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ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION  
FOR WESTERN ASIA

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# 1996-1997 REPORT



UNITED NATIONS  
New York, 1998

## Notes

The designations employed and the presentation of the material in this publication do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the Secretariat of the United Nations concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries.

For the purposes of this report, the terms "region" and "regional" should be understood to refer to the territories of the 13 members of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia: Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, the Syrian Arab Republic, the United Arab Emirates and Yemen.

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## Foreword

*The 1996-1997 biennium was particularly important in the life of the United Nations. A series of proposals for reform, presented by Secretary-General Kofi Annan in July of 1997, were adopted by the General Assembly at the end of that year. After more than fifty years, the organization has had to cope with new realities; the reform measures adopted so far are perhaps the most far-reaching since the inception of the United Nations. This report is therefore appearing at a crucial moment in the history of the United Nations system.*

*For the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), the 1996-1997 biennium was equally significant. Paramount among the events of this period was ESCWA's move from its temporary headquarters in Amman to the new permanent headquarters at United Nations House in Beirut. In recognition of the importance of this milestone in the history of ESCWA, Mr. Annan, on his first visit to the Middle East in his capacity as Secretary-General, presided over the inauguration of United Nations House in March of 1998. At long last, ESCWA's odyssey through the Arab capitals of the region has come to a happy ending in Beirut. In spite of the complexities of this move, the work programme for the biennium was completed as planned.*

*No less important in the 1996-1997 biennium was the completion of a series of reform measures, initiated in 1992, involving substantive, administrative and organizational restructuring, thus closing a major chapter in the ongoing work of reform. With this in mind, it can be said that it is now the time for consolidation and implementation.*

*The purpose of the **1996-1997 Report** of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia is to present to the general public a comprehensive and reader-friendly account of the work of ESCWA. First published in 1995 and covering the activities of ESCWA for that year, the second issue of the **Report** covers the period 1996-1997, corresponding to ESCWA's programme of work for the biennium. The **Report** reviews ESCWA's socio-economic environment, its organization, its activities during the biennium and*

*its relations with other organizations and institutions, as well as the major issues facing the Commission.*

*The 1996-1997 Report, like its predecessor, is a self-contained document. Although the mandate of the Commission and its organizational structure have not undergone any major changes since the previous report, it was felt that the reader would benefit from access to all of the relevant information on ESCWA without having to resort to other references. With this in mind, the chapter on the mandate and organization of ESCWA has remained essentially the same as in the first issue. The final chapter of the Report, "Assessment and future prospects", reflects the changing problems and challenges to the work of ESCWA. While the previous report emphasizes the constraints on the Commission, the new one highlights the promises and the prospects for its work in the years ahead.*

*As an intergovernmental body of the United Nations, ESCWA is accountable to the member States and to the Secretariat of the United Nations at its Headquarters in New York. The purpose of this Report, however, is to reach a wider constituency. It is our hope that this and similar reports in the future may help guide public opinion to a better appreciation of the role of ESCWA and its activities. ESCWA is a service-oriented organization; it is, after all, the opinions and needs of our constituency that matter first and foremost.*



*Hazem El-Beblawi  
Executive Secretary  
July 1998*

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## ABBREVIATIONS

ACC	Administrative Committee on Coordination
ACSAD	Arab Centre for the Studies of Arid Zones and Dry Lands
AFESD	Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development
AFMANENA	Agriculture Food Marketing Association for the Near East and North Africa
AGFUND	Arab Gulf Programme for United Nations Development Organizations
AIDMO	Arab Industrial Development and Mining Organization
ALO	Arab Labour Organization
AMF	Arab Monetary Fund
AOAD	Arab Organization for Agricultural Development
API	Arab Planning Institute
BGR	Federal Institute for Geosciences and Natural Resources of Germany
CAWTAR	Center of Arab Women for Training and Research
CEDARE	Committee on Environment and Development in the Arab Region and Europe
CEFACT	Centre for Facilitation of Procedures and Practices for Administration, Commerce and Transport
CEHA	Centre for Environmental Health Activities
DASE	Division for Arab States and Europe
DESA	Department for Economic and Social Affairs
ECA	Economic Commission for Africa
ECE	Economic Commission for Europe
ECLAC	Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
ECWA	Economic Commission for Western Asia
EDI	Electronic data interchange
ERF	Economic Research Forum for the Arab Countries, Iran and Turkey
ESCAP	Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

## ABBREVIATIONS (*continued*)

ESCWA	Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia
ESIS	ESCWA Statistical Information System
FAIESR	Federation of Arab Institutes for Economic and Social Research
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FEA	Federal Environmental Agency
FWCW	Fourth World Conference on Women
GATT	General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
GCC	Gulf Cooperation Council
GDP	Gross domestic product
GIS	Geographic Information System
GPS	Global Positioning System
GTZ	German Agency for Technical Cooperation
Habitat	United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (UNCHS)
Habitat II	United Nations Conference on Human Settlements
ICARDA	International Centre for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas (Beirut)
ICG	Regional Inter-Agency Coordinating Group
ICP	International Comparison Programme
ICPD	International Conference on Population and Development
IDB	Islamic Development Bank
IDRC	International Development and Research Centre
ILA	International Leadership Academy
ILO	International Labour Organization
IMF	International Monetary Fund
ISO	International Organization for Standardization
JCEDAR	Joint Committee on Environment and Development in the Arab Region
LAS	League of Arab States



### ABBREVIATIONS (*continued*)

NENARACA	Near East-North Africa Regional Agricultural Credit Association
NGO	Non-governmental organization
PAM	Policy analysis matrix
R and D	Research and Development
RBAS	Regional Bureau for Arab States
RNE	Regional Office for the Near East
ROSTAS	Regional Office for Science and Technology in the Arab States
SITC	Standard International Trade Classification
SNA	System of National Accounts
SOLIDERE	The Lebanese Company for Development and Reconstruction of Beirut Central District
TRIPS	Trade-related aspects of intellectual property rights
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEDBAS	Regional Office for Education in the Arab States
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNESOB	United Nations Economic and Social Office in Beirut
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNHCR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women
UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East
UNSD	United Nations Statistics Division

### ABBREVIATIONS (*continued*)

UNU	United Nations University
UNV	United Nations Volunteers
WEC	World Energy Council
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization
WSTA	Water Science and Technology Association
WTO	World Trade Organization

*Notes:* References to dollars (\$) are to United States dollars, unless otherwise stated.

In view of the multidisciplinary framework for the activities of ESCWA during the biennium 1996-1997, many linkages were established between ESCWA programmes, as well as between ESCWA and a variety of regional organizations, United Nations bodies and other international organizations. As a result, a certain amount of information on these programmes has inevitably been repeated throughout the text. This information is listed under several different headings in order to illustrate adequately the nature and scope of the Commission's work.

**Chapter I**

**The Economic and Social  
Commission for Western  
Asia**



# I. THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION FOR WESTERN ASIA

## A. MANDATE

The **Economic Commission for Western Asia (ECWA)** was established by Economic and Social Council resolution 1818 (LV) of 9 August 1973 as the successor to the United Nations Economic and Social Office in Beirut (UNESOB). In 1985 the Commission was redesignated the **Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA)**, in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1985/69 of 26 July 1985, in order to acknowledge more fully the social aspect of the Commission's activities. The majority of activities under the regular programme of work are regional in dimension. There are, however, a limited number of activities that are country-specific, but have regional implications.

The main functions of the ESCWA secretariat are as follows:

- (a) To promote economic and social development through regional and subregional cooperation and integration, and to serve as the main general economic and social development forum within the United Nations system for the ESCWA region;
- (b) To formulate and promote development assistance activities and projects commensurate with the needs and priorities of the region and to act as an executing agency for relevant operational projects;
- (c) To provide substantive secretariat services and documentation for the Commission and its subsidiary bodies;
- (d) To organize conferences and intergovernmental and expert group meetings, sponsor training workshops, symposia and seminars, and carry out studies, research and surveys within the terms of reference of the Commission;
- (e) To establish and develop statistical databases and information pertinent to the work of ESCWA, through the collection, compilation, standardization, evaluation, processing and dissemination of data to end-users, and to assist member countries in improving data services;

(f) To coordinate ESCWA activities with those of the major departments/offices at United Nations Headquarters, the specialized agencies and the intergovernmental organizations, including the League of Arab States (LAS), the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC)<sup>1</sup> and the Organization of the Islamic Conference, with a view to avoiding duplication and ensuring complementarity and exchange of information.

## **B. ESCWA WITHIN THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM**

ESCWA is a part of the Secretariat of the United Nations and is one of the five regional commissions which report to the Economic and Social Council, the principal organ of the United Nations responsible for coordinating economic and social activities in the United Nations system. The other regional commissions are: the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA). ESCWA carries out its work at the Western Asia regional level.

Since its establishment in 1974, the secretariat of ESCWA has been located in three different capitals: Beirut, Baghdad and Amman. However, at its seventeenth ministerial session held in Amman in May 1994, the Commission decided by its resolution 197 (XVII) to move its permanent headquarters to Beirut. The move to Beirut was completed in the fall of 1997.

