



**Lebanese Republic  
Ministry of Agriculture  
Lebanese Agriculture Research Institute  
LEBANON**

**Regional Workshop on  
“Community Based Organization  
legal Framework”**

**Mednine – Tunisia-  
28 – 30 May 2007**

**Report Prepared by**

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Eng. Hanaa Chehabeddine**



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**Regional Workshop on  
“Review of current local  
institution in charge of M & M III”**

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## Over view on the Quaa – Hermel Area

The Quaa – Hermel region is located at the north of the Bequaa Plain at an altitude of 656 m for Quaa and 734 m for Hermel region. This area is surrounded by Syria from the north, Baalbeck from the East and Akkar-Sir El Dunnieh on the west side.

The main river is Assi River or Orontes River. It rises in the great springs of Labweh region on the east side of the Bekaa valley has a 571 km and expands into the Lake of Homs in Syria and passing north of the modern Antakia in Turkey.

### 1- Natural resources

#### 1.1- Water

Quaa – Hermel is an arid region. The Quaa region receives less than 200 mm as annual rainfall and the Hermel region receives between 200 and 400 mm as annual rainfall. The main source of water is: private wells. The potable water is purchased water.

There is an on going project for a well at the eastern site of Chaat region that can irrigate almost the total area of Quaa - Hermel region and another project on Assi River, building a dam to provide all the district with water. These projects is conducted by the ministry of energy and water

#### 1.2- Agriculture

Fruit trees, (Apple and pear), vegetables, grapes, olives. The barley production is not economical because of its low production in Quaa region but at Hermel the cultivated area represent 1100 ha.

#### 1.3- Animal production

Mainly Goat and sheep are raised at a private farms. Farmers buy what they need to feed their animals and use also what they have of agriculture by products.

#### 1.4- Fish

The fresh water fish "Trout" flourishes best under the conditions of the Assi river basin. More than eight fisheries scatter around the river banks and supply most of the local market needs.

The importance of this industry is spelled by the fact that a cooperative is established to help in making the industry more economical. Unfortunately, every few years floods from the surrounding mountains disturb the process and they have to start again at relatively high cost.

### 1.5- Bees

The Hermel area is surrounded by mountains having all kinds of forest plants which serve as good source of food for honey bees. Vegetables and fruit trees around the villages add to the richness of bee pasture.

The number of hives is about 1874.

The cooperative of honey bees in this area tries to help in making better products and in marketing this naturally valuable food item.

### 1.6- Pasture

The quaa - Hermel area is relatively under populated and enjoys having large areas of native land which serve as pasture land for grazers. Unfortunately, the grazing is heavy and productivity is low.

However, the cooperative of producers helps in finding new technologies and processes which could make the production of meat and milk more profitable.

## 2. Property Right and Rangeland Management Institutions

The majority of land in the Quaa - Hermel region is not privately owned and continues to be used as had been since the Ottoman Empire hundreds of years ago.

It is basically communal land which allows for the use and benefit without having the possessively value.

In essence the government is supposed to give the management and use details. Privately owned land is big but the inheritance system has not been applied so the ownership is not very well defined. This has created lots of problems for new buyers. Credit based on land ownership is lacking and credit facilities become hard to get.

At the French mandate time 1919 - 1945, the French have given the opportunity for land users to improve and own the land. The free pasture areas were given to the local municipalities to manage. Forest and marginal land continues to be managed on the basis of Tradition.

The legal system has not yet defined the proper authority to protect, reclaim and enforce the law which is still short on these issues.

The main text governing this aspect is “Law of forest” but there are many problems concerning the application of the law and the existing use of these resources making major impact not only on the present situation of natural resources but also on future improvement plans

### III - Local Institutions

There are Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Social Affairs, municipalities, cooperatives, associations and syndicates.

#### III – 1 - Ministry of Agriculture

The ministry of Agriculture provides services in the following area, land reclamation, environment protection, animal health, water management

#### III – 2 - Ministry of social affairs

It has Social Development Services Centers where the main activities give priority to programs targeting health education, social awareness, rehabilitation, and women empowerment, health care( preventive and Curative Medicine) .The ministry has a center to serve the Qaa – Hermel area.

