

Debates of the Civil Society on Decentralization and Participation in Hinche

From last February 18 to 20, a meeting was organized in Hinche on the theme "Decentralization and Participation" gathering about 115 organizations of the region civil society. Were represented on this occasion, youth associations, students associations, women organizations, peasants bodies, private sectors as well as many different Territorial Communities (ASECs, CASECs, City Councils, Municipal Assemblies, Assemblies and Departmental Councils) and the central government (representatives of different Ministries, judicial power and the HNP). Thus all participants had the occasion to debate openly this problematic and to submit a number of recommendations concerning this matter to the public authorities.

These "**Debates of the Civil Society on Decentralization and Participation**" are in keeping with the activities of the **Project Enhancement of the Civil Society (ASOSYE)**, one of the phase of the **Bilateral Project for Democracy Enhancement** concluded between the American and Haitian Governments, and funded by **USAID**. The objective of these debates on Decentralization and Participation is to stimulate a collective and national thinking on the new decentralized structure of the Haitian State as it is provided by the 1987 Constitution and the legislation related to it and to identify common leads for a viable and concerted action by all concerned social players. ASOSYE plans to actually close these debates on Decentralization started last November by a number of activities which will be organized in the metropolitan area by the end of March 1998. However, this experience of regional debates will be pursued around other themes of national importance in order to facilitate the dialog process between all sectors of the civil society and the government.

This debate of the Civil Society revealed itself to be a great success both by the number of local and regional organizations represented and by the dynamic participation and the quality of the debates offered to the participants. From everyone's opinion, this event responded to the real demand of dialog and participation from organizations of the region Civil Society as well as the requirements expressed through the 1987 Constitution Preamble. Thus ASOSYE is pleased to bring to the public's attention the following resolutions issued from the debates of the Civil Society in the Plateau Central region.

DEBATE

ON DECENTRALIZATION AND PARTICIPATION - HINCHE

Workshop I DECENTRALIZATION AND DEVELOPMENT

I - PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT

According to the participants, the environment is everything that is surrounding us trees, animals, water, and people. They believe it is necessary to protect the trees in order to enable the people to live better. However, the participants think the economic situation is the reason why trees are being cut down.

The participants are urging the Ministry of Agriculture to plant more trees to protect the environment, make the population aware of the importance of trees. According to them, deforestation is like the arable land (soil) that goes down to the sea. The participants say there must be a big campaign on reforestation throughout the country. However, they believe the organizations must determine which types of trees would be necessary. The Ministry of Agriculture must take its responsibilities by

- 1) preparing nurseries,
- 2) assigning agronomists, agricultural technicians and forest agents in the rural sections,
- 3) obtaining the passing of a law making obligation to plant 5 trees in replacement of each single tree cut down,
- 4) changing the outdated methods of working the land,
- 5) implementing annexes throughout the country

The way in which the Ministry of Agriculture is presently functioning clearly shows there are many weaknesses to be corrected in the way they address the issues concerning the degradation of environment.

The participants say the consequences of the degradation of the environment are very serious in Haiti, many birds disappeared, poverty and cost of living are increasing because of the country deforestation.

The participants denounced the generalized disorder in the cutting down of useful trees such as mango, avocado, orange, grapefruit trees, and so forth to produce charcoal, it is true that other developing countries use charcoal but the concerned ministries of these states assign agricultural agents and forests guards to control the cutting down of trees. The Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Environment in Haiti should imitate the experiences of the other countries to protect the environment.

The participants have noticed that a number of springs have dried, potable water is becoming scarce, many rivers are dried, overflowing of these latter destroy plantations because of the non rehabilitation of these basins-banks they ask themselves what is the role of the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Environment?

According to the participants, the deterioration of the environment is not only reflected in the deforestation. Many other important aspects need to be corrected such as rubbish in the streets, graveyards ill maintained, citizens who refuse to build latrines in their yards, vehicles in bad working condition that are given off toxic gas. All this pollutes the air and constitutes an increasing danger for the health of the population.