## **C. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE**

The organizational structure of ESCWA is outlined in the chart below.

ESCWA carries out its technical and substantive activities in the economic and social fields through its substantive divisions and regional advisers. The substantive divisions are the Energy, Natural Resources and Environment Division; the Economic Development Issues and Policies Division; the Social Development Issues and

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<sup>1</sup> The Gulf Cooperation Council members are Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.

Policies Division; the Sectoral Issues and Policies Division; and the Statistics Division.

The Technical Cooperation Division provides regional advisory support services and promotes development assistance activities and projects in line with the needs and priorities of the region, while the Administrative Services Division provides administrative support services in the areas of conference servicing; human resources management; budget and finance; and general services related to building management, electronic data processing, procurement, communications and records management, and security and safety.

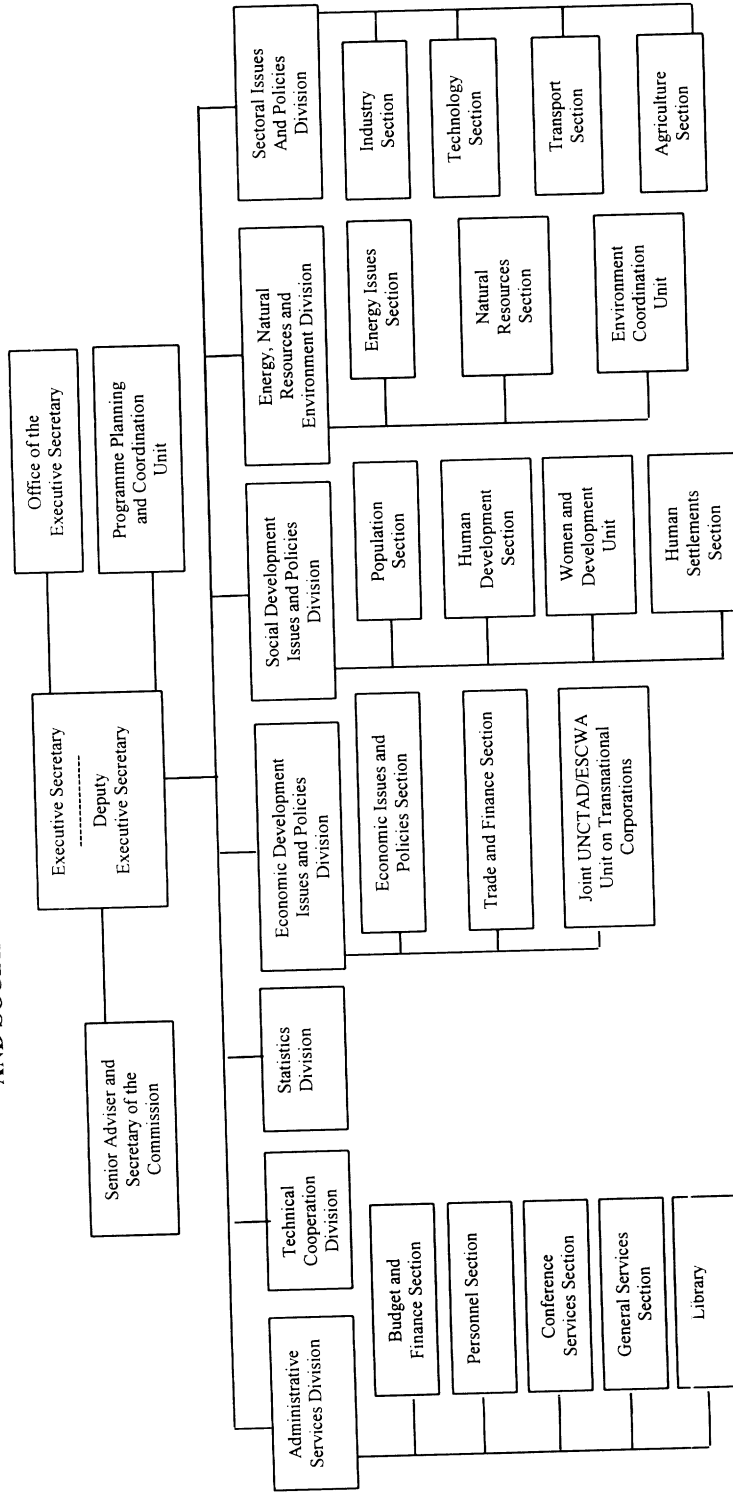
#### **D. GOVERNING BODY AND SPECIALIZED SUBSIDIARY INTERGOVERNMENTAL BODIES**

The **ministerial session** of ESCWA is the governing body of the Commission. The session is held every two years, in accordance with ESCWA resolution 196 (XVII) on the frequency of sessions of the Commission and the Technical Committee. It is assisted by the specialized subsidiary intergovernmental bodies listed below, which serve as points of interaction on programmatic issues between the specialists of the member States and the substantive staff of the ESCWA secretariat.

The Standing Committee for the Programme, the main subsidiary body of the Commission, was established by ECWA resolution 114 (IX) of 12 May 1982 on the ECWA medium-term plan for the period 1984-1989. The Standing Committee was subsequently redesignated as the **Technical Committee** by ECWA resolution 125 (XI) of 26 April 1984 on the general policy-making structure of the Commission.

There are six specialized subsidiary **intergovernmental committees**, which report to the ministerial session of the Commission. The Technical Committee on Liberalization of Foreign Trade and Economic Globalization in the Countries of the ESCWA Region and the Committee on Water Resources meet annually, while the others meet biennially. The committees are listed below:

**CHART. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE SECRETARIAT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION FOR WESTERN ASIA**





(a) The **Statistical Committee**, established by ESCWA resolution 179 (XVI) of 2 September 1992, held its second session in Amman on 24-26 February 1997;

(b) The **Committee on Social Development**, established by ESCWA resolution 198 (XVII) of 31 May 1994, held its first session in Amman on 25-26 March 1997;

(c) The **Committee on Energy**, established by ESCWA resolution 204 (XVIII) of 25 May 1995, held its first session in Amman on 26-27 November 1997;

(d) The **Committee on Water Resources**, established by ESCWA resolution 205 (XVIII) of 25 May 1995, held its first session in Amman on 30 March 1997;

(e) The **Committee on Transport**, established by ESCWA resolution 213 (XIX) of 7 May 1997, is scheduled to hold its first session in 1999;

(f) The **Technical Committee on Liberalization of Foreign Trade and Economic Globalization in the Countries of the ESCWA Region**, established by ESCWA resolution 214 (XIX) of 7 May 1997, is scheduled to hold its first annual session in 1999.

The above committees were established to assist the Commission in formulating its work programme in their respective areas of competence.

#### E. OTHER BODIES

The **Advisory Committee** was established by ESCWA resolution 175 (XV) of 18 May 1989 on strengthening the role and performance of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia. This Committee consists of heads of diplomatic missions in the host country of the Commission or their representatives, as well as a high-level representative of the host country. The Advisory Committee plays a consultative role and functions as a major means of communication between member States and the ESCWA secretariat and among member States themselves on important matters requiring attention between the biennial sessions of the

Commission. During 1996-1997 the Committee held meetings on 7 April and 4 November 1996; and on 8 April and 19 October 1997.

On the initiative of ESCWA, and pursuant to calls by the Secretary-General and the member States for closer coordination of United Nations activities, the **Regional Inter-Agency Coordinating Group** was established in Amman in April 1995 to enhance coordination among the regional offices of the United Nations. The Group held meetings on 16 January, 17 June and 26 September 1996; and on 16 June and 24 September 1997 (box 1).

**Box 1. Inter-agency coordination at the ESCWA regional level**

The **Regional Inter-Agency Coordinating Group (ICG)** was established in April 1995 to strengthen coordination at the regional level and identify modalities for this purpose. The Group comprises representatives of United Nations regional offices.

In 1996, ESCWA continued to fulfill its role as coordinator of United Nations activities at the regional level. The ICG, which first met in 1995 with ESCWA as the convenor, met in Amman five times during the biennium 1996-1997.

Representatives of UNICEF, UNRWA, UNDP, UNIFEM, UNFPA, ESCWA, Habitat, UNHCR, WFP, UNESCO, and WHO attended the second meeting held on 16 January 1996. Discussions focused on recent events with an impact on United Nations activities in the region; follow-up to world conferences; the financial crisis of the United Nations; operational activities for development; and information-sharing and cost-efficiency within the United Nations system. An agreement was reached to continue coordination in various fields through task forces, and the Inter-Agency Task Force on Gender was established with UNIFEM as the convenor.

The ICG met again on 17 June 1996 on the occasion of the visits to Amman of the Director-General of UNESCO and the Executive Director of UNFPA. The two officials were the guest speakers at this meeting, which was chaired by the Executive Secretary of ESCWA. Both speakers emphasized the importance of United Nations inter-agency coordination in the new era of post-cold war relations, within the context of the Agenda for Peace and the Agenda for Development, as well as within the frame work of global conferences, and

**Box 1 (continued)**

clarified the interrelationships in the work of the various United Nations bodies. Representatives from UNICEF, UNRWA, UNDP, UNFPA, ESCWA, UNHCR, WFP, UNESCO/UNEDBAS and WHO attended the meeting.