#### III – 3 - Municipalities

They handle issues related to communication, transport, health, education, etc...It exist 5 municipalities at Hermel and 1 at Qaa region

### III – 4 - Cooperatives

There is a number of cooperatives mainly in Hermel area and they focus on agriculture, fisheries, animal production, apiculture, and women.

### III – 5 - Associations

The local associations have activities in providing credit, charity, environment protection and human welfare.

There are many joint contracts between the Ministry of social affairs and the private associations responsible for the implementation of different health, social and educational services from which the society get benefits in the geographical vicinity of the project.

The Chiite islamic higher council in Hermel coordinates with the ministry in providing social services.

### III – 6 - Syndicates

The available syndicates focus their activities on marketing and fish production.

## IV - Local projects supported by NGO's:

### VI – 1 - Asail fattening support program.

Main activities of this program are to improve marketing potentials and improve the livelihood.

The major activities are:

- 1) Vaccination program that will insure more lambs produced per unit of flock production which will contribute in more animals to be sold, thus increasing the income.
- 2) Fattening the lambs to reach heavier weights that will bring more income per head produced.
- 3)

These two activities will improve the financial situation of the producer that will make his business more sustainable, after being already trained how to practice the fattening activities that will increase his income in the future.

### VI – 2 - GTZ Project at al Qaa Region

The project is funded by GTZ and implemented by ACSAD through a regional project in Lebanon, Syria and Jordan. It covered an area of about 25 km<sup>2</sup> and comes under the commitment of Ministry of Agriculture in combating desertification

GTZ has conducted activities related mainly to combat desertification, and stopping flood:

1- A huge reservoir for collecting the flood water and a series of flood barriers.

2- Around the flood path plantation for grazing perennial shrubs and annual legumes to support the grazing capacity on the area.

GTZ has also a component that supports small ruminants producers targeting improving their livelihood.

#### V - Private sector

The private sector has recently played a very big role in the development of the Qaa -Hermel area which is very suitable for vegetable production under irrigation. The region is dry but warm even in winter conditions so it provides for off-season produce at relatively high prices. Greenhouses are being constructed to intensify and manipulate crops as needed by the market. Water is pumped either directly from the Assi River or from drill-wells in the plain. This high investment system has provided for more income and higher employment opportunities. This intensive production system applies for the fisheries as well. These two systems have contributed a lot to the welfare of the residents in this area.



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## Regional Workshop on

“Lebanese legislation related to local  
institutions and associations”

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# Lebanese legislation related to local institutions and associations.

## 1. Introduction

Since 1955, the Lebanese government has given a great importance to rural resource management. Some of the institutions have played an important role in developing the rural society to help it, in facing economic and financial problems.

The local Lebanese institutions are divided into two parts:

1- Formal or governmental institutions: such as ministries, directorates, specified councils, governments.

The work of these institutions interferes without planning and coordination between them.

The main official institutes concerned with rural resource management are:

- Ministry of agriculture
- Lebanese Agricultural Research Institute - LARI
- Ministry of environment
- Ministry of social affairs
- Ministry of energy and water resources
- Ministry of labor
- Ministry of interior and municipalities

2- Community based organisations: such as cooperatives, associations, credit union ( ), syndicates and NGO'S.

For legalizing the establishment of NGO'S, laws and organizations were been made through establishment of:

- "Directorate of cooperatives", under the Ministry of agriculture, to certify, monitor and organize the functioning of cooperatives.
- "General Directorate under the Ministry of housing", to create credit unions.
- "Directorate of political affairs, parties and associations", under the Ministry of interior and municipalities.
- "Directorate of syndicates", under the Ministry of labor.

Cooperatives, social activities and associations played an important role in developing social works in rural societies.

## 2. Legislation's situation in Lebanon

Legislations related to natural resources that been applied in Lebanon, are:

- Protecting agricultural land (decree no 69 – 6/9/1983). This decree is difficult to apply due to economical and social reasons.
- Using chemicals fertilizers, for controlling the production and marketing of these products.
- Preservation of natural land escape (decree no 434)
- Natural reservation
- Water use (the water legislation goes back to 1920)

## 3. International treaties

The Lebanese government has participated in many environmental and biodiversity meetings, and has a membership in:

- the United Nation treaty in change of climate (law number 256 – 1/8/1994)
- the United Nation treaty in agro biodiversity (law number 260 – 1/8/1994)
- treaty of combating desertification (law number 469 – 8/12/1995)

and other treaties for plant protection and certification with the FAO,...