The participants think the civil society must first commit itself to these protection activities by motivating and making the population aware of the consequences of the environment deterioration for in this field, it has a role to play with the government authorities

The participants ask the central government in conjunction with the local government to send specialists to conduct a viability study of the charcoal mine situated in the communal section of “Grande Savane ” An exploitation of this mine, if it is profitable would create employment, provide revenues to the peasants and would diminish the cutting down of trees in this area

The participants think if the public government and the Civil Society are aware of the environment deterioration, find the true causes and analyze the consequences, the development of the country by pertinent decentralized interventions would gain a great deal

II - DECENTRALIZATION AND AUTONOMY

The participants think there cannot be decentralization without autonomy and in order to get to decentralization, cooperation is necessary If the government is decentralized, the local government, in conjunction with the civil society will have the right to plan a development program for their respective village Thus there will be good schools, hospitals, universities for all Haitians in all regions of the country

The decentralization cannot be functional without autonomy but the communities need to be ready to take their responsibilities in hands Order and discipline in the public administration should consolidate decentralization

The participants think central government must start implementing good structures and with the assistance of the civil society that must continue to impose itself, will be able to achieve this difficult decentralization

2 1- Role of cooperatives

According to the participants, a cooperative is a democratic institution where many people put themselves together to achieve an objective of economic development The Cooperatives must not have political ambition despite the fact they work to maintain political stability Thus a cooperative must train citizen capable of participating in all development activities of the area

- allow the citizen to be aware of the need for cooperatives,
- help peasants to increase the volume of their production,
- teach them techniques of stocking in silos,
- facilitate a better sale of their products,

- implement mutual associations to help each other financially Thus an area where there are cooperatives will be on its way to development That is why we urge the Parliament to review the law on cooperatives and to divulge and promulgate a law facilitating the creation by the local authorities in their respective zones the types of cooperatives that suit their needs,
- The central government and the local government must bring their assistance by encouraging the organization of training seminars on cooperatives

The participants think it would be necessary to have school cooperatives, savings cooperatives and credit unions, agricultural cooperatives to strengthen the decentralization process

2 2 - Resources management and economic growth at local level,

The participants have identified three levels of resources human, financial and material If there are no competent people, there cannot be economic growth To this effect, the Central Government in conjunction with the local government must implement viable structures to exploit resources and to allow communities to benefit on their side sufficient resources so that the concerned entreaties can establish information and recreation centers and create an ambiance susceptible to encourage young people to remain in their villages

The Central Government must make an assessment of the national mining resources, make an inventory of the cultivable lands, create processing industries, encourage stock-breeding, create markets to help the craftsmen to quickly sell their products, prevent the entry of “pepe” (used goods) - that invade national market and impose taxes on locally-grown products and on vehicles, and on vessels transporting exportation products When all this will be achieved, we will reach the development stage we have been fighting for so long

2 3 - How to promote national production?

The participants say to promote national production, we need a good land reform in the country The local government must mechanize the agricultural system with the assistance of good technician agronomists, good irrigation, agricultural tools, promotion of big agricultural properties and the possibility of obtaining good seeds

The participants are asking themselves if the Central Government is not equivocating by applying on one hand the neo-liberal plan, on the other hand by advocating national production? According to them, the land reform should not only concern Artibonite It is important for the local and central government to cultivate the lands that do not belong to any individual

If the government authorities are conscious of the necessity to promote national production, the country will move out of the state of misery in which it is debating

III - DECENTRALIZATION AND DEVOLUTION

The majority of participants think decentralization means the Central Government delegates some prerogatives to the local government, thus facilitating transparency in the management of state properties. While devolution means to multiply annexes of government offices throughout the country. This group of participants believes that decentralization should work on a par with devolution. A second group thinks that decentralization should be done before devolution.

For a third group, devolution should come before decentralization. But all the participants remain convinced that decentralization and devolution are complementary. They call upon the Central Government to divulge information regarding decentralization as a development means.

3.1 - Modernization of the State-owned Enterprises

The participants declared that for some time the functioning of state-owned enterprises of the country constitutes a problem: the population does not receive services, the mediocrity of some employees goes hand in hand with institutionalized stealing. This explains why people today keep changing from modernization, to democratization, to privatization, and then sometimes neo-liberal plan.

According to the group of participants, the modernization of the state-owned enterprises would aim at making them functional and profitable. The private sector needs to associate itself with the State to make them function. The Central Government should transfer underused employees of the government in other government offices where there is a scarcity in human resources. The government must

- hire competent technicians so that the population obtains services to which they are entitled,
- eliminate corruption,
- abolish employment of public servants on the only basis of their political beliefs.