The fourth meeting, which took place on 26 September 1996, emphasized follow-up to international conferences as well as recent activities of ESCWA and the United Nations specialized agencies in the region. The meeting, attended by the representatives of UNICEF, UNDP, UNFPA/CST, ESCWA, UNRWA, Habitat, UNHCR, WFP, UNESCO and WHO/CEHA, decided to further the integrated approach for follow-up to global conferences, in particular the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), the World Summit for Social Development (WSSD), the Fourth World Conference on Women, and the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) under the umbrella of UNSCAP (the United Nations System-Wide Conference Action Plan), according to ACC initiatives and decisions.

The fifth meeting of the ICG was held on 16 June 1997 and included a briefing on recent events, including ESCWA's nineteenth session on reform in the United Nations, the move of ESCWA to Beirut, the situation of locally recruited staff and preparations for the twenty-fifth anniversary of the establishment of ESCWA. The meeting also discussed the Middle East/North Africa economic summits (Cairo, November 1996 and Qatar, November 1997); the first meeting of the Mediterranean Development Forum (Marrakesh, May 1997; the United Nations Seminar on Assistance to the Palestinian People: Promoting Palestinian Human Development (Amman, May 1997); a preliminary project proposal on integrated follow-up to global conferences; gender issues; implications of the ESCWA move to Beirut for the ICG; and recent developments within the United Nations. The meeting was attended by UNICEF, UNRWA, UNDP/RBAS, UNIFEM, UNFPA and UNFPA/DASE/CST, ESCWA, UNHCR/Amman, WFP, UNESCO and WHO/CEHA.

The sixth meeting of the ICG took place on 24 September 1997. It discussed the implications of United Nations reform for the region and for Jordan; follow-up to global conferences; cooperation of the Beirut members of the Regional Inter-Agency Coordination Group with ESCWA; and assistance rendered by ESCWA to Jordanian staff in seeking alternative careers. The meeting was attended by the UNICEF regional and area offices, the UNRWA field office, UNDP, UNIFEM, UNFPA (Jordan and CST), UNU/ILA, ESCWA, Habitat, UNHCR, WFP and UNESCO.

**Box 1 (continued)**

ESCWA intends to continue its efforts to foster concerted action at the regional level on issues of common interest and to maintain and strengthen its ties with members of the ICG in Amman by holding at least one meeting a year in Amman and one in Beirut.

**Chapter II**

**Economic and Social  
Conditions in the  
ESCWA Region  
in 1996-1997**

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## **II. ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS IN THE ESCWA REGION IN 1996-1997**

For ESCWA, which is the only United Nations institution mandated to deal with geo-economic and social issues in the region, socio-economic and political developments frame a setting where rapid and unpredictable change continues to affect economic and social conditions.

Within this context, economic and social developments in the ESCWA region during 1996-1997 were influenced by fluctuations in oil prices over the two-year period, the introduction and acceleration of economic reforms in many of the member countries, and the continuing impact on prosperity and progress of social problems such as unemployment, poverty and destabilization of the social structure. The unstable political situation that continued to prevail in the region, mainly as a result of the impasse in the Middle East peace process, was also an obstacle to economic growth and social development.

In 1996, the gross domestic product (GDP) in the ESCWA region, excluding Iraq, registered an increase of 5.3 per cent over 1995, and preliminary estimates of economic growth for 1997 indicated an increase of 3.6 per cent over 1996. These growth rates translated into positive real per capita growth for two consecutive years, the first positive per capita growth to be reported in the region in several years. While 1996 was characterized by rising oil prices, an increase in oil production in 1997 in several countries compensated for the decline in oil prices that year. As a result, the region's total oil revenues for 1997 remained at approximately the same level as in 1996.

The importance of the oil sector in the economies of most ESCWA members remains apparent. Excluding Jordan, Lebanon, and the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, which do not export any oil, the remaining ESCWA members are all exporters of oil in varying degrees, and oil revenues play an important role in their economies. In the GCC countries, for example, despite diversification efforts over the last two decades, the oil sector still represents around 35 to 40 per cent of these countries' combined GDP. Oil revenues account for as much as 80 per cent of Government revenues and for more than 85 per cent of exports in these countries. In the more diversified economies, such as Egypt, the Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen, oil revenues do not assume such a dominant role but still

represent a major source of foreign exchange earnings. Therefore, the recovery in oil revenues registered in 1996-1997 exerted a direct and appreciable impact on the level of activities in the majority of ESCWA member countries.

The recovery, however, was not confined to the oil sector alone. Several sectors, especially trade, banking and construction, recovered on their own and were further helped by the oil revenue increases. This was particularly true for the GCC countries. In the more diversified economies, the non-oil sectors that performed exceptionally well and contributed significantly to GDP growth included industry, agriculture, construction and tourism.

Economic reform and structural adjustment programmes, designed to correct internal and external imbalances as well as enhance efficiency and productivity, are particularly crucial in what is rapidly becoming a global economy. These programmes continued to be implemented in this period in most of the ESCWA member countries with diversified economies, but the pace of economic reform varied widely from country to country. While economic reform efforts intensified in the more diversified economies, most notably in Egypt, Jordan, the Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen, in most of the GCC countries the drive for economic and structural adjustment lost most of the momentum it had gained in 1995, with the exception of Oman. In a number of GCC countries, the policy to diversify the tax base and further reduce subsidies on goods and services provided by the Government was largely suspended in 1996 and 1997. Efforts must be made to reinstate this policy, as its gradual implementation would allow the GCC countries to avoid abrupt reductions whenever confronted with a significant decline in oil revenues.

In 1996-1997 some ESCWA member countries introduced new investment laws to encourage foreign and domestic private investment. Egypt and Jordan reduced tariffs; in these two countries there were indications that low tariffs on imported capital goods positively affected production and productivity. The pace of privatization increased in Egypt, Kuwait and Oman, and in several member countries specific measures were introduced to improve the efficiency of their stock markets. Egypt, in particular, witnessed a surge in the volume of shares traded on its stock market, which attracted both domestic and foreign private investors.



Growth diversion factors were also in action in the region. These factors fueled the perception of the region as politically unstable and exerted a reverse impact on economic growth, particularly in the more diversified economies of the region. Prominent among these factors were the lack of progress in the Middle East peace process; the bombings across the Israeli-Lebanese borders; the intermittent closure of the borders of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip; and the terrorist attacks on tourists in Egypt. These factors slowed the growth efforts in the region and affected the inflow of foreign capital and tourists to the region. The economic sanctions imposed on Iraq by the United Nations also seriously affected economic growth and development, not only in Iraq itself, but also in those ESCWA member countries which traditionally had strong trade ties with Iraq, particularly Jordan.

High unemployment rates remained a major problem in the ESCWA region despite the growth rates in real GDP and the increase in per capita income reported above. This was particularly true with regard to the more diversified economies in the region. These economies have, over the past several years, been generally characterized by a relatively high rate of population growth and a consequent increase in the number of new entrants to the labour market, which the countries concerned have been unable to absorb fully. Unemployment in the GCC countries has also been rising. However, in these countries, the causes of unemployment tend to be different from those in the more diversified economies.

The inflation rates in most ESCWA member countries were generally low in 1996 and fell further in 1997. The rates among the more diversified economies, however, tended to be considerably higher than those reported for the GCC countries. For example, Jordan's inflation rate, at 6 per cent for 1996 and estimated at 4.7 per cent for 1997, was the lowest among the more diversified economies, yet it was still higher than the highest rate (4.5 per cent in 1996 and an estimated 3.7 per cent in 1997, reported for the United Arab Emirates) among the GCC countries in 1996 and 1997 respectively.

All the ESCWA member countries managed to reduce their budget deficits as a percentage of GDP in 1996; and in 1997 this budget deficit was also relatively low and/or declining in most of the ESCWA region. Many developed and developing countries in

different areas of the world were unable to reduce their respective budget deficits as a percentage of GDP to below 3 per cent; however, Bahrain and Egypt reduced their budget deficit ratios to GDP to less than 1.5 per cent in 1996. Additionally, five ESCWA countries (Bahrain, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Yemen) achieved the below 3 per cent benchmark in 1997, and Kuwait was able to realize a large surplus in its Government budget. The following three main factors may have been behind this success: oil revenues that were significantly higher than those projected in all of the budgets of the GCC countries; generally constrained Government expenditure in some countries; and rising GDP growth rates.

In 1996-1997, there was a marked difference between the GCC countries and the countries with more diversified economies with regard to the performance of the external sectors of their economies. In the former, the surpluses in the balance of trade showed a considerable increase, owing to the sharp increases in oil export revenues. In the latter group of countries, deficits in the balance of trade were further widened because of the increase in their already high levels of imports. The increases in their imports submerged whatever increases occurred in their exports. Tourism and workers' remittances counted positively in the current account of the countries with more diversified economies, whereas they counted negatively in the current account of the GCC countries. It is interesting to note that the performance of the external sector not only differed between the two main groups but also differed within each group.

