

EveryChild.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Of the Research

“Philanthropic behavior in the Republic of Moldova”

Project “Development of philanthropy culture and individual donations in the Republic of Moldova”

The study “**Philanthropic behaviour in the Republic of Moldova**” was performed by IMAS-INC between 22 October and 04 December 2010, within the project “Development of culture of philanthropy and individual donations in the Republic of Moldova”, supported by AED Moldova, within the Program for the civil society consolidation and change agenda, and implemented by EveryChild Moldova.

The objectives of the research were focused on describing attitudes and behaviours of the general public towards actions of philanthropy generally, and to individual donations, specifically. The research also highlighted forms of donations, most accepted by the population, the profile of institutions and persons, accepted as recipients of donations, opinion of citizens regarding NGOs activity, level of trust, and existing trends in our society, referring to forms of financial support of NGOs from local sources.

The research covered a population sample of 800 respondents, being representative for the adult population, and its maximum margin of error was 2,2%

The interviews were performed in the respondents’ homes, in 60 areas of 12 territorial-administrative units, not including Transnistria.

The structure of the research

The goal of the first module of questions was to study the general context, that is, to make a general picture of the situation, approaching elements of social capital and the population’s general mood. The second set of questions referred to informal associative practices, that is, to styles of relations within public or private environment, to social activism of the respondents. The following section covered aspects of profile and image of the associative sector, its functionality, as it is seen by the general public.

Questions referring to formal associative practices (membership in NGOs, voluntary activity) made another set of questions that flowed naturally into aspects related to the philanthropic behavior (estimation of ratio of donations, types of donations, motivations, preferences, level of information, range of attitudes, etc.). The last part of the study approached aspects related to the social involvement of companies.

Limitations of the study

In spite of the efforts made to offer a better analysis and planning tool, the study has a set of limitations.

Precision limitations: the margin of error is 3,5%, due to the population sample of 800 persons of 18 and above;

Complexity limitations: due to the use of a relatively small sample, of 800 respondents, a part of analyses that could produce extremely interesting and useful data for practitioners, was impossible to perform;

Methodology limitations: the study relies of the declarations of the respondents. It did not investigate real behaviours, observed among the respondents. In fact, the pressure of

offering a pleasing and desirable response to the interviewer can sometimes determine the response offered.

The results of the study should be also perceived, taking into consideration the demand-and-offer mechanism in the area of philanthropy that is similar to the one applied in economy.

The real situation of philanthropy is given in the context of interaction between demand and offer. The research largely reflects the level of information of respondents, with regard to philanthropy and social involvement. These two causes make the image outlined by the research data: It is unlikely that one makes a donation for someone who does not ask for it, and it is difficult to use or want a fundraising method that you do not know or you never heard of.

Uncovered areas

This study does not investigate direct social involvement of the business sector. Unfortunately, this component of the study misses out because of insufficient funds that have been available till present. We hope to be able to cover this need for information as soon as possible.

Utility and audiences

Although the study intends to represent a scientific research, its main role is practical: to assist those involved in the mobilization of private resources in the non-profit sector, within their efforts of planning, implementation, and evaluation.

Secondly, we expect the study to be used by:

- Leaders of NGOs, for the development and evaluation of policies concerning the sector, and for the development of strategic, financial, marketing, human resources plans within their own organizations. Representatives of financing institutions – whether private or public – can use it for the development of their own plans.
- Representatives of the business sector, involved into corporative social responsibility activities, public relations, etc.
- Decision-makers in political/administrative sector can use it for the development of policies on mechanisms of financial coverage of the non-governmental sector, fiscal policies, especially, fiscal facilities for donors.

MAIN CONCLUSIONS

General environment

The research has proposed to perform a study of philanthropic behaviour in a broader perspective. At the first stage, brief investigation of the general environment was performed, making a general picture of elements of social capital and the population's general mood.

Only one of five respondents believe that their peers are correct. 8 of 10 persons consider that those around them are trying to profit of them. The data describe a Moldovan society, marked by dissatisfaction of the quality of life, interpersonal and institutional mistrust.

Generally, people tend to consider that philanthropy, association, are favoured by a higher level of confidence of people.

The prevailing behaviour, though, insignificantly, is that of persuading – those who are trying to convince others to believe in what they believe (42%) have slightly inclined the balance in their favour, against the other 35%, who do not wish to influence others' opinions. This individual militarism is relatively uniformly distributed among representatives of the society, where standing out are persons with higher education, higher incomes, especially, those living in urban areas.

Confidence in institutions

Local and international NGOs are in the middle of the scale of confidence in institutions. However, in the case of international NGOs, a specification needs to be made – credibility ratio is almost equal to the level of mistrust that some respondents have for NGOs. This balance is not the same in the case of local NGOs: here, the ratio of mistrust is higher. Three areas of confidence can be distinguished: high (Church, Mass-media, Army, Local Public Authorities), medium (International NGOs, Local NGOs), and low (Government, Parliament, President's Office, Justice, Police, Syndicates, Political Parties).