For a second group, the modernization of the state-owned enterprises remains imperative. But they believe the Haitian State must take its responsibilities instead of liquidating these enterprises to foreigners who are going to choke the population, who in short term, will not be able to pay for the services provided. A last group thinks that the Central Government needs to be aware of the situation of the state-owned enterprises.

The Parliament should

- review the organizational law of the state-owned enterprises,
- implement measures to make the laws applicable,
- avoid the replacement of “small thieves” by “big thieves” in the state-owned enterprises.

The participants remain convinced that modernization of state-owned enterprises will result in the improvement of services and increase their profitability. Their modernization should be done by taking into account the Haitian reality.

3.2 - Decentralization and Infrastructures

The participants say infrastructures are considered all means that need to be put in place by the Central Government and the local government to enable the population to live in better conditions: roads, telephones, electricity, drinking water, hospitals, airports, schools, universities, and so forth. According to the participants, if there are no infrastructures in the Territorial Communities, there cannot be decentralization.

The Central Government needs to seriously think about infrastructures related to the following points:

- Providing training seminars for a group of teachers,
- Establishing professional schools in the communal sections to prevent the exodus of the rural population,
- Training of a large number of technicians: agronomists, medical doctors, engineers, nurses who would be mostly assigned in non-urban areas.

The Central Government must guarantee these people a decent and adequate salary to encourage them to accept working in the communal sections. Grant more specialized scholarships abroad to obtain master degrees, and doctorates. Urge these grant holders to come back to Haiti to work, thus enabling the creation of a pool of available executive managers in order to build a real decentralization.

IV - NECESSITY FOR A DECENTRALIZED INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

For the participants, a decentralized international cooperation means good relations between territorial communities and representatives of foreign organizations. This would facilitate some kind of control of the population on the use of international assistance and would help the territorial communities to better benefit from a number of advantages such as: training of young people, granting of funds for projects execution.

Many participants declared that the decentralized international cooperation is important but according to the 1987 Constitution, only the Chief of State has the right to negotiate with the foreign countries. To their opinion, the territorial communities should benefit from accords signed by the Chief of State with the foreign countries. The results of these negotiations should be divulged so that the population of the communal sections be informed of the financial contributions granted to Haiti from abroad: be it donated or loaned.

The participants believe that in the scope of a decentralized international cooperation, the communities should be able to define the model of cooperation they wish for and choose the sectors where they want to have collaboration from international organizations

V - DEBATES FOLLOW-UP

The participants commit themselves to

- share the training received at the workshop with other members' organizations of their villages,
- make the citizens of their villages aware of the importance of decentralization, with the help of the civil society,
- create a federation to enable them progress in the fight for decentralization,

However, the participants say they lack means to ensure the training. Thus they rely on ASOSYE's assistance

- First ASOSYE needs to be decentralized itself

Workshop II DECENTRALIZATION AND CIVIL SOCIETY

1- RELATIONS BETWEEN THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT, LOCAL ADMINISTRATION AND THE CIVIL SOCIETY IN THE SCOPE OF PARTICIPATIVE DECENTRALIZATION

- According to some participants, the local administrations need to have good relations with the Central Government. In fact, it is the civil society that gives them mandate to lead, it supports them in their decision-making which, because of the cooperation process, must take into account the desiderata of the grassroots organizations. Thus the local administrations constitute a driving belt that connects the Civil Society to the Central Government
- Some participants declared the three sectors must cooperate with great trust and mutual respect sharing information and preparing the number of projects to be executed in each zone
- In order for this type of relations to exist, according to a group of participants, the civil society needs to be well aware of the role of the State and the local administrations
- According to some participants' opinion such relations will exist between these entities when the expression of participative democracy will mean the smallest local organization will be able to work and submit its opinions in all liberty and that local administrations in conjunction with the Central government will put into application the points of view and the proposals of this local organization

1.1 Action of the Civil Society on the locally Elected officials

- After a lot of brainstorming on the subject, the participants were able to find many ways through which the civil society can act on the locally elected officials to encourage them to work in the interest of the civil society. They think that a

cooperation is mandatory at the beginning to allow a profound analysis of the situation, seek information, think together about what's need to be done, what was done, and what will be done and so forth. During the meetings that will occur every month, the locally elected officials will be able to bring their complaints to the civil society and submit a report of their activities already achieved.

Other participants believe that the civil society should act as a pressuring force, legally capable of requiring from the locally elected officials details of their activities and even having, in this particular case, the prerogatives of sanction.