Despite the improvements achieved in many social sectors such as health, literacy, education and housing, in the period 1996-1997 the ESCWA region continued to grapple with such basic social problems as the uneven distribution of development and its benefits, the poor quality of education, a dearth of quality health services, inadequate employment opportunities, poverty, high rates of population growth, a lack of serious improvements in the situation of women or their role and the staggering problems of urbanization. These problems have been compounded by political instability, the aftermath of major wars, and massive movements and dislocations of local communities nationally and/or across national boundaries.

The magnitude and persistence of these social development problems do seem unnecessarily overwhelming, given the vast potential of the region and its availability of both human and financial resources. Yet it is exactly this persistence and magnitude, which earmarked the last four decades as decades of lost developmental opportunities, that are a direct result of failures in the management of social development. The apparatus for development, which expended much of its resources in over-centralization, thereby marginalizing the participation of the institutions of civil society, was incapable of steering social development when faced with the stress and uncertainty that continue to dominate the region.

The ESCWA member countries continue to witness high rates of growth in urbanization. By the year 2000, a majority of the inhabitants of the countries of the region will be living in urban areas. Only three countries are an exception to this trend: Egypt, with its urban population constituting 46 per cent of the total; Oman, with 16 per cent of its population residing in urban areas; and Yemen, where this figure is set at 38 per cent. In Bahrain, Kuwait, Lebanon and Qatar, the urban population is projected to exceed 90 per cent of the total by the year 2000. In addition, major cities have become a fact in regional urbanization patterns. One manifestation of this is the "city state", exemplified by some Arab countries such as Bahrain and Kuwait, where nearly all of the population resides in one urban centre. Another is the primary city, represented by such urban centres as Cairo, with a population of over 9 million; Baghdad, with over 4 million; and Damascus and Riyadh, each with over 2 million inhabitants. Accelerating urbanization has outpaced the capabilities of most Governments of the region to deal with it. The lack of appropriate policies leads to major social bottlenecks, whether in the increasing pockets of unemployment and poverty, or crime and drug abuse.

Major achievements in the education sector in this period included gains in formal education. However, available data indicated wide discrepancies, with Yemen having a combined first, second and third level gross enrolment ratio of 45 per cent, while Bahrain achieved a high of 84 per cent. In addition, many countries of the region have shown marked improvements in their adult literacy rates over the last two decades. Nonetheless, a few lag behind, suggesting that their policies in this area may have been

ineffective. Three countries in the region currently have adult literacy rates below 50 percent: Egypt, at 49.8 per cent; Oman, at 35 per cent; and Yemen, at 41.1 per cent. A major cause for concern in the development of the education sector is the persistence of a bias in favour of liberal arts education, despite the growing need for more emphasis on vocational and technical education. Secondary technical enrolment as a percentage of total secondary education ranged between the lows of 0.3, 0.8, 2.2, 2.7 and 2.8 percent for Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, Oman, Qatar and Saudi Arabia respectively; and the relatively high enrolments of 23.3, 20.9, 13.7 and 12.7 per cent for Jordan, Egypt, Iraq and Bahrain respectively.

The ESCWA member countries continued to encounter major challenges in their labour markets during the period 1996-1997. Chief among these were the integration of young persons and women into these markets. Young persons, as new entrants to the labour market, faced serious obstacles, whether in regard to the availability of training and employment opportunities, or to the suitability of their qualifications for the labour market. Women's share of the adult labour force remained low in comparison to countries with similar income levels. The low participation rate of women in economic activity resulted in a generally low labour participation rate. In non-GCC countries, the labour force as a percentage of total population varied between 35 per cent for Egypt and 26 per cent for Iraq.

Poverty in the ESCWA region currently affects about 27 per cent of the population, representing an increase from the mid-1970s and early-1980s. This rate is similar to the level of poverty in Latin America and the Caribbean (25 per cent). It is lower than the percentage of poverty for the entire Arab region (33 per cent) and/or for the developing countries (28 per cent).<sup>2</sup>

Social development indicators in the ESCWA member countries were uneven in their performance and growth rates. The

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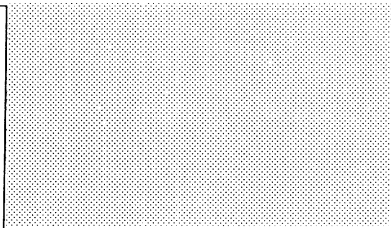
<sup>2</sup> In this report, the term "Arab region" includes all of the 13 ESCWA members, plus the following states that are members of the League of Arab States: Algeria, Comoros, Djibouti, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Mauritania, Morocco, Somalia, Sudan and Tunisia.

social sectors still constitute high regional and national priorities on the agenda for development in the ESCWA member countries.

Against this background, ESCWA provided a unique and neutral forum for debating regional development issues. In its capacity as a centre for the formulation of regional development strategies, policies, studies and projects within a multidisciplinary framework, ESCWA continued its activities in 1996-1997 in accordance with its work programme and priorities, as outlined below.



**Chapter III**  
**ESCWA Activities in**  
**1996-1997**







### **III. ESCWA ACTIVITIES IN 1996-1997**

#### **A. BACKGROUND**

The programme of work for ESCWA is conceived within the framework of the United Nations' system-wide medium term plan, which includes ESCWA's medium-term plan. This plan outlines the main strategies and objectives of ESCWA over a period of four years, beginning in 1998. These broad strategies and objectives are then to be translated into concrete activities. The biennial programme budget specifies these activities and anticipates the human and financial resources required for their implementation. The programme of work, covering the various social and economic areas within its mandate, is two-faceted. Analytical work and norm-setting, the bulk of ESCWA's work, are complemented by operational activities. In addition, upon their request and on an ad-hoc basis, advisory services are provided to the member States by the regional advisors at ESCWA. The prescribed programme of work for ESCWA is complemented by a number of technical cooperation projects which are presented to donors for funding.

The sections below summarize ESCWA activities under the regular programme of work. Also reviewed are the regional advisory services and technical cooperation activities that took place during the biennium 1996-1997.

#### **B. OVERVIEW OF STRATEGIES AND CONSTRAINTS**

The spirit that guided the formulation and implementation of ESCWA's work programme in 1995 continued to direct its efforts in 1996-1997. This spirit was embodied in the following:

- (1) A thematic and multisectoral approach to the work programme, incorporating issues that cut across the relevant sectors;
- (2) An attempt to forge closer links with the ESCWA member States as well as with other United Nations agencies. The work with the member States was conducted with a view to responding more fully to their needs. The impetus for working more closely with the other United Nations agencies was the desire to undertake joint activities with the objective of creating a greater impact as well as rationalizing resources;

(3) A drive to perform in an environment fraught with uncertainties. Constraints included the fast-changing conditions in the ESCWA region; the redefinition of the role of the United Nations and the dwindling financial and human resources experienced system-wide as a result; and, in late 1997, the relocation of the ESCWA secretariat from its temporary location in Amman, Jordan, to its permanent headquarters in Beirut, Lebanon (box 2).

#### Box 2. ESCWA's move to Beirut

Since the establishment of ESCWA in 1973 (then known as ECWA), its headquarters has moved several times. In 1982, as a result of the civil war in Lebanon, ESCWA moved from Beirut to Baghdad. Then, in the wake of the Gulf war, it moved again, on a temporary basis, to Amman. By Commission resolution 197 (XVII) of 31 May 1994, a decision was made to make Beirut the site of ESCWA's permanent headquarters. This decision was subsequently endorsed by the Economic and Social Council in its resolution 1994/43 of 29 July 1994, which also requested the Secretary-General to ensure that the transfer would be financed within existing resources and primarily from external contributions.

Following the resolutions, a complex exercise was set in motion, requiring considerable interaction at the diplomatic, legal, programmatic, logistic, financial and personnel levels in order to accomplish the move. Extensive planning, coordination and management of a broad range of issues were required. The move also called for cooperation between ESCWA officials, the Government of Lebanon, senior officials and the offices concerned at United Nations Headquarters, and outside contractors and consultants.

The entire move was conceived as a set of interrelated tasks covering the broad spectrum of ESCWA activities. In order to manage the exercise efficiently, including the continuous monitoring of critical elements and milestones, a model for the move was set up within the Microsoft Project software environment. To assist in internal coordination, a **Technical Task Force**, which was particularly concerned with the building, was formed early in the process; in addition, a **Steering Committee** was formed to assist in planning and executing the move. The personal participation of the Executive Secretary, who served as Chairman of the Steering Committee, aided coordination with programme managers; with the Administrative Services Division, which had overall responsibility for planning the move; and with external participants.

**Box 2 (continued)**

The **Agreement between the United Nations and the Government of Lebanon concerning the Headquarters of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia** was signed on 27 August 1997 after lengthy negotiations. This headquarters Agreement was drafted by the Office of Legal Affairs at United Nations Headquarters and negotiated with their assistance. In addition to standard provisions as set out in the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations, the ESCWA Agreement contains other provisions, such as permitting access to the local labour market for family members of officials of the Commission and extending the Agreement to all United Nations entities occupying the building, allowing them to operate under the same legal regime. The Agreement subsequently was ratified by the Government of Lebanon and a presidential decree was issued to this effect.

