants, among which county councilors, will make a draft of local decision for a center for counseling and information for the young women and a center for the integration and support of young mothers."

Mare Nostrum speaking...

The campaign for selective waste collecting "A recycled material – a cleaner Navodari" has begun. The aim of this campaign is to raise awareness among the population related to the necessity of selective collecting and to involve them in this campaign. The project is due for this year and aims to involve over 10,000 persons in the campaign for selective collecting. Mare Nostrum, together with Navodari City Hall and TSP Ecoterm SA, distributed over 3,000 promotional materials and placed ecological recycle bins with messages that called for action. In this project of raising public awareness, Mare Nostrum, in partnership with Navodari City Hall, organized on March 25th a series of activities meant to celebrate the International Water Day. The event

included an exhibit of artworks made of recyclable materials (paper, plastic, glass, metal), artworks representing marine creatures. These were made by children who want to live in a cleaner Navodari. The best artworks received awards.



Kolping went to Parliament

On February 5th, Kolping Romania started "The week of internships in politics for young people". The aim of the project was to strengthen the cooperation between the political structures and the civil society. Eight members and volunteers of Kolping from Timisoara, Blaj, Adjud, Bacau, Brasov, Sacele and Targu Mures observed a week in the professional life of MPs from PNL, PC, PSD and UDMR. The eight were

able to observe the activities of the MPs in their offices and on the field, but it all depended on the MP they had to work with. Some of them complained that their MP didn't pay any attention to them and didn't show them anything from what they agreed initially. Others were luckier and appreciated very much the efforts made by the MP to involve and explain to them as much as possible.

The monitoring report was launched



In the second half of the year 2004, ApoWeR Timisoara began monitoring the local and county public administration with regards to domestic violence. After the monitoring process, APoWeR launched a report. The conclusions of this report are:

✘ The 217/2003 Law regarding prevention and fighting against domestic violence, after two years from its adoption, isn't applied by the public authorities in Timisoara and Timis County.

- ✘ In 2005 there was no initiative of the local or county councilors regarding domestic violence or for support for its victims
- ✘ Public service for social assistance of Timisoara City Hall doesn't take into consideration the needs of the community when elaborating the strategic plan
- ✘ Representatives of local public administration are not giving written replies to requests addressed by citizens according to 544/2001 Law regarding free access to information of public interest.

PDA Focsani's project proposal was approved

The Focsani chapter of Pro Democracy Association formed at the beginning of 2004, but was legally established in November 2005. Lacking the necessary funds to sustain certain projects, PDA Focsani focused on local activities that didn't require great financial resources. But, after gaining its legal statute, the first step in getting financing was a success. The project

proposal they put forward to the World Bank, "Developing small rural communities by civic involvement of citizens", whose aim is to increase the representation of the interests of the small rural communities in the decision making process by increasing competencies of village delegates, was approved by the financier. Congratulations and we are waiting to hear all about the results.

ARAS beneficiaries know all about advocacy

In the first issue of the civic newsletter we also said: "ARAS has an ambitious plan: to form a team of young people from among its beneficiaries and to train them on advocacy issues". We are very proud to see that your plans are coming to life. So here we go again and say that what was last year under "Plans

for the future" is this year under "Latest news". Indeed, ARAS did in March a training on "Advocacy" for its beneficiaries, who were happy to hear from NDI all about advocacy and how can they represent the HIV infected persons community in front of the authorities.

Training for environment NGOs

The member organizations of Coalition "Natura 2000", together with park administrators, participated in the training "Financial support and advocacy for protected areas". The training was organized by two NGOs, members in the Coalition, as part of the "Management and

promotion for protected areas" project. NDI delivered the training on advocacy issues for this seminar. Participants discussed various campaigns they can implement in their communities and started working on tangible action plans.

I'm a child, just like you!

The National Association for Children And Adults with Autism from Romania (ANCAAR) – Craiova chapter, organized on March 16th, 2006 a philanthropic event for autistic children from Craiova. In order to make this event happen, ANCAAR Craiova made partnerships with the County School Inspectorate and with twenty-two schools. The event was undoubtedly a success, ANCAAR managing to raise several tens of millions ROL, money that went to the ANCAAR day-care center. One of the strong points of this event were the posters and invitations, which had a great design. Congratulations for the ANCAAR team for the initiative and for such a great effort to make it all a reality!



"Behind the closed doors of your child's heart is a world he is waiting to share with you. You only have to give him the comfort and security he needs to trust and open the doors and let you step in."