- But another group of participants has observed that some locally elected officials had confronted serious difficulties in trying to satisfy the complaints of an impatient civil society because of the fact that they do not possess the proper logistic means.
- At last, whatever the action of the civil society on the locally elected officials, according to the participants, we must take into account factors such as competence, means of intervention and level of interest in the population.

1.2 - Role of the Civil Society in the scope of Decentralization

- For a group of participants, “decentralization” is a sophisticated term they want to impose on a civil society mainly illiterate. This society must be vigilant, organize itself to react efficiently, it must participate in every thing that is being done and if it is pushed aside, assert its rights to participation and seek support from all citizens to develop the communities. However, the role of the civil society is to carry out the motivation without pushing aside the mobilization, to inform the populations of the most remote areas about decentralization, continue with the debates, preach mutual respect, instruct citizen about their rights as well as their duties and encourage them to work and participate in any activity favorable to the community's well-being.
- Port au Prince must not decide for the rest of the country.
- The role of the civil society consists also to encourage all citizens to pay their taxes to the government so that rewards of development can be implemented in their regions.
- Another aspect of the role of the civil society take side on what is being done in the country, find the ways to arrive to decentralization by investing its time, putting an end to intestinal wars, asking locally elected officials not to work for them or a small group only, but in the interest of community. The civil society must closely observe the actions and behaviors of the locally elected officials in terms of decentralization and reject ways and opportunities for corruption. It also has the role to support the police, to promote civic formation in conjunction with the members of the HNP who are part of the civil society and who just like them has the same dream: a developed, decentralized and democratized nation.

2 - ROLE OF WOMEN ORGANIZATIONS IN DECENTRALIZATION AND IN PARTICIPATIVE DEMOCRACY

- According to many participants, the role of women is not only to stay at home but also to also participate without discrimination in development, take part in national decisions and occupy elective functions
- They must force themselves to mobilize the civil society and particularly women on the issue of family planning in order to contain poverty in our country They must organize themselves because they represent the living forces of the country Their role also consist in changing mentalities and outdated concepts in their homes, schools, churches, institutions and so forth They must provide all kind of information susceptible to overcome obstacles and value their qualities as women instead
- According to another group of citizens, women must fight, on all fronts, violence from which they are victims They must share responsibilities in their homes by inviting their spouses, sons to participate in household activities in conjunction with them This group also thinks that the role of women is not to criticize men but to avoid quarrels, fights, to create a climate of cooperation favorable to the progress of civil society
- According to some participants' point of view, a larger number of women should have positions in the public administration and to this effect propose laws advocating women presence in CASEC cartels, Municipal Councils, in the House of Representatives and in the Senate

3 - LAWS ON ORGANIZATIONS

- Many participants have underlined the need for every organization, association to have their own status which proves that it is mix and certified by the Ministry of Social Affairs Policies are necessary to define the nature of organizations, precise their rights and limits, indicate how they must operate as well as laws related to their technical and financial support enabling to control them, to detect and sanction deliberated approaches of illegal bodies working against changes
- Other participants have insisted on the fact that organizations must elaborate a program that is designed in the interests of the civil society Such policies would place these organizations under the Ministry of Social Affairs, which would have as mission to control them, to inspect and visit them in order to make them more performing According to a last group, the operating license of the Ministry of Social Affairs, should beforehand condition the certification of local administrations

4 - CIVIC EDUCATION

According to a group of participants, civic education constitutes a major advantage for a society The absence of civic education or a civic education ill

directed prevents the members of society to become good citizens. According to them, civic education enables citizens to know their rights and duties. It guides the civil society on the development road and prevents it to be duped. It allows it to be better structured, better understand its social role and to make judicious choice.

- The opinion of another group of participants is that the State must not be the only actor concerned by civic education, churches, schools, families, organizations and youth associations, agents multiplier of changes, generally speaking all citizens must collaborate in a national program of civic education touching all the sides of the country from the smallest social entity to the biggest city in order to get its achievement. Moreover, special articles in newspapers, need to be written, broadcast and televised programs, public debates in all gathering places must be convened on the importance of the national program civic education.
- Other participants think that civil society must be vigilant because civic education can be considered as a blade with two cutting sides that can do good or bad depending on the way they are destined to be used. But the overall opinion was that exchanges should be taken place between those who chose to do good through civic education.

