

The National Association of
Citizens Advice Bureaux
(NACAB)

NACAB in the Name of the Citizen!

Sustained Concerted Effort for Citizen Information and Participation

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1. NACAB. In a Nutshell

National Association of Citizens Advice Bureaux (NACAB):

= **nongovernmental, non profit organization**, founded to support and to direct the activities of the Citizens Advice Bureaux (CABs)

= **federative structure**: NACAB is made up of 38 NGOs that founded CABs and CAB branches in more than 60 localities in Romania, both in urban and rural environments.

= **service provider for the member organizations:**

- Representation in relation with public authorities
- Promotion of their activities
- Coordination of the CAB activities and training for the CAB personnel

2. Recent Success Stories

NACAB's main achievement – the development of the CABs' image as both partners for the communities where they activate, and as centers providing assistance (information and counseling services) to individual citizens → over 100 meetings and gatherings with the citizens, and the local authorities and other CSOs, in order to better address problems concerning the free access to information as a prerequisite for citizen engagement.

2011-2012- NACAB becomes a **vector of change** at national level:

- Raises awareness on the negative effects that the adoption of a Governmental Emergency Ordinance on the taxation of the NGO sector would entail for the CSOs
- Mobilizes over 300 national NGOs in asking the authorities to withdraw the act
- Succeeds in changing the ruling at a level acceptable for smaller NGOs

3. Challenges. Overcoming the Barriers

CSO-Public authorities relationship: cooperation potential at the local level, BUT neglect and even confrontation at the national one

-perseverance and collaboration between CSOs

Scarcity of resources for ensuring the sustainability of the CAB network -developing the fundraising capacity of the network,

-offering support to the member NGOs and to the CABs in consolidating their position in the communities where they activate and partnering in the delivery of particular projects

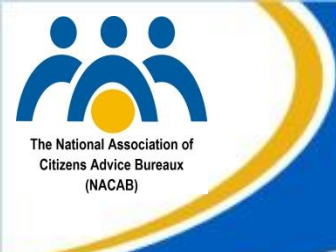
Lack of information on behalf of citizens as regards the role played by the CSOs and by the international institutions and bodies

-developing grass root initiatives meant to solve particular issues within communities engaging in information campaigns

4. The Way Ahead. Working in Networks

Networking = concerted effort for change at

- National level → advocating for the change of public policies directly affecting their constituency or their activity
 - facilitates the access to best practices existent within the members' home countries
- European level → by cooperating in: monitoring of European policies and identifying means to influence the public decision at the EU level (i.e. Funds), Citizen information (an emphasis on their rights in the European context), Citizen engagement at EU level
 - enables members and their constituency to attaining a ground level experience Europe wide



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