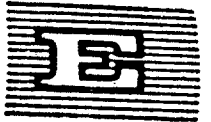




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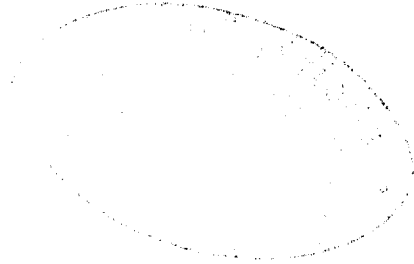
E/ECWA/45/Add.1  
24 March 1977

Original: ENGLISH

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR WESTERN ASIA

Fourth session  
24-29 April 1977  
Amman, Jordan

Item 6 (a) of the Provisional Agenda



"The Brain Drain Problem: Causes,  
Consequences and Remedies"

(Progress Report)

The Brain Drain Problem: Causes,  
Consequences and Remedies

(Progress Report)

1. The study on "the brain drain problem: causes, consequences and remedies" is a research project contained in ECWA's 1975 Programme of work <sup>1/</sup> which was approved by the Commission at its first regular session in June 1974. The initial objectives of this project were to study the brain drain problems from the ECWA region, examine the underlying causes, formulate action-oriented policies and to consider ways and means of making use of the services of Arab talents residing abroad. In the course of its implementation, the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development and national Development Funds in the region expressed their interest in this study and provided ECWA with some additional resources for extending the scope of the study to cover all Arab countries and to compile, as far as possible, a roster of all Arab talents residing abroad.
2. With the extension of the scope of the brain drain study, the outline of the study was finalized <sup>2/</sup> taking also into consideration relevant observations and comments that were made by regional and international organizations concerned.
3. The implementation of the brain drain project was interrupted in 1975 and 1976 by the prolonged civil fighting in Lebanon. It was not possible to undertake, steadily and regularly, the necessary research work and field missions. ECWA's staff members were forced to evacuate from Beirut in 1976 and resumed work in Amman in the second half of the same year. During this period, it was not also possible to recruit a professional staff member to

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<sup>1/</sup> Document E/5539/E/ECWA/9

<sup>2/</sup> The outline of the brain drain study was attached to the progress report to ECWA's Third Session, Document E/ECWA/30/Add.1

devote his time fully to the project. The additional financial resources which were provided by the Arab Development Funds were released only in March 1977. Under these circumstances, the brain drain study was not finalized, but arrangements have been made for its finalization and completion by the end of 1977.

4. In the meantime, concrete steps have been taken towards carrying out the brain drain study. The literature on the brain drain was surveyed extensively with special emphasis on the Arab countries. A number of visits were undertaken in 1975 by a staff member of the Development Planning Division of ECWA to member countries in order to discuss the brain drain problem with government officials and collect relevant information.

5. At the conclusion of the discussions between the Executive Secretaries of ECWA and the Economic Commission for Africa, at Addis Ababa, a joint communiqué was issued on 20 September 1976. Among the priority projects agreed upon for immediate implementation within the framework of ECWA/ECA cooperation is the brain drain problem. ECA has assigned one of its staff members to study the brain drain from Arab countries in Africa. The same outline which was finalized by ECWA will be followed by ECA. ECA staff member will undertake country visits to collect necessary information and will prepare draft reports on these missions which will be made use of in the preparation of the final study. In this connexion, extensive discussions were recently held with the ECA staff with a view to co-ordinating the approach and delineating areas of importance to be emphasized in the investigation.

6. One of the significant aspects of the brain drain study is to identify various policies and measures which the Arab countries adopt to reduce the outflow of their own professionals on the one hand, and to induce professionals working at home and those residing abroad to stay longer and/or to return, respectively. A questionnaire was prepared to deal specifically with this matter. It was sent to ECWA member countries. So far, three out of twelve countries responded. (See Annex I for the text of the questionnaire). In 1977, further contacts with the government officials were made by the Development Planning Division staff members. A short visit was undertaken

to Iraq where further discussions were held with government officials concerned and additional relevant material was collected. The questionnaire on the brain drain was taken-up directly with the officials concerned in Jordan whose observations and responses were taken note of.

7. A draft of the causes of the brain drain, Chapter III of the study, has been prepared in accordance with the outline. However, since it is a part of the overall study, it will not be submitted separately in this progress report. Moreover, some changes may be introduced in the light of the information which will be gathered on the Arab countries in Africa. Though there are data related to the magnitude of the brain drain, Chapter II of the study, these data need to be updated. Contacts have been initiated with some recipient countries and international organizations to get more recent data on the outflow of Arab professionals.