4 1 - ROLE OF THE PRESS

- The press, which represents the fourth power by its influence, must take part in civic education, disseminate objective information, and be of service to all without distinction of political affiliation, color or social rank. The participants notice that the press must play its role in all fairness and independence. It must cease to do politics in favor of one sector to the detriment of another.
- Another group of participants says the role of the press is to educate and inform, it has to work for the promotion of culture, the creole language and of development. To that effect, it must be governed by laws that protect it, give it access to information which allows it to analyze and process information before broadcasting. Laws that make provisions to gather the State media (Radio and Television - RTNH), make them obligation to better train their members for a very effective job. The press must be decentralized, it must be present in all communities and regions of the country.

5 - DEBATES FOLLOW-UP AND PROPOSALS TO ASOSYE

- a The participants are committing themselves to share the acquired experiences during these debates with the members of their communities.
- b ASOSYE must keep them posted of the debates results and provide them with additional documents so that this job bears its fruits.
- c ASOSYE itself must be decentralized so that it can be present in all communal sections,

- d ASOSYE must stay in contact by mail with all organizations,
- e ASOSYE must help women organizations in their enterprises until the envisioned changes are materialized,
- f ASOSYE must help women associations working in development and education projects find proper technical and financial assistance,
- g USAID and ASOSYE must carry all decisions issued from these debates to the Central Government

WORKSHOP III DECENTRALIZATION AND SECURITY

1 - SECURITY A GUARANTEE FOR DECENTRALIZATION

Regarding security, the participants described the situation of insecurity in their villages. They say that the population in their areas is living in a permanent fear because thieves stealing livestock, goods, harvests, the smugglers and all kinds of bandits are part of their daily lives.

The people in the neighborhoods capable of investing do not do it anymore because they lack security, indispensable condition to decentralization. Security and decentralization work hand in hand. That means without security all decentralization is impossible. We can openly say that “security is a guarantee for decentralization.”

This brings us to think about the second point.

2 - POLICE FORCE IN THE COMMUNAL SECTIONS

So far there are no police officers in the communal sections, this constitutes another problem according to the participants. It is a lack of importance that complicates the job of CASECs to whom the functions of policemen become incumbent. Thus machete fights are common, such a situation could not continue.

The participants propose

- that Central Government accelerate the policemen recruitment process for the communal sections,
- that Central Government protects the police in return the police officers can protect the population,
- that Central Government guarantee the good training of these policemen,
- that policemen are armed with courage, determination, and professional ethics in the application of law and execution of their tasks,
- that the manpower of three anticipated in the communal sections be superior.

3 - RELATIONS BETWEEN LOCAL AUTHORITIES

First we have considered

1 role of locally elected officials

According to the participants the role of the locally elected officials is to

- control what is being done in the community,
- execute the people’s will as being his representative,
- make a report on their management in transparency,
- maintain courteous relations among them, this means between Mayors, members of Municipal Assemblies, CASECs, ASECs, and so forth. The dialog must be systematically established among them,

- ensure a good and true management of the resources they dispose, share equitably these resources for the population well-being but not in favor of another sector or a group

We have considered

3 3 Relations between Police and locally elected officials

The participants have noticed that locally elected officials and the members of the HNP are the sons of a same fatherland having each his own responsibilities. Their tasks must be complementary, thus

- they must not enter into confrontation,
- they must collaborate for the well-being of the population
- they must work together in the interest of the community

Then we addressed the followings

3 3 - Relations with Police and Civil Society

In the scope of relations between police and civil society, the participants have noticed that the population sometimes reveals itself to be arrogant during police interventions

Even a courteous police officer is often not welcome. The participants added this behavior is caused by a poor education of the members of the civil society

According to a great number of participants, some police officers have developed a complex depending on their intellectual background. They are not tolerant vis-a-vis the population who sometimes shows a certain aggressiveness

In order to solve these problems, the participants suggest

- that Central Government implements a program of civic education so that the population is informed of the attitude to keep towards the police officers,
- that Central Government gives a better training to the police officers so that they can attract the population sympathies. Thus there will be mutual respect. They will work hand in hand

4 - DISARMAMENT

For the 26 participants in this workshop, the issue of disarmament needs to be addressed with caution because weapons are spread throughout the entire country. Many civilians and ex military are armed. Some of them are authorized, others no. There are rumors that even kids would be guns holders of all kinds

They walk around with them in broad daylight. In the regions near the borderline, carrying a weapon is even more frequent. We must not underestimate the entry access that the ports and airports represent.