But these treaties were not translated on the ground by practical steps of legislations and functioning.

## 4. Governmental Institutions

### 4.1- MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE

The ministry of agriculture is found in December 1955 from:

- The board of planning and coordination consist of the minister of agriculture, general director, and other ministry's directors.

- The superior agricultural council considered as consulting council which meet once a month to plan and monitor agriculture development.

The general directorate is composed of: - directorate of agricultural resources  
 - directorate of animal resources  
 - directorate of rural development and natural resources

→ The directorate of rural development and natural resources is of two parts (law number 558 – 24/7/1996):

<u>Part one:</u> Forestry department	<u>Part two:</u> Fishing and shooting department
<p><u>Activities:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- three planting and common land</li> <li>- monitoring the application of laws concerning investments of forestry and common land</li> <li>- protecting soil from erosion and water reservation</li> <li>- developing rural natural pastures and regulating the greasing of goats and sheep.</li> </ul>	<p><u>Activities:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- regulating water resources, animals, and wild birds.</li> <li>- monitoring the application of laws concerning fishing in sweet water and in the sea.</li> <li>- ameliorating ecological fish situation in the rivers.</li> </ul>

The main role of the ministry of agriculture is: (law number 31 – 18/1/1955)

- Control of fertilizer and agronomical materials
- Control of nurseries
- Control of veterinary medicines import
- Control of animal production
- Study irrigation project and organizing distribution of irrigation water and use

(decree no 14148 – 21/10/1963)

- Control of forest and natural reservation
- Control of forest and natural reservation
- Control of plant protection and seeds cultivation
- Extinction – cooperation - statistics

⇒ **Green plan** (decree no 13335 – 10/7/1963)

**The green plan has played a role in agricultural land reformation, road building, land cleaning, and water basin construction.**

## 4.2- Lebanese Agricultural Research Institute – LARI

The Lebanese Agricultural Research Institute (LARI) was found in 1957, as an autonomous public institution, under the supervision of the Minister of Agriculture. (decree no 16766 – 10/7/1957)

LARI is a governmental organization, directed by a general director who conducts the work execution, with assistance of technical and administrative groups.

A board of direct as a decided authority conducts general politics of the institution and decides about all research programs concerning farmers and agricultural sector.

The institute conducts applied and basic scientific research for the development and advancement of the agricultural sector in Lebanon. In addition, the Institute keeps close ties to the farmers and tries to develop research activities aiming at solving their problems.

Cooperative relation emphasizes all possible ways to accomplish better research results and expand to areas not well covered, presently. There exists excellent cooperation with international organization (ICARDA, FAO, UNDP, CIHEAM, IPGRI, INRA, World Bank, ACSAD...).

LARI is conducting some development activities such as production of quality seeds, diagnosis of animal diseases, food quality control, soil analysis, rural development...

⇒ In the field of rural development, the institution is concerning to:

- precise and limit problems: by statistics and field wipe to precise economical and social data
- remove new technologies: by improvement of quality and productivity, natural resources management

Research findings are directly transferred to the farming community, public private institutions, and private sector.

## 4.3- MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT

**The main role of the ministry of environment is in:** (law number 216 – 2/4/1993)

- **Organizing a general environmental politics**

- Planning of environmental projects and use of natural resources
- Putting legislations for protecting natural resources
- Setting the environment conditions for establishing of farms
- Setting the direction of using of common land

The ministry of environment is contributing with the United Nations and the European Union community in organizing the ecosystem and biodiversity.

The major project of the ministry in north bekaa was only in three planting. No activities in the field or rural development were accomplished by the environment ministry.

#### 4.4- MINISTRY OF ENERGY AND WATER RESOURCES

The main role of the ministry of energy and water resources is in:

- Protecting and developing the natural water resources
- Study of water resource and evaluating the need of water and its use all over Lebanon
- Controlling water quality, surface and underground water
- Protecting water resources from pollution
- Certification the use of common water and rivers

Until 2005, no developing projects in water resources have been done in north bekaa, especially in Assi River which is the one of the main water resource in the region and this goes back to political and economical reasons.