With the exception of meetings that could not be rescheduled, the delivery of outputs, normally due by 31 December 1997, was advanced to 31 August 1997. With this in mind, beginning in February 1997 activities were reprogrammed in order to meet the new deadline. This decision facilitated the relocation of staff with children beginning 1 September 1997 so that the children could be accommodated in the Beirut schools. Furthermore, as the reproduction facilities were not expected to become fully functional in Beirut until early 1998, advancing the date for the delivery of outputs also allowed the Conference Services Section to complete the processing of its programmed publications in Amman. Finally, in order to minimize the impact of the move on ESCWA's **programme of work**, the relocation of staff was planned in phases from **1 September through 31 December 1997**.

On 20 March 1998, the building was formally inaugurated as the **United Nations House** by the Secretary-General of the United Nations during his official visit to Lebanon. Other United Nations agencies in Beirut are expected to relocate to the building; negotiations are ongoing.

The **logistics** of the move included: (a) establishing a liaison office in Beirut to serve as a forward base of operations and to monitor the progress of the new building; (b) granting procurement contracts, both in Amman and Beirut, for transport of equipment and personal effects, and for other services; (c) phasing out and liquidating activities in Amman; (d) planning and implementing the physical move of staff, office property, and personal household effects; (e) establishing and carrying out accreditation and importation procedures in Beirut, Lebanon; (f) instituting requirements and specifications for the

**Box 2 (continued)**

allocation of space and furniture in the building; (g) commissioning the operating systems for the building; and (h) initiating administrative operations in Beirut.

The **financial** aspects of the move involved: (a) planning and budgeting the move; (b) adjusting estimates for the programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999 based on operating costs in Beirut; (c) opening a trust fund for receiving voluntary contributions to finance the move; (d) screening and selecting a new bank in Beirut in consultation with United Nations Headquarters; (e) phasing down financial operations in Amman and starting up in Beirut; and (f) maintaining simultaneous operations in both places during the transition phase.

In order to finance the costs of the move, negotiations were held with the Government of Lebanon, and the Executive Secretary contacted the ESCWA member States to request them to pledge contributions. So far, in addition to providing the building and its fittings, the Government of Lebanon has contributed US\$1 million, while the Government of Kuwait has contributed US\$500,000. The Government of Saudi Arabia has pledged US\$1 million.

Plans reflecting ESCWA's requirements for the construction of the new headquarters **building** were drawn up jointly with the Government of Lebanon in August 1996. The building was officially occupied by ESCWA on United Nations Day, 24 October 1997; and a ceremony marking the handover of the building to ESCWA took place on 10 November 1997 under the auspices of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Lebanon.

The **personnel** aspects of the move included: (a) internationally recruited staff: (i) establishing and notifying staff of their entitlements in Beirut; (ii) carrying out survey missions to Beirut regarding schools, housing, medical facilities, security, and other staff welfare issues; (iii) obtaining agreement from the Government of Lebanon with regard to certain issues of the Headquarters Agreement that were important to staff; (b) locally recruited staff: (i) planning and implementing a job placement support programme in Amman, since such staff would be separated from the Organization upon ESCWA's move to Beirut; (ii) negotiating with United Nations Headquarters to obtain a special separation package for outgoing staff that was 50 per cent higher than normal; (iii) Placing separated staff on mission assignments, as available; (c) other personnel actions: (i) reviewing job descriptions, taking into account new office needs in Beirut; (ii) developing specialized tests, and testing and screening applicants for local

**Box 2 (continued)**

posts in Beirut; (iii) developing orientation manuals and briefing sessions for transferring and newly recruited staff in Beirut.

Although great care was taken in the planning of the move of ESCWA to Beirut, the transition was not without its uncertainties that, in turn, had to be managed. However, as issues arose, ESCWA approached each of them, evaluated its significance, and integrated it into the plan of action, assuring its satisfactory resolution.

In 1996-1997, the number of multidisciplinary activities nearly tripled, rising from three in 1994-1995 to eight in 1996-1997. Moreover, while these activities were largely experimental in 1995, they became institutionalized in 1996-1997. Terms of reference were established for the multidisciplinary task forces and they were subject to close monitoring from the outset, enabling them to become more effective (box 3).

**Box 3. ESCWA multidisciplinary activities**

As a result of the restructuring exercise and reform actions launched in 1994 in terms of the programme of work, ESCWA adopted a thematic and multidisciplinary approach. This consisted of formulating and implementing a number of core activities that cut across the different substantive divisions in ESCWA. Within this context, multidisciplinary activities featured prominently in ESCWA's work programme for the biennium 1996-1997. A total of eight multidisciplinary activities were carried out in 1996-1997, as compared with three in 1994-1995. Moreover, by virtue of their relevance to more than one area, these activities gained momentum. Introduced on an experimental basis in 1994-1995, these activities became an integral part of the 1996-1997 work programme, since their mandates, *modus operandi* and monitoring mechanisms had already been defined.

A review of the multidisciplinary activities is provided below:

**(1) Activities concerned with the alleviation of poverty**

These activities involved all four sections of the Social Development Issues and Policies Division (SDIPD): Population, Human Development, Women

**Box 3 (continued)**

and Development, and Human Settlements; and the Economic Issues and Policies Section, the Industry Section, and the Statistics Division (see box 10 for details).

(2) **Activities relating to follow-up action in the ESCWA member countries on the implementation of the recommendations of global conferences**

These recommendations were implemented by the four sections of the SDIPD, through their work programme, was based on the theme of the improvement of the quality of life.

(3) **The first session of the Committee on Social Development**

Servicing this activity involved the concerted efforts of all four sections of the SDIPD, with the Population Section serving as the focal point for preparations for the session, which was held in Amman in March 1997. In fulfilment of its main objective of increasing coordination and cooperation between the countries of the region and the ESCWA secretariat in the area of social development, the Session brought together representatives of 12 ESCWA member States and observers from 15 Arab, regional and international organizations.

(4) **Assessment of the role of NGOs and programmes for networking among them in the occupied territories and under the Palestinian Authority**

This set of activities was undertaken by the Agriculture, Industry, and Women and Development Sections. A study on the subject was issued in four volumes: the executive summary and three case studies; (i) *NGOs Operating in the Health Sector*; (ii) *NGOs Operating Women's Income-Generating Microenterprises*; and (iii) *NGOs Operating in the Agriculture Marketing Sector*. A related expert group meeting was held in the West Bank in December 1997 which provided a forum for discussion with the Palestinian National Authority, NGOs, donor agencies, international organizations and non-governmental organizations to address prospects of networking.

**Box 3 (continued)****(5) Activities concerning the impact of the peace process on selected sectors**

These activities were carried out by the Industry Section and the Trade and Finance Section. Two studies were completed: (i) *Impact of the Peace Process on Selected Sectors: Textiles and the Electronics Industry*; and (ii) *Impact of the Peace Process on Trade in Services: The Tourism Sector in the ESCWA Region, Case-Studies on Egypt, Jordan and Palestine*. In June of 1997, a related expert group meeting was also held in Amman.

**(6) Survey of economic and social developments in the ESCWA region**

The *Survey of Economic and Social Developments in the ESCWA Region*, which includes contributions from all substantive sections, is one of the recurrent multidisciplinary publications of ESCWA. It maps and analyses the socio-economic developments in the region during each year of the biennium in question. The second part of the Survey addresses, in depth, two issues of importance to the region, one in each year of the biennium. In 1996-1997 the two issues addressed were a) privatization in the ESCWA region, and b) tourism and the economies of the ESCWA member countries. In conjunction with each issue of the *Survey*, a summary is published on a yearly basis. In addition, in the year following the issuance of each survey, a preliminary overview of economic developments in the ESCWA member countries for that period is published to provide policy makers with an early assessment of economic developments in the region.

**(7) Activities concerning WTO/GATT issues for ESCWA member countries in selected sectors**

These activities were undertaken by the Trade and Finance, Industry, Agriculture and Technology Sections, all of which contributed to the umbrella study, *Challenges and Opportunities of the New International Trade Agreements (Uruguay Round) for ESCWA Member Countries in Selected Sectors*. Under the above title, the sections prepared the following four publications: (i) *Crude Oil, Petroleum Products and Petrochemicals, with Statistical Supplements*; (ii) *Implications of WTO/TRIPS for Technology Transfer in the Pharmaceutical Industry*; (iii) *Agriculture under GATT and WTO, with Special Reference to Egypt*; and (iv) *Textiles and Clothing Industry*.

**Box 3 (continued)**

An associated expert group meeting on the topic was held in Kuwait in November 1997.

(8) **Assessment of research and development capabilities**

Both the Technology Section and the Industry Section were involved in conducting activities related to the development of research capabilities, which culminated in the following two studies: *Assessment of Research and Development in Selected ESCWA Member Countries: Local Technological Inputs*; and *Women's Research and Development Opportunities in Selected ESCWA Member Countries*. An expert group meeting on R&D was also held (Beirut, December 1997).

Attempts to forge closer links with member States included, among other things, continuation of the meetings of the Advisory Committee (see p. 7). The Committee was established by ESCWA resolution 175 (XV) of 18 May 1989 on the strengthening of the role and performance of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia.