In this context, the participants believe that talking about disarmament is something extremely difficult. However, they believe that disarmament is not impossible if the Central Government has decided to assume its responsibilities.

In order for this disarmament to become reality, they propose

- that Central Government establish a serious control at the level of the borders, in all the ports and airports to prevent illegal arrival of weapons in the country,
- that Central Government counts, registers all firearms holders in the country authorized or not,
- that Central Government take the necessary measures to ensure a proper training to the police, gives it material means, logistic support such as trained dogs, special binoculars, detectors throughout the territory,
- that Central Government provides to the police effective communications gears and rapid means to move around,
- that the population, on his side, cooperates with the police giving it leads and information when they can, thus allowing them to carry out the disarmament efficiently and effectively,
- to conclude, the Direction of the National Police must show its will to efficiently control insecurity throughout the national territory in order to avoid the repetition of the events that occurred in Mirebalais.

5 - DEBATES FOLLOW-UP

- the participants have decided to divulge information received during these debates to the members of grassroots organizations. They would wish to receive assistance from ASOSYE in terms of working documents.
- They would wish that ASOSYE take their complaints very far.
- They suggest that the regional Director of the HNP visit at least once a month each commune to meet the locally elected officials and inform the population on the type of collaboration they can expect from the HNP.

WORKSHOP IV NECESSITY FOR A NEW ORDER OF STATE IN THE SCOPE OF DECENTRALIZATION

1 - DIFFERENCE BETWEEN DECENTRALIZATION AND DEVOLUTION

The majority of participants have expressed their opinions. For some, decentralization means sharing of the central government, transfer of responsibilities. They added by explaining that to have transfer of responsibilities, you must have autonomy. To

ensure autonomy, you need human resources. You must also demarcate political, decentralized, and economic zones. Others remain convinced that devolution is the road that leads to decentralization.

2 - ROLE OF THE EXECUTIVE IN THE DECENTRALIZED STATE

According to a group of participants, the Executive should encourage the education of the population and keep them informed before taking any important decision that engages the country. Another group thinks the Executive's role is to look after the Haitian people's well-being. To that effect, it must implement infrastructure to consolidate the Territorial Communities. According to a third group, the Executive must study, contribute, implement, and coordinate programs and projects issued from the grassroots organizations.

3 - NECESSITY OF ANOTHER APPORTIONMENT OF THE NATIONAL BUDGET

In regards to that question, a group thinks putting together all budgets of the territorial communities and their apportionment according to the needs of each village are important points for the implementation of road infrastructures susceptible to ensure a better road circulation that would facilitate economic activities and contribute to increase the revenues of the State. With the support of all layers of the populations, we will arrive to a better apportionment of the national budget.

3.1 - Role of the Superior Court of Accounts

According to some participants the role of the Superior Court of Accounts would be

- 1) to monitor the management of public funds,
- 2) to solve the conflicts between the public servants of the state-owned enterprises

Another group thinks the implementation of an annex of the Superior Court of Accounts by itself would not be sufficient to solve common problem if this annex is not equipped with efficient logistic means to function.

Others think the role is to control and sanction all embezzlement of public funds. The majority does not agree to this definition. Moreover, they say, there is too much latitude and negligence, this makes it possible for some public servants to embezzle State funds. Besides, the salary scale when it exists, is not always applicable. In conclusion, they are asking themselves if the controlling entreaties that are at the disposal of the country are sufficient.

4 - RELATIONS BETWEEN CENTRAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Some participants have observed that relations between the central government and the local government must be administratively efficient and at the same time courteous. Others think unfortunately these relations are actually tense in some particular cases. At the superior and central level, anticipate intrinsic difficulties to the proper functioning of the City Councils, Assemblies and Departmental Councils, could avoid clashes and confrontations.

between those who possess the administrative authority and those who have the law enforcement powers. This forethought is also stretched out to the concern of a deep preparation of the electoral process. The majority of the participants have observed that most of the time the Central Government absorbed the local government. According to them, the officially elected representatives of all citizens must work in the interest of their communities and in this prospect, a sudden awareness at the level of different sectors of the national life was necessary. But it is also important to stimulate the action of the public authorities. The relations between the Central Government and the local government must be loyal, sincere, democratic and transparent.