Informal associative practices

The perceived level of social insecurity is rather high among citizens of the Republic of Moldova: isolation, loneliness affects almost two-thirds of the population; 52% feel insecure when being in public, while 43% say they feel the same even when they are in their own homes. These segments of the population fit best the category of the socially passive ones. It is the least probable that an "isolated" person has social initiative, has the desire to "go out" into the social area.

The preferred sociability framework most often embraces families' own households, friends, neighbours.

In their free time – considered to be the incipient stage of long-term associations – respondents prefer to set relations with their neighbours, friends, colleagues, or relatives; members of certain associations are the least considered in this sense.

Half of the respondents did not name any of the forms of social participation: the least represented are communication relations within a formal, institutional framework: 6% participated in NGO activities, 7% wrote petitions to certain institutions, 16% participated in meetings discussing local concerns, 21% appealed to the Mayoralty with various issues.

Being popular - image

The term of "non-governmental organization" cannot be considered common for the respondents of the study: over 80% of respondents cannot give a definition, do not know what an NGO is or what it does. Visibility of NGO activities is rather low – six out of 10 persons never heard of activities performed by any NGO; 80% cannot spontaneously invoke the name of any NGO, while for 38% names of NGO remain completely unknown, even after reading out to them a list of organizations in the area.

The image of the sector is highly segmented between those who have favourable opinions (about NGOs social usefulness, their contribution to saving human lives, etc.), those who

have negative attitude (related to the lack of information about their activities, lack of transparency, etc.), and those who do not state their opinion.

Perceptions referring to the functionality of NGOs in the public area are categorized as low efficiency and very low efficiency. The category of the least efficient was attributed to the anti-corruption activity, while the highest efficiency line was attributed to the support provided to socially vulnerable families (old persons, children, the poor, persons with disabilities, etc.);

Formal associative practices

Associative behaviour is extremely rare: only 4% of the respondents reported their membership in some organizations (NGOs) or made voluntary work within the previous 12 months.

Lack of visibility and contact with the area of NGOs activity is also confirmed by the situations indicated by those who haven't become members of a NGO by now: nobody asked them to become a member of NGO – 49%, they did not hear of any NGOs of this type – 38%.

Lack of confidence in NGOs seems to be a hindrance for a relatively reduced number of persons – only 13% quoted this as a drawback.

Philanthropy – values and economic significance

Almost three quarters (73%) of the adult population of the Republic of Moldova has made at least one donation within the last 12 months. The probability to find a donor is higher among: women, employed population, persons with higher incomes, of Moldovan ethnicity.

High percentage of donors registered among the entire sample can be misleading, if we do not take into account contextual relations: inundations in 2010 and media campaigns that followed them, the category of beneficiaries of donations (especially churches and beggars).

Respondents stated that within the recent 12 months they donated money to churches/monasteries (50% of the respondents), to beggars (45%), while 36% said that this year's inundations determined them to donate money to help the flood victims. It should be noted that donations for NGOs are ten times lower (4% of respondents), if we compare to people who donated for a church.

Specific for the Moldovan philanthropy is that the destination of donations– the needy people – includes unknown people in the street or those who knock at the door, and not an intermediating philanthropy organization that administrates donations.

The donors' preferences are clear – “I prefer to give money directly to a person, to see the person to whom I donate”; other forms, such as putting money into a special box, sending sms, buying products of charity services, phone calls, etc., have a very low ratio.

In most cases, donations were offered in cash (66%), food (31%), clothes or footwear (25%). The average amount offered by a donor within the recent 12 months was about 600 lei (about 2 Euro per month).

The attitudes of the population to donations can be categorized in three areas: situational inadequacy (unanimous refusal of the population to make donations, and contradictory internal nature of attitudes towards donations); delegation of responsibility (religious reasons, social solidarity, mistrust of NGOs, lack of resources); and symbolic use of the donation (to raise the image, expectation of a social reward).

Philanthropic behaviour cannot be fully achieved, without having a society, where individuals have high social capital: trust their peers, are tolerant, feel that they can change things around them, wish to assume certain risks to evolve, feel integrated, and not isolated within the society, trust institutions-in-charge, etc. Mentality, attitude, also change with time, especially, through education and healthy models of life. Apart from these dimensions, we should not leave out a very important one – the economical framework and incomes of the population.

Social involvement of companies

The vast majority (80%) consider that the business sector should have social involvement. Even though the philanthropic behaviour of companies is considered important by almost two-thirds of respondents (62%), it is the last in the line of criteria that define a good employer, through the prism of social involvement.

The importance of various sides of social involvement, as well as their relative order, remain the same in taking decisions for purchasing, whereas donation of a part of income shifts to the end of the scale in the list of criteria defining the purchase of a product.

It is important to note that correct information of consumers, activities related to the environment and acts of donation of part of income have the strongest impact on the image of a company.

More than half of the respondents (55%) expressed open attitude to paying more for a product or service, if part of its cost is targeted to a social cause, identified as important. This reveals that community marketing and the promotion of community causes by companies have excellent potential of functioning in the Republic of Moldova as well.