Lately, a water dam will be planted for the region and constructions essentially started.

#### 4.5- MINISTRY OF LABOR

The ministry of labor is concerned about legislations for labors and labor syndicates.

The syndicate directorate is especially concerned about:

- Application of legislations and laws about syndicate activities
- Helping the syndicates in developing intellectual level and running social services
- Regulating the collaboration between employers and employees

Kinds of syndicates in Lebanon are: industrial syndicate, commercial syndicate, agricultural syndicate and handicraft syndicate.

Most of the syndicate in Lebanon works to political agenda rather than developing one. The main role of syndicate is in protecting the specialty, encouraging and developing their interests of their members, and improving the financial situation.

#### 4.6- MINISTRY OF SOCIAL AFFAIRS

(law number 312 – 2/4/1993)

The ministry has taken into charge:

- New strategy of social work, which is in harmony with the contemporary concept of human development.
- Social development Services by giving priority to programs targeting health education, social awareness, rehabilitation, and women empowerment.
- In rural development activities: new projects which contribute in the development of the Lebanese rural areas.
  - Economical project: equipment of artesian well, opening agrarian roads, irrigation canals, buying agrarian equipments
  - Environmental project: public parks, tree-planting, water drainage
  - Construction projects: retaining walls, agrarian roads, water network, agrarian cooperative
- List of NGO's, in north Bekaa related to the ministry of social affair:

Name	Activity	Address
Al Irchad Social Association	Social Health care center	Ersal
Al Misak Association	Social Health care center	Shmastar
Baalbek – Deir Al Ahmar Bishopric	Health care center	Baalbek
Bassil Al Assad Cultured and Social Center	Social Health care center	Baalbek
Deir Al ahmar women Association	Social Health care center	Deir Al ahmar
The Army Leadership	Social Health care centers	doures-houche hala – faware
The Chiite islamic higher council	Social Health care center	Yamounit
The Chiite islamic higher council	Social services Center	Hermel
The Lebanese association for disabled persons	Social Health care center	Baalbek

#### 4.7- MINISTRY OF INTERIOR AND MUNICIPALITIES

Municipality is a local institute that applies the law in the area under his control and its runs and the supervision of the ministry of interior.

(decree no 118 – 30/6/1977)

The association of municipalities could include all municipalities geographically close that have common interests in economic and development.

Municipality can be established in a village that has 3000 populations. The council of the municipality plays a role in the developments projects, the most important are:

- Programs for cleaning, health concerns, water management, lightings and general works

- Planning of streets

- Establishment a green places and public gardens

- designing the region and putting up an orientation design in cooperating the civil organization directorate

- Establishing local and public place, museums, hospitals, libraries, educational centers,...

This entire works depend on the financial situation of the municipality. Due to the absence of the government in some field, the municipality replaces its responsibility and asks of decentralization of decisions to be able to do the local activities.

Municipalities work with local none profitable associations as well as government ministries within certain projects.

In conclusion, the area where we are working in Lebanon in the MM III project, has the potential of ecotourism because of the absence of pollution and presence of old ageing trees, attracting landscape in addition to natural pastures as far as financial ability is available.

## 5. Community based organizations

### 5.1- Laws and organizations of cooperatives

(decree no 15355 – 5/2/1964)

Cooperative is every organization that consists of people and it has an unlimited capital and its goal is not to gain profits with respect to precise rules, and its objective is to prosper the social and economic conditions of its members.

The cooperative effort has proved its existence and its goal on several patterns and it's had a positive reaction on enhancing the social work in the agricultural groups and other projects.

### → Principal organization

The development of a cooperative requires a full understanding with respect to the on going rules and procedures, as well as proceeding with the continuing communication with the Directorate of cooperative, that is related to the agriculture ministry.