Three additional subsidiary intergovernmental bodies established by the Commission also served to further communication with the member States. These bodies served as forums for interaction on specialized issues between the secretariat of ESCWA and the representatives of its member States. The three committees that met for the first time in 1997 were the Committee on Social Development, the Energy Committee and the Committee on Water Resources. The Statistical Committee, established earlier, held its second session in 1997.

As part of the effort to cement relations with the ESCWA member States, the Executive Secretary of ESCWA made a number of visits during the period 1996-1997, meeting in New York and Geneva with the heads of mission of the ESCWA member States. On those occasions, he shared with them the concerns and activities of ESCWA and briefed them on major developments. Beginning in 1995, and continuing in the biennium 1996-1997, the Executive Secretary also paid visits to the member States, providing an



opportunity for him to learn firsthand of their needs as well as to impress upon them the mission and concerns of ESCWA (box 4).

**Box 4. Missions of the Executive Secretary to  
the ESCWA member States**

As part of the continuing efforts to promote regional cooperation and to cement relations with the members of the Commission, the Executive Secretary visited the majority of the ESCWA member States in 1995. In 1996-1997, the purpose of his visits was threefold: to represent the Secretary-General in meetings; to carry a message from the Secretary-General to some of the ESCWA member States, soliciting their contributions in order to facilitate ESCWA's move from Amman to Beirut; and to head a technical mission to Lebanon. Some of the details of these activities are reported below:

- ▶ At the request of the Secretary-General, the Executive Secretary was designated the team leader for the special technical mission to Lebanon (27 May-10 June 1996), which was carried out in accordance with General Assembly resolution 50/22 C of 25 April 1996 on the Israeli military attacks against Lebanon and their consequences.
- ▶ The Executive Secretary, as the representative of the Secretary-General, participated in the economic conferences for the Middle East/North Africa (MENA) region, held in Cairo from 12 to 14 November 1996, and in Doha from 16 to 18 November 1997 respectively.
- ▶ In September and October 1997, the Executive Secretary travelled to Manama to meet with Sheikh Isa bin Salman Al-Khalifa; to Abu Dhabi to meet with Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al-Nahyan; and to Kuwait to meet with Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmed Al-Sabah, to deliver messages from the Secretary-General and from the Prime Minister of Lebanon.
- ▶ In 1996 and 1997, the Executive Secretary participated in several missions to Lebanon to liaise with the authorities there regarding ESCWA's move to Beirut. The headquarters agreement with Lebanon was signed on one such mission in August 1997; meetings were also held with the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Lebanon at that time.

In an endeavour to respond more fully to the requirements of its end-users, especially the ESCWA member countries, the ESCWA secretariat conducted a readership survey in 1996. The survey assessed the efficacy of ESCWA publications and the constituency and dimension of its readership. Results indicated that all respondents used ESCWA publications in their area of specialization.

In addition to implementing its prescribed programme of work, ESCWA has assumed a greater role as the regional arm of the United Nations. It was in this spirit that the Secretary-General designated the Executive Secretary of ESCWA to represent him at a number of conferences, missions and other activities throughout the region (box 4), including the United Nations Special Technical Mission to Lebanon (see box 5).

**Box 5. United Nations Special Technical  
Mission to Lebanon**

In response to General Assembly resolution 50/22 C of 25 April 1996 on the Israeli military attacks against Lebanon and their consequences, the Secretary-General designated the Executive Secretary of ESCWA as team leader of the inter-agency United Nations Special Technical Mission to Lebanon (27 May–10 June 1996). The Secretary-General dispatched this Mission to prepare a report on the human and material losses and damage resulting from the hostilities.

In addition to representatives from ESCWA, the Mission comprised representatives from the Department of Development Support and Management Services (DDSMS), New York; FAO, Rome; ILO, Beirut; UNDP, Beirut; UNICEF, Amman and Beirut; UNIFIL, Naqoura; and WHO, Beirut. Recognizing that the formation of a regional United Nations team for this task signalled the importance of the role assigned to these parties as regional entities, the team worked in close collaboration to assure the success of the Mission.

The work and observations of the Mission may be summarized as follows:

- (a) The team observed the effects of the military attacks on the social sector and infrastructure as well as upon the supply of electricity and

**Box 5 (continued)**

water. While the damage cut across several sectors and extended to both human life and property, the human losses and the indirect effects on the economy and the society were far greater than the material losses to public and private property;

(b) In spite of the presence of masses of displaced people from southern Lebanon and the West Bekaa, sheltered mainly in houses and other locations in Beirut rather than in relief centres, which rendered the provision of relief assistance difficult, the relief efforts were successful;

(c) Children suffered tremendous psychological damage as a result of the attacks;

(d) The response to this emergency situation on the part of the institutions of civil society within and outside of Lebanon showed the cohesiveness of the people;

(e) Physical damage was repaired with startling promptness, indicating a strong presence by the Lebanese State. Admiration was expressed with regard to the resilience demonstrated by the Lebanese in addressing this crisis;

(f) The Lebanese Government succeeded in rallying the mass media to focus its attention on this crisis, which received wide coverage as a result;

(g) The team indicated the actual cost of damages when it was found appropriate, but did not provide an estimate of overall losses. They acknowledged that it was important for the Government of Lebanon to have a realistic assessment of financial losses, without compromising prospects for the future development of Lebanon if the extent of the material damage reported proved to be daunting.

The report of the Special Technical Mission was submitted to the Secretary-General in mid-June 1996 and was presented to the General Assembly at its fifty-first session.

ESCWA remains firm in its commitment to perform in spite of the uncertain conditions in the region, where the changing political scene renders it difficult for ESCWA to pursue a number of pivotal

issues, including the implications of the peace process with Israel for the ESCWA member countries.

The redefinition of the role of the United Nations has imposed changes and constraints system-wide. This has affected the allocation of both human and financial resources, and is yet another cause for the uncertainties experienced by ESCWA. In this context, it is to be noted that owing to the freeze imposed on recruitment, at the end of the biennium 1996-1997 the vacancy rate in the Professional category in the ESCWA substantive divisions remained high, exceeding 30 per cent of planned staff resources. On the positive side, the majority of the numerous high-level managerial posts (posts of chief) that were vacant in 1995 have now been filled. It should be noted that, owing to the ongoing process of reform within ESCWA and other United Nations organizations, it is not yet possible to gauge the effects nor fully reap the benefits of the reform measures introduced. Box 6 gives an account of reform measures undertaken by ESCWA.

#### Box 6. Reform measures at ESCWA

One of the landmarks in the early stages of reform at ESCWA was the launching of the process in January 1992 during a high-level intergovernmental meeting to review the medium-term plan (MTP) for the period 1992-1997. This was followed by the authorization to reorganize the ESCWA secretariat, given to the Executive Secretary by the sixteenth session of the Commission in its resolution 191 (XVI), dated 2 September 1992. In November 1993, the Office of Inspections and Investigations (now the Office of Internal Oversight Services [OIOS]) also recommended a fundamental reappraisal and restructuring of ESCWA. Thereafter, from 1993 till 1997, ESCWA embarked on a series of reform initiatives involving substantive, administrative and organizational restructuring. These initiatives were reported to the Commission's seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth sessions respectively. In December 1996, at the *Meeting of Eminent Persons on the Role and the Future of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia*, this process culminated in the evaluation of the reform measures undertaken up to that point. The reforms were ultimately endorsed at the Commission's nineteenth session, by resolution 216 (XIX) of 7 May 1997, which also called for further reinforcing the role of the Commission.

**Box 6 (continued)**

**Reform initiatives** involved the following areas:

**In substantive terms**, the revision of the MTP for the period 1992-1997 led to the adoption of five interdisciplinary subprogrammes to replace the existing 15 sectoral subprogrammes, as well as to the subsequent reformulation of the 1994-1995 programme budget along thematic lines. This strategy prevailed in the preparation of both the 1996-1997 and 1998-1999 programmes of work.

It also led to the adoption of a multidisciplinary approach in the formulation and implementation of the programmes of work, launched in 1994-1995 on an experimental basis and refined and institutionalized in 1996-1997, through the establishment of multidisciplinary task forces with defined mandates and *modus operandi*. Another outcome of the reform was the progressive refinement of the programmes of work, resulting in a 40 per cent reduction in the total number of activities planned for 1994-1995 in comparison with the 1998-1999 programme of work. Furthermore, activities were concentrated in areas where ESCWA has a comparative advantage, such as water, energy, transport, human development, gender and statistics; and a reduction in activities was made in areas addressed by other existing specialized United Nations agencies, such as agriculture and industry. Another facet of substantive reform consisted of ensuring complementarity between normative and operational activities.

**In organizational terms**, the reform initiatives resulted in the reduction of the previous seven substantive divisions to five; and, as an efficiency-based measure, in a substantial reduction in the number of General Service posts in the Division of Administrative Services for 1998-1999. These steps were intended to establish a better balance between administrative and substantive requirements.

**To improve coordination with the ESCWA member States and with other United Nations agencies**, in 1994 ESCWA reactivated the Advisory Committee (see p. 7); and it also established and/or operationalized six specialized intergovernmental subsidiary bodies to enhance reciprocity with representatives of ESCWA member States on sectoral issues (see part I. D. above).