Barbara Schatzler

ADCP project for the US Embassy has ended

ADCP's project, "Partners for Dialogue", financed by the US Embassy, was completed with the adoption of the Socio-Economic Development Strategy by the Calopar Local Council in April, this year. During this project, besides the activities you know from the fourth issue of the civic newsletter, ADCP organized four consultancy meetings with the Local Council for designing the annual action plan and the strategy for four years. The strategy, debated in these meetings

was adopted with a majority of votes in the Local Council. Also, ADCP project team put together in April 2006, based on the experience gained during the implementation of the project, a study entitled "*Designing the strategy for Calopar Local Council (2006-2010) – case study*". The study aims to be a model for other rural communities in Romania and also a starting point for implementing community development in Romanian rural environment.

From the training program or what else you learned about...

More and more strategic plans are on the way

After the training on "Strategic Planning", some of you asked for our help to complete the strategic plan and the marketing plan. So, we paid a two-day visit to our colleagues from APoWeR Timisoara and we discussed the guidelines for the strategic plan. The final plan is to be finished by APoWeR. The same happened with ARAS Constanta who just let us know they completed the strategic plan for January 1st, 2007 – December 31st, 2009. Manu is telling us how the planning took place: "At the planning meeting we invited to sit in two teenagers, beneficiaries of ARAS. We tried to adapt the strategy written by ARAS Bucharest to Constanta specific". Among those who can now be proud they completed their strategic plan is also ALIAS who, under the NDI guidance, thought and wrote the strategic plan for the next

years. PDA Focsani, although not present in our training and asked for our help in completing the marketing plan. After discussions on how to do it, PDA Focsani took the plan very seriously, put aside the paperwork and got out in the street to do a real stakeholder analysis. We also traveled to Focsani to do an one-day workshop for PDA Focsani and the PDA Chapters from the region it coordinates. The workshop was held on the topic: "Writing projects and grant proposals".



Another training, new ideas and, we hope, new funds



Another training provided by NDI took place, on Fundraising through alternative methods". Judging by the evaluation forms we have from you, it

was a successful training and you had a lot to learn from it. We hope you will put into practice the projects you designed during the seminar and we are waiting to hear all about the results they will bring. We were glad to see that some of you began writing requests for sponsorships and you started thinking seriously about the fundraising methods you will use in the future.

A new training is on its way

Those working in NGOs usually face problems when having to think in terms of marketing or public relations (PR), but we should all realize that an NGO's success lays in the NGO's power to "sell" and promote a product – the sold product being the ideas found in the organization's mission and the way the organization is fighting for these ideas – to donors,

volunteers, partners, community, authorities, etc. This means we have to use all the techniques we have to attract our "buyers" and to communicate what we want them to know about us. And we will tell you all there is to know about these techniques during our "PR Techniques for NGOs" seminar, which will take place at the end of June. See you then!

About CeRe...

CeRe is part of the Initiative Group for the Structural Funds

CeRe barely "opened its eyes", and it started its activities. The issue that drew our attention and made us start working immediately is related to structural funds and the inexistent dialogue between the respective authorities and civil society. Once we realized this, we understood the necessity of forming a coalition to make a solid point regarding this matter. And so we assisted the birth of the "Initiative Group for Structural Funds", made up of seven NGOs.

This way, many NGOs found out how important their involvement is in planning, implementing and evaluating the structural funds, and 130 organizations asked the authorities to involve them in the discussions on this topic. We were very pleased to see that not only NGOs, but also some ministries began to understand the necessity of a dialogue between civil society and the authorities. Although this is an important step, we won't stop here and we'll keep an eye on them.

Grant opportunities

S-a dat undă verde la MATRA

Matra is a major program run by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs. It has a wide range of components, and its aim is to support the process of social transformation in Central and Eastern Europe. The Matra Small Embassy Projects Programme, better known as Matra/KAP, is part of it. There are several fields that are of special interest for the MATRA program. Understanding that in these fields there were already implemented various initiatives, they consider that from the perspective of the NGOs and local authorities, some of them deserve more attention. These areas are: anti-corruption, fighting trafficking of human beings, sustainability of NGOs – the initiatives should be focused on developing the NGOs' capacity to: access funds (others than the ones from foreign donors), development of networks, collaborating with

governmental institutions, volunteers management, influencing the designing of public policies, initiatives related to gender unbalance that aim to a structural change in existent situations in the field of equal opportunities between women and men; domestic violence; women's representation in the political life; women's access on the labour market; culture as a tool of democracy and social change; human rights – giving special attention to monitoring the use of legislation and good practices in this field. Useful information on the application procedures is available at www.netherlandsemb.ro. The deadline for submitting the applications is June 16th. The approved projects will receive approx. Euro 9,000, the maximum sum for financing a project being Euro 15,000. The beneficiaries of this support must contribute financially and/or in-kind.

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