



“Enhanced Land-use Management of the Rachine River Basin”

**Municipality of Zgharta-Ehden
(MuZE)**

CHALLENGE AND PROBLEMS ADDRESSED BY THE PROJECT

2. Rachiine River Basin:

- **ABOU ALI**
> 50000 inhabitants in 5 towns, plus ca. 12500 Syrian refugees on its banks (excluding ex-caza)
- **RACHIINE**
Highly polluted with untreated sewage, farm refuse, olive mill waste and runoff from agricultural lands.

- Lower income from agricultural and tourism sectors, loss of interest as a leisure destination, loss of watermill activities and heritage value, further degradation of water quality

Response:

- **KADISHA**
Enhanced land-use management and livelihood through multi-sectorial problem solving approach addressing environment, agriculture, landscape, culture and social economy

2. INSTITUTIONAL SETTING:

Awareness of need for a sustainable solution since early 1990's but lack of means or impactful action by the central authorities plus:

- Complex array of competent authorities with little or no coordination (CDR (SDATL), Ministries (WW strategy by MEW), Water Establishment, Municipalities, Municipal Federation, ...)
- Simplified Local Development Strategy (PSDL/ cluster level) with “structuring” projects (DTP: Agriculture, Land Use Management (*Charte de Territoire*) but no means to implement
- 2030 Agenda and SDGs (> 7)
- Aggravation by Syrian Refugee Crisis and surge in pressure by local population (NGOs, stakeholder demand, spontaneous...)
- Stakeholders: locals, farmers, mill owners, tourism operators, ...

3. APPROACH:

Need for emergency response led to mobilization of local funds for immediate action on a spot intervention basis (infrastructure) while working towards a more sustainable approach:

- Reinforcement of Local Development Office (BDL)
- Decentralized Cooperation mainly with French counterparts with the help of CGLU/BTVL:
 - Water Cycle Management (AUDE)
 - Transition Towards a Sustainable Tourism (AUDE, Chamonix ...)
- UNDP, UNHabitat, UNHCR:
 - Support to agricultural sector
 - MRR, District Profiling, Infrastructure Project Financing

4. OUTPUTS (real or expected)

- Built new small sewer networks (temporary and permanent) and obtained pledges for some of the vital infrastructure
- Pledge for a new composting plant, irrigation canal rehabilitation (ongoing by UNDP), produce market...
- Networking, pro-active relationship and better partnering with competent central and local authorities
- Better livelihood with increase in farming efficiency and revenues through enhanced image
- Pledge for the rehabilitation of water mills and intervention on built heritage indicator of enhanced awareness and pride
- Sustainability through strategic involvement by central authorities and ownership by locals

5. LESSONS:

- Pro-active approach and strategic positioning by local authorities is possible with good chance of securing positive impact
- SDGs constitute a good convergence point for all actors
- NGOs are a good partner but non-concerted action is a total loss: should act only in full coordination with and within vision and strategic goals of local authorities
- In most cases in Lebanon, research and studies have become redundant: substantial funds for implementation of local strategic projects are needed (instrument to be found)
- Pursuit of “Localization of Aid” is vital and should be accelerated

6. TRANSFER

What are the necessary preconditions to transfer this practice to another place? What would be the first steps to take?

- Local Authorities to reach/decide on:
 - Vision and Strategic Development Plan with accent on Role within the National Land Use Management Scheme (think “territory” before deducing development axes and projects by “sector”)
 - Emergency Response Instrument
 - Participative approach to decision making (NGOs, stake holders, actors of the local civil society, professional experts...)
 - Seek complementarity rather than competition on similar strengths