**Box 6 (continued)**

Also with a view to enhancing its linkages, ESCWA established the Regional Inter-Agency Coordination Group in Amman in 1995. The Group continued its activities in 1996-1997, strengthening coordination between United Nations regional offices in both substantive and administrative terms (box 1).

**To promote technological advancement and capacity-building** under the reform process, extensive task-oriented computer literacy training was launched in 1995. Other measures in this area included conducting management training courses to improve the management culture (1993-1997); initiating staff training in substantive areas to improve performance (1996-1997); developing a relational database to facilitate programme planning and monitoring (1996-1997); and, to facilitate internal communication, operationalizing the Local Area Network (LAN) in 1996-1997.

**Current mechanisms employed to support substantive activities** include the reactivation and/or establishment of the following six committees in 1998: Information Technology; Publications; Programme Evaluation; Technical Assistance Projects; Library; and Special Activities (lectures and exhibits). Other ongoing reform initiatives include continuing to pursue a more focused, coherent and multidisciplinary programme of work and further refining mechanisms to achieve this objective; giving due consideration to merging the Programme Planning and Coordination Unit with the Technical Cooperation Division at ESCWA, with a view to effecting better integration of normative and operational activities at the substantive level (1998-1999); continuing computer and other skills training, such as secretarial skills; and expanding substantive training of staff. In conjunction with the relocation of ESCWA to Beirut (September-December 1997) a variety of administrative reform measures are planned or have already been implemented. A number of Beirut-based United Nations agencies will have the opportunity to share the premises at the new United Nations house, thus reducing costs.

The United Nations Information Service (UNIS) is being merged with the United Nations Information Centre (UNIC) in Beirut, which will provide combined information services for ESCWA as well as other Beirut-based United Nations agencies and enhance the impact of their work as well as increase cost-effectiveness (1998). Other reform measures include considering further steps for restructuring the Division of Administrative Services (1998-1999); outsourcing, in 1998, of selected services such as security operations and

**Box 6 (continued)**

maintenance, and operation of the United Nations House; streamlining administrative practices under the umbrella of track II of the reform process within the United Nations system; operationalizing the system-wide Integrated Management Information System (IMIS) in 1998; and establishing the Beirut chapter of the Regional Inter-Agency Coordination Group.

**Long-term reform perspectives** are expected to focus on exploring and defining the role of the ESCWA secretariat *vis-à-vis* other regional organizations in its capacity as a neutral international entity, not constrained by any ideological considerations, and on addressing the geo-economic problems of the region within the context of globalization.

Another destabilizing factor in 1996-1997 was the relocation of ESCWA from Amman to Beirut, which affected its infrastructure. The possible adverse effects of this relocation on the programme of work were mitigated by advancing the delivery dates for the majority of programmed activities to 31 August 1997, just prior to the departure of the first wave of ESCWA staff for Beirut. In addition, staff members were requested to work extended hours to fulfill this objective.

Considering the numerous constraints faced by ESCWA in 1996-1997, the implementation rate of 81 percent recorded in relation to quantifiable activities can be considered satisfactory. This is particularly true in the light of the large number of vacancies among Professional staff in the substantive divisions, which, as noted above, equalled over one third of the total human resources allocated to these divisions.

### C. ACTIVITIES OF SUBSTANTIVE DIVISIONS

#### 1. *Energy, Natural Resources and Environment Division*

The overall objectives of this Division include promoting regional and subregional cooperation in the development of natural resources, implementation of joint energy projects, and following up on the implementation in the region of relevant chapters of Agenda 21. Priority is given to areas of particular importance to the region

such as water, where the division has conducted and further refined assessment of water quantity and quality, and pursued optimal development and management of water resources, including shared non-conventional water resources. Other priorities include the development of non-conventional energy resources, interregional and intraregional cooperation for energy transportation networks, with a focus on electrical power grids, and the identification and management of related environmental problems.

(a) *Energy Issues Section*

Activities in this Section during the period 1996-1997 focused on energy supply and quality of life issues. Concerns included ensuring sufficient energy supplies for economic and social development and protecting the environment. Activities also stressed ways of contributing to the improvement of the quality of life through both energy efficiency and the development of renewable energy technologies, particularly in remote and rural areas. In addition, efforts were directed to fostering subregional and regional cooperation in the field of energy, with particular emphasis on the interconnection of electricity grids between the ESCWA member countries.

In an effort to promote regional cooperation in the field of energy, the Section completed the study, *Technical and Economic Aspects of the Establishment of a Regional Electricity Network*, which assessed the ongoing and planned electricity interconnection projects within the ESCWA region and at the interregional level, and developed a proposal for a regional electricity grid and its possible technical, economic and environmental benefits. The associated *Expert Group Meeting on the Prospects for a Regional and Interregional Electricity Network* in the ESCWA member countries was held in Amman on 25-27 November 1997.

To promote rational use of energy and improvement of the quality of life in the energy sector, two studies were undertaken. The first of these, *A Regional Approach for the Efficient Use of Energy* (in Arabic), presented the actual status of primary energy production and final energy consumption, as well as improvement of efficiency in the energy producing and consuming sectors in the ESCWA member States. The second study, *Regional Programme for the Development of New and Renewable Energy Resources:*

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*Assessment and Prospects*, evaluated the current status of renewable energy development in the region, including case-studies on Egypt and Jordan; developed a regional programme; and proposed the establishment of a renewable energy promotion mechanism (REPM), which is intended to foster cooperation between ESCWA member States based on their inherent capabilities to market renewable energy.

In order to assess the status and experiences in privatization of the electric power sector in the ESCWA member States, as well as the prevailing privatization approaches and regulations that can be considered by countries in the region, a four-volume study was undertaken entitled *Assessment of Privatization of the Electric Power Sector in Selected ESCWA Member Countries*. The four volumes of this study comprise an overview and case studies on Egypt, Jordan and Yemen.

The *First Session of the Committee on Energy* was held in Amman on 26-27 November 1997. The Committee discussed its operational mechanism, reviewed ESCWA's achievements in the area of energy and recommended issues to be undertaken within the 2000-2001 work programme in order to meet the needs of member States. A report was also prepared on the session.

(b) *Natural Resources Section*

Under its 1996-1997 work programme, the Natural Resources Section continued to collaborate with the ESCWA member States to provide the framework, guidelines and advice needed for the optimal development and management of water resources in the region. To this end, it was necessary to take into consideration problems of water scarcity and inefficient utilization as well as the need to place more attention on the transboundary aspects of major surface and groundwater sources.

With regard to the development of water resources in the region, the following studies were undertaken:

(i) *Development of Non-Conventional Water Resources* concerned water availability from desalination facilities or treated waste water, as a means to bridge the water supply/demand

imbalance, especially in the GCC countries. A related expert group meeting was also held in Manama on 27-30 October 1997 (box 7).

(ii) *Water Pollution in Selected Urban Areas in the ESCWA Region—Case Studies: Damascus, Gaza and Jeddah* focused on a variety of aspects of the environmental impact of water pollution. Recommendations were made concerning measures to improve of water quality and combat pollution, especially in urban areas.

(iii) *Review of the Impact of Pricing Policy on Water Demand in the ESCWA Region with a Case Study on Jordan* assessed the cost of water production from different water sources and current water tariffs being levied in the region. The concept of privatization and its trends in selected countries was reviewed; and guidelines were presented for the development of an effective water pricing policy.

In addition to the above studies, the *Proceedings of the Training Course on Using Remote Sensing Data and GIS Techniques in Hydrology and Hydrogeology* (Amman, December 1995) was published in 1997; this document concerned the application of modern techniques in the assessment and management of the region's water resources. The *Proceedings* may be used as training material to enhance the capacity of water specialists in the ESCWA region.

**Box 7. Expert group meetings and workshops in the water sector**

The *Expert Group Meeting on Water Legislation in the ESCWA Region* (Amman, November 1996) was convened to review the existing and/or planned efforts to formulate water laws, regulations and ordinances. It also concerned their enforcement and the overall relationship of these efforts to the development, utilization, protection and management of water resources in the ESCWA member countries. The meeting was attended by government-designated officials and representatives of international organizations involved in legal issues relating to the status of water legislation at the national level. The meeting provided a platform for the participants to exchange views on the establishment of mechanisms for the effective enforcement of such legislation, with the objective of achieving rational utilization and integrated management of water resources in the region. A publication on the subject was issued in 1997,

**Box 7 (continued)**

reviewing the status of water legislation in selected ESCWA member States and providing guidelines for the formulation of modern water laws and regulations. The ESCWA secretariat is expected to prepare a project document on training in this important field.

The *Expert Group Meeting on Development of Non-Conventional Water Resources and Appropriate Technologies for Groundwater Management in the ESCWA Member Countries* was held in Manama from 27 to 30 October 1997. It was jointly sponsored by ESCWA, the United Nations Environment Programme and the BGR, in cooperation with the Ministry of Electricity and Water of the State of Bahrain.