5 - NECESSITY OF THE TRAINING OF THE PEOPLE IN CHARGE OF PUBLIC SERVICE IN THE COMMUNES AND COMMUNAL SECTIONS

5 a - Training of the locally elected officials

The participants have underlined that residents of the communes must assert that the population must fight to insist that the State implements structures and proper modalities to control the skills and competence of the locally elected officials.

- 5.1 According to some of them, articles 91 and 96 of the 1987 Constitution should be reviewed because they do not detail the level of competence required to become locally elected officials. This point of view did not obtain everyone's approval, other participants say the competence should not weigh more than the "voice of the people". Everyone has his/her place in the public service. Everyone must express himself to provoke the departure of incompetent people and their replacement be ordered. Another group thinks from the choices that were made, the State should define and establish a program of civic education which would diminish the cases of voting for a candidate on the single basis of his/her membership to a political party without taking into account his/her competence.

6 - DEMOCRACY AND LITERACY

How can we talk about democracy if the people are not educated?

Education does not go hand in hand with hunger. It is important for this education not to reproduce a foreign model. It must take into account the realities of the country.

7 - FOLLOW-UP

It has been recommended the followings

- 1) All citizens must have access to civic education,
- 2) Grassroots organizations must find tools and training materials suitable to their needs, this will allow them to contribute effectively to this debate follow-up,
- 3) These debates must be disseminated through the press,

- 4) ASOSYE must be decentralized and establish representations in all communal sections,
- 5) These participants hope those resolutions will be concretely applied, manifesting themselves in real advantages for the participants and those they represent

WORKSHOP V OBSTACLES TO DECENTRALIZATION

1 - CORRUPTION IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

Concerning this matter, some participants often think public servants lacking training are hired in government offices and are not competent to fulfill their tasks. Favoritism aggravates this situation. Additionally another weakness of the government offices is the supremacy of militancy over competence. Many participants added that corruption among some managers / leaders in search of money would make them incapable of managing State properties and matters.

1 1 - Functioning of the judiciary system

Regarding this matter, majority of the participants insist on the weakness of the country judiciary system and they notice despite the theoretical independence of the Judiciary Power, this latter depends too much on the Executive who strongly influences it. They went even further to assert that in some cases, justice is coined for often the judgements depend on the wealth of the persons involved. Others mentioned to work in a Court, you need to have a legal training and make sure that justice is strictly served without any consideration of personal advantages.

2 APPORTIONMENT OF RESOURCES

According to some participants there will never be real apportionment of resources without sudden awareness because the majority of actors involved are only thinking about getting rich. Fortunately, we can find illustrations where the contrary is true for example, they cite the electrical power plant of Boucan Carre which provides electricity to many villages even though Boucan Carre is not electrified. We need to prove to ourselves that we have a true will for progress and decentralization so that distribution of resources can take place. We also need infrastructures. Among other things, they note that Boucan Carre does not benefit from a police presence. Many participants declared that Plateau Central is not as devoid of resources as they say. This region does not simply benefit of a sufficient management support to allow its residents to exploit their resources such as charcoal mines, honey and so forth.

3 - RURAL EXODUS

According to some participants' opinion, if this decentralization does not start in the communal sections, it is normal that rural exodus intensifies. The people not being able to find what is essential to ensure their survival in the section, are forced to migrate to Port au

Prince Without a good apportionment of the resources, rural exodus will not be easy to suppress. If the farmers did not depend on rainy seasons to cultivate their lands, if the State helped the communes more to guarantee irrigation, if good structures existed in the sections, rural exodus would cease.

4 - LAWS INCONSISTENT WITH THE CONSTITUTION

After a lot of exchanges on that topic, many participants agreed with the fact that some laws prior to the 1987 Constitution would need to be amended. They cite for example articles of "François Duvalier Rural Code" which talk about the CASER of the Order in council dated November 27, 1989 which according to them create conflicting situations between Notaries and the population.

5 - DEBATES FOLLOW-UP

In the scope of the debates follow-up, the participants asked that ASOSYE grant assistance to grassroots organizations to help them mobilize, make the residents of the communal sections aware of their goals to activate the useful work they have started.

The participants require from ASOSYE an assistance to promote the creation of a federation, grassroots organizations in all the regions, facilitate transmission of organizations complaints to the concerned authorities, this is to say all the way to the Central Power.