The cooperatives work in terms of a basic regime put by the coop directorate and it decides:

- Objectives of the cooperative
- The rules of its performance
- Responsibilities
- Financial business
- The way to end its work

The role of cooperatives covers many fields and human activities and the objectives are always for the sake of the members:

- Organization of activities and business
- Providing the need of products, services, resources
- Marketing, production, turnover
- Transforming the production and manufacturing it in group work
- Enhancing the quality of the production and productive services

⇒ To establish a cooperative, an application form should be presented to the directorate of cooperative in the ministry of agriculture and should include the constitution:

- Names, signatures, address of all the establisher members
- Nature of their jobs and activities
- The amount of the stocks that are obliged to release it all.
- Name of the cooperative, its mission, jobs area and its location

The cooperative rules appears to be good and perfect but the basic rules of the process of any coop (mainly agricultural) is to get any help or gift from the government in the beginning.

### → Composition of the cooperative

The cooperative consists of two parts:

\* Board of direction, the legally representative which consists of 3 to 7 members who are being elected by the general community in a secret pallet.

Their mission is to:

- manage the coop activities; make sure everything is done well

- represent the coop in front of the government, laws ministries, private and public organizations.
- take all the transfers for the coop and give receipts
- accept the transfer of stocks among members

\* Community control: elected by the general community, it must meet at least once every six month and it must do the following:

- taking an idea about the decisions taken by the board of direction
- taking a look at all the records, reports that include the amount of inventory, accounts and balances
- putting an annual report about the results of its work which includes all the notes, suggestions...

\* General community: it includes all the members that released all the payment of stock (at least one), and it is the highest power in the cooperative.

Their mission is to:

- test all the accounts and balance
- prolonging the duration of the coop
- increase he responsibility of member
- adding some improvement to the coop regime
- making cooperative a member to the unions

the agricultural cooperation's must be represented in the organizations or agricultural union where it meets with the cooperation a basic goal, that is to create a sense of understanding between all agricultural which help them to solve their problems.

→ Kinds of cooperatives in Lebanon are: agricultural cooperative, Consumer cooperative, service cooperative and educational cooperative.

In the Bekaa region, the cooperatives are mainly agricultural cooperatives (animal's husbandry, fish and bees), consumers, handcrafts and productive. The number of cooperatives in Lebanon till the end of 2005 is about 243 from different sectors.

Numbers of cooperatives in Hermel region:

Cooperatives	Number
Agricultural cooperative	23
Animal husbandry coop	3
Fish spawning coop	2
Bee spawning coop	2
Productive coop	4
total	34

## 5.2- Laws and organizations of syndicates

(decree no 7993 – 3/4/1952)

Syndicate is a group of employees or employers according to the field they work in, such as industrial, commercial, agricultural and handcraft. The syndicate has his personality in front of the law. All the Lebanese syndicates are related to the department of labor and professional relation – ministry of labor.

### → Principal organization

To establish a syndicate, an application form should be presented to the department of syndicate and should include the constitution:

- List of members, their numbers and addresses
- Members contribution
- Name of the syndicate
- Financial source

After consulting the ministry of interior, the ministry of labor certifies the establishment of syndicate, after that the establishy members have to meet and decide the election date for the board of syndicate direction.

The syndicate has to be run by board of directors between 4 and 12 members, for four years.

Financial statement should be prepared yearly and given to all syndicate members as well as the syndicate department in the ministry of labor. The syndicate should keep a list of membership, the balance of income and expenditure.

In case of canceling the syndicate, the ministry of social affaire have to control the financial situation.

Syndicates in Lebanon have a regional offices according, the main agricultural syndicates in bekaa are:

- Syndicates of tobacco growers
- Syndicates of horticulture
- Syndicates of fish producers
- Syndicates of crop producers

## 5.3- Laws and organizations of associations

(decree no 41 – 28/9/1932)

Association is a group of people concerned with common interests and non profitable organization. All the associations are certified by the ministry of interior and municipality, department of political affairs, parties and associations.

### → Principal organization

To establish an association, an application form should be presented to the department of political affairs, parties and associations and should include the constitution:

- List of members, their numbers and addresses
- Members contribution
- Educational level
- Name of the association
- Financial sources:
  - contribution of members
  - governmental contribution
  - private contribution

### → Composition of the association

The association consists of two parts:

\* Association management, the legally representative and runs association according to the laws.