8. In particular, ECWA is cooperating with UNCTAD in the area of the brain drain. This cooperation would involve exchange of information and participation in activities dealing with the brain drain problem. For example, ECWA will participate in the forthcoming intergovernmental expert group meeting on the brain drain, sponsored by UNCTAD, and tentatively scheduled in January 1978. A paper will be presented by ECWA for this meeting on the brain drain problem from the Arab world.

9. Work on the roster of Arab talents residing abroad has been initiated. Use was made of similar efforts undertaken by ECA in issuing its report entitled "Directory of African Specialists and Consulting Organizations", 1975 and IDCAS publication entitled "Directory of Expatriate Arab Experts",

دليل الخبراء العربية في المهجر .

In the light of available financial resources and time, the expected roster will be selective and demonstrative. It is well known that for any roster to be of operational use, it has to be regularly and continuously updated. The roster of Arab talents residing abroad will, thus, concentrate on three major categories of Arab professionals, namely; engineers, physicians and university professors. (See Annex II for the information which will be sought on each professional). Contacts have been initiated with possible parties that may be entrusted with the compilation of the roster in accordance with these general guidelines.

10. A budget plan for the allocation of extra-budgetary resources was prepared and approved. The total amount of \$23,000 will be allocated to cover consultancy, compilation of the roster, the travel expenses of an ECA staff member assigned for the brain drain study, participation in UNCTAD's expert group meeting and contingency. The above mentioned amount has been already released and, accordingly, disbursements will be effected along the plan of the study. Accordingly, a consultant for the brain drain project has been recently appointed. He will be responsible for the analysis of compiled data, the co-ordination of various elements of the project and the writing up of the draft of the study within the frame of the outlined developed for the project. The study will be completed by the end of 1977.

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR WESTERN ASIA

DEVELOPMENT PLANNING DIVISION

Questionnaire on the Arab Brain Drain

I. Measures taken to curb the brain drain:

1. What legal and administrative measures have been taken to curb the brain drain? Please attach a copy of the laws and regulations promulgated in this connexion.
2. Are any particular categories of skilled manpower prevented from travelling abroad? If so, which? (e.g. doctors, engineers, etc..).
3. During what period are the above skilled categories prevented from travelling abroad?
4. What measures are being taken to prevent the migration of the above categories? (e.g. non-issue of passport, prior application for travel authorization, requirement for financial guarantee etc...)
5. Are these measures applicable to migrant skills in general or merely to those migrating to certain particular countries? Are any measures taken in connexion with migration to other Arab countries?
6. Have any agreements been concluded with other countries to regulate the process of the exchange and migration of skills?
7. Is there any illegal migration of these skills? (i.e. migration not authorized by the government authorities concerned). How significant is this migration and what forms does it take?

II. Measures taken to encourage skilled manpower to return from abroad and to continue to remain in the home country:

1. Are there any special laws or regulations to encourage skilled manpower to return from abroad? Please attach a copy thereof.
2. Do the government authorities concerned resort to any of the following measures to achieve the above objective:
  - (a) To what extent do they ensure the availability of suitable employment compatible with the specialized skills of such manpower?
  - (b) The payment of special allowances over and above the wages paid to other government employees. What is the rate of these allowances and how do they vary in accordance with differing skills?
  - (c) The granting of special customs concessions to these categories (e.g. exemption of furniture and car from customs duty).
  - (d) The provision of other facilities. Please specify these facilities in detail.
3. Are the above measures applicable to skilled manpower resident in the country? How is this effected?
4. Is the skilled manpower returning to work in the country mainly concentrated in:
  - (a) Government service.
  - (b) The private sector.
  - (c) Academic and research institutions such as universities. Please explain.
5. Are any statistics available on skilled Arab and foreign manpower working in the country? Please provide us with these statistics.
6. Are any statistics available on skilled manpower that has returned during recent years? Please provide us with them.

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR WESTERN ASIA

DEVELOPMENT PLANNING DIVISION

Roster of Arab Professionals Residing Abroad

Name:

Date and Place of Birth:

Sex:

Marital Status:

Nationality at Birth:

Present Nationality:

Education:

Dependents:

Degree and year of Graduation:

Field of Specialization:

Knowledge of Languages:

Major Publications:

(Please attach detailed list)

Positions held for past 5 years:

(Please attach detailed list)

Present Post:

Availability to accept employment  
consultancies in the Arab Countries:

Permanent Address:

Present Address:

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