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ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION FOR WESTERN ASIA

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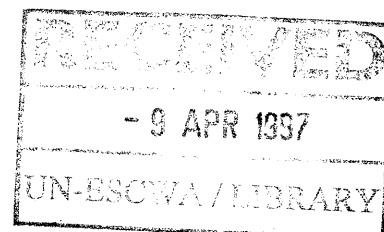


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ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION FOR WESTERN ASIA

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS

FAO/ESCWA Expert Consultation on Agrarian Systems and
Socio-Economic Implications of Fragmented Holdings in
the Near East
14-16 December 1985
Baghdad, Iraq



**Problems of Fragmentation of Agricultural Holdings in the Near East
(Magnitude and Trends, Causes, Implications and Possible Solutions)**

1. The consultation agreed that excessive fragmentation and dispersal of agriculture holdings could create serious problems to land use and agriculture production. The fragmentation of holding was a dynamic process influenced mainly by population pressure on land, law of inheritance, the application of land reform and land distribution programme unrestricted sale of agriculture land and other social and economic factors.
2. In the majority of cases the land owners recognize the problems of fragmentation and usually welcome and accept action by Government for consolidation. In the cases Governments undertook land consolidation through legislation and administrative actions.
3. While it was of primordial importance to examine the economic aspects of land consolidation particularly the size of the optimum holding, it was necessary as well, to take into account the influence of social factors, such as the demand for labour and its displacement to other sectors of the economy.
4. A number of options for land consolidations had been advanced. It was recognized that Government had a major role in making the decisions for application and implementation Co-operatives and farmers' organizations were considered a suitable vehicle for implementing consolidation programmes.
5. Governments should consider the consolidation of agricultural holdings not only as a measure to increase agriculture production but also as a means to reduce poverty in the rural areas.

6. In planning and implementing consolidation programme consideration should be given to the prevailing systems for land use, the rate and level of technologies as well as possible improvement to the land use systems that could be applied to the consolidated holding.

7. There was a need to conduct studies and collect data on the optimum use of agriculture inputs and technologies available to the farmers in relation to the existing land terms pattern. The studies should also cover the dynamic and trend in land fragmentation and the efficiency with utilization of labour as well as the alternative employment opportunities in rural areas where fragmentation is creating an obstacle to social and economic development.