The meeting was attended by government-designed experts on non-conventional and conventional water resources from all 13 member countries and areas. In addition to five Arab and international scientific research centres and one non-governmental organization, representatives of fifteen regional and international organizations also attended the meeting. Drought conditions and excessive water utilization in all sectors have led to an increase in water demand. The experts discussed ways and means to contribute to the development of additional freshwater sources, particularly non-conventional sources, to bridge the resulting water supply/demand imbalance.

The experts also focused on the importance of the role of modern technologies in meeting excessive water demand and the inevitable use of non-conventional water resources, not only as an augmenting resource, but also as a major component in the overall water supply. A technical publication on the subject, incorporating the outcome of the discussions at the meeting, will be issued in 1998.

The Section also participated in and presented papers at a number of workshops on water, including the WHO *Regional Workshop on Water Conservation and Reuse: Practical Approaches and Strategies* (Amman, 4-7 March 1996); the UNIDO *Workshop on the Role of Industry in the Development and Rational Use of Water Resources in the Arab Region* (Amman, 13-15 May 1996); the UNDP *Current Situation of Water Resources in the ESCWA Region: Training Course on Water Resources Management* (Fujairah, 22-24 November 1997); the ACSAD *Training Course on Groundwater Protection* (Amman, 6-10 December 1997); and the *Third Gulf Water Conference: Towards Efficient Utilization of Water Resources in the Gulf* (Muscat, 8-13 March 1997).

The question of promoting management of shared water resources was addressed in the study, *Transboundary Water Resources in the ESCWA Region: Utilization, Management and Cooperation*. This publication reviewed ongoing and future plans to develop, manage, and conserve water resources in the region. Major shared regional surface and groundwater basins were identified; regional water agreements and practices documented; and guidelines and strategies for development and management of transboundary water resources suggested. Another study assessed the role of NGOs active in the water sector and briefly examined their role in general development activities, including the water sector. Requirements for NGOs to function efficiently and effectively in the ESCWA member countries, particularly in the water sector, were presented.

Review of the status of knowledge of transboundary groundwater sources was undertaken in a joint ESCWA/BGR (Federal Institute for Geosciences and Natural Resources of Germany) project entitled "Advice to ESCWA member countries in the field of water resources". The study, *Investigation of the Basalt Aquifer System Shared by Jordan and the Syrian Arab Republic*, presented an effective modality for enhancing cooperation and coordination between member States in developing and managing shared water resources. The study was also conducted within the framework of an ESCWA/BGR technical cooperation project.

The study, *Water Legislation in Selected ESCWA Countries*, reviewed existing and planned efforts to formulate water laws, regulations and ordinances, together with enforcement mechanisms regarding the development, utilization, protection and management of water resources in the ESCWA region. An expert group meeting was also held on the topic in Amman from 24-26 November 1996 (box 7).

The formation of the **Committee on Water Resources**, which held its first session in Amman on 30-31 March 1997, with the participation of water resource experts from the member States (box 8), marks significant progress towards enhancing coordination of water activities among the ESCWA member States.

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**Box 8. Establishment of the Committee on Water Resources**

One of the goals in the development of the ESCWA Secretariat's water resources programme is to promote **regional cooperation** in the field of water resources. With this in mind, ESCWA pursued extensive efforts to achieve the active involvement of the authorities concerned in the ESCWA member States, including the establishment of the Committee on Water Resources under ESCWA resolution 205(XVIII) of 25 May 1995, which was adopted at the eighteenth session of the Commission. The Committee on Water Resources is made up of representatives from the member States who are specialized in the field of water resources.

The Committee's mandate includes:

1. Participating in the establishment of priorities for programmes of work and medium-term plans in the field of water resources;
2. Monitoring developments in the field of water resources in the ESCWA member States;
3. Monitoring the progress achieved in the activities of the ESCWA secretariat in the field of water resources;
4. Following up on international and regional conferences and the participation of member States, coordination of member States' efforts in connection with the implementation of resolutions States' efforts in connection with the implementation of resolutions and recommendations.

The *First Session of the Committee on Water Resources* was convened in Amman on 30 March 1997 with the participation of representatives from 10 ESCWA member States, as well as water resource experts from international and regional organizations. Discussions focused on current and planned water programmes. A report on the session was submitted to the nineteenth session of the Commission.

(c) *Environment Coordination Unit*

The principal functions of this Unit are to follow up on the implementation of Agenda 21 in terms of cross-sectoral clusters and on the recommendations of ministerial conferences on environment;

and to promote and strengthen the issue of sustainable development within the programmes of the ESCWA secretariat.

In this connection, during the period 1996-1997 the Unit made numerous contributions to the *Task Manager Report* on the regional implementation of Agenda 21 for submission to the Commission on Sustainable Development; and a contribution reviewing the state of the environment in the ESCWA region was made to the UNEP publication, Global Environment Outlook: State of the Environment Report 1996. ESCWA also participated in the meetings of the Joint Committee on Environment and Development in the Arab Region (JCEDAR), helping to promote regional cooperation in the implementation of priority environmental and sustainable development projects. Contributions to these meetings were made on policy related issues; capacity-building; environmental training and awareness; and the institutions, legislation, tools and standards for environmental management.

The Unit also prepared the *Report to the Commission on Follow-up Action to Agenda 21*, which reviewed progress achieved in the regional implementation of Agenda 21. The Report was presented to the nineteenth special session of the General Assembly, held from 23 to 28 June 1997, to assist in the appraisal of the implementation of Agenda 21 (a five-year assessment of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development [UNCED]). Another publication, the *Survey on Incorporating the Environmental Dimension into Development Plans*, covered various aspects of environmental management as an element of national planning in the ESCWA region, and underlined the importance of strengthening institutional and regulatory frameworks at the regional and national levels.

In-house coordination of environmental issues included the development and distribution to the ESCWA substantive divisions of status matrices of priority with regard to Agenda 21, which were meant to serve as a tool for identifying shortcomings in the implementation of Agenda 21 in the region and, consequently, to identify ways and means of enhancing capacity-building and regional cooperation.

## 2. *Economic Development Issues and Policies Division*

This Division is responsible for analyzing economic development issues and policy changes of importance to the development process in the region. It also analyses the effects of global economic developments on the region and promotes economic cooperation and integration in the member countries. The strategy followed by the Division in the implementation of its programmed activities emphasized extensive participation by experts from national, regional and international organizations. Additional resources were also mobilized to supplement regular budget allocations in a manner that increased the coverage of studies, the number of case studies, and the contribution of non-governmental organizations (NGOs). This strategy helped to make policy recommendations more effective.

### (a) *Economic Issues and Policies Section*

This Section is responsible for reviewing and analysing economic developments in the region and making recommendations for policies and measures. It conducts activities concerning major economic issues facing the region and assists in identifying the best course of action, including policies, strategies and measures.

During the biennium 1996-1997, the Section met these objectives by preparing its annual publication *Survey of Economic and Social Developments in the ESCWA Region* (henceforth referred to as the *Survey*). The multidisciplinary *Survey* includes contributions on various social and economic sectors from most substantive divisions and provides an in-depth analysis of socio-economic developments at the regional and country levels, together with a forecast for the following year. The annual *Summary* of the *Survey*, which is sent to the Economic and Social Council and to the ESCWA member States, provides an early assessment of the economic situation nationally and regionally. Moreover, in response to a request by the Executive Secretary, the Section published for the first time in December 1996, and again in 1997, the *Preliminary Overview of Economic Developments in the ESCWA Region*. The main objective of this initiative was to provide decision-makers in the region, and the public at large, with an estimate of developments and trends in the main economic variables before the end of the year, as well as an outlook for the following year. In the light of the positive

response received from readers, ESCWA has decided to continue issuing this publication on an annual basis.

ESCWA also publishes part two of the *Survey*, which addresses specific developmental issues of concern to the region. In 1996, part two, entitled *Privatization in the ESCWA Region*, covered experiences in both the GCC countries and those with more diversified economies, with a view to providing decision-makers in the region with a comparative analysis of those experiences. For those countries in the region that have not yet embarked on this course, the 1996 study also proposed various methods and policies to consider before venturing into privatization and provided a set of recommendations on important policy issues related to privatization. In 1997, part two of the *Survey*, entitled *Tourism and the Economies of ESCWA Member States*, assessed developments in this increasingly important sector.

The Section complemented these activities by issuing *Review of the Progress Made by the Republic of Yemen in the Implementation of the New Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the 1990s*, which examined Yemen's success in carrying out its economic reform programme. Other activities included *Institutional Aspects of Privatization: a Comparative Approach in the ESCWA Region*, which covered Egypt, Jordan and Oman. The study focused on the role institutions are required to play in privatization and in an efficient market economy in order to achieve credibility, predictability and accountability. The related *Expert Group Meeting on Institutional Aspects of Privatization* was held in Beirut on 1-3 December 1997. Another study, the *Impact of Economic Reform Policies on Poverty in Selected ESCWA Member Countries: Egypt, Jordan and the Republic of Yemen*, assessed the implications and impacts of ongoing economic reform policies on poverty and provided a comparative analysis of the effects of different policies for poverty eradication in the countries concerned.

(b) *Trade and Finance Section*

This section is responsible for analysing developments in the external and payment sectors, and in the monetary and financial sectors in the region. It assesses the impact on these sectors of major

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regional and international developments and formulates recommendations for policy