Mission of the president:

- chairs the meetings
- supervises the community's work
- signs all the official correspondence with the general secretary
- signs all the financial correspondence with the general treasurer

Mission of the general secretary:

- keeps all the minutes of the meetings, all the decisions of the general community

Mission of the treasurer:

- collects membership fees
- keeps all the financial reports

\* Common members are all members of association that elect the association management in secret ballot.

Their mission is to:

- raising suggestions
- discussing the association financial statement
- certifying the financial statement of the previous year
- changing the constitution of the association
- discussing of financial and management reports for the previous year's work and the suggested future work.

The management of the community can distribute the work between sub communities. The sub communities have no deciding personality only suggesting one.

Sub communities can ask for help from specialized persons even if they are not member of association from outside. Its role finished when the work allocated to them is done.

The number of associations in Lebanon is 5000 associations distributed to cultural, social, agricultural, environmental... no statistics on the member of these associations and the field they work in according to each government.

#### 5.4- Laws and organizations of Credit Union

(decree no 35 – 9/5/1977)

Credit union is an association based on the will to cooperate and to mutually help each other, its aim is not just to get profit but to provide help for the members and their families and that is by:

- providing compensation for the action results and all the danger that could face the members, weather in their physical body or their investments.
- providing compensation on case of illness or physical accidents, disabilities.
- helping members on case of illness or physical accidents, disabilities.
- encouraging education and specialties
- providing help, scholarships and loans...

##### → Principal organization

To establish a credit union, an application form should be presented to the general directorate of housing's ministry, and should include the constitution:

- List of members, their numbers and addresses, nature of their jobs
- Name of the credit union, its missions,...

After the approval, the pioneers are obliged to put in the directorate of housing, a receipt from any bank that proves the payment of one year contract.

##### → Composition of the credit union

The communities meet in the presence of a representative of the directorate to decide the basic rules of organization and elects the board of direction and the community control .

The board of direction is obliged to provide directorate in 15 days the following:

- Report of the meeting of organizing common members
- Report of the meeting of board of direction
- Report of the meeting of community control

After the approval, the directorate is obliged to provide a decision making about the foundation, send it to print, and register the credit union in a particular document provided by the law.

The credit union consists of two parts:

\* Board of direction, the legally representative and runs credit union according to the laws, elected from all the members for 2 or 3 years.

\* Community control: it takes an idea about the decisions, looks at the notebooks, public reports and financial issues.

The credit union is obliged to take yearly around 25% from its limited resources and put it in a special account called “preserved obligatory account”. The yearly surplus that remains after paying all syndicate expensive goes to a specific account.

The number of credit union in the Bekaa region till the end of 2005 is three in the following region:

- conservatism	of zahle
- conservatism	of rachaya
- conservatism	of baalbeck

## 5.5- USAID

The USAID’s Mission in Lebanon strives to help:

- Expanding economic opportunities, accelerating economic reform
- Strengthening foundations for governance with municipalities and civil society.
- Improving environment policies and practices for water management and sanitation.
- Link between rural and urban.

The following five U.S. non governmental organizations are committed to implementing activities related to expanding economic opportunities under this strategic objective:

- Cooperative Housing Foundation (CHF)
- Mercy Corps (MC)
- World Vision (WV)
- Young Men’s Christian Association (YMCA)
- SRI International.

The geographical areas covered by these NGOs stretch over most of Lebanon and include Bekaa (Baalbeck, Zahle, Tel Amara, Jdita) .

→ Activities in bekaa region

- Increase access to markets and expand market capacity
- Increase capacity of food production, processing centers
- Develop and strengthen local institutional structures

The rehabilitation of women capacities takes a part of their activities: women production groups/cooperatives, Train women in cottage industries and food processing enterprises in informal production groups and cooperative societies

USAID's current partners, PVOs and NGOs, private companies, business associations, donors, government agencies and American educational institutions are fully engaged in our program and instrumental in helping achieve results.

## CONCLUSION

Legislative laws concerning national resources management in Lebanon goes back to 1930, it's in bad need for updating and executing. Some of the laws have been renovated, but some of it not been executed due to political, economical situation, results of war, priority affairs ...

Several concerned institutions meet for their goes while other work separately although they have the same responsibility. Finally local institutions and communities are a need to consult each other to resolve the problems and chair the natural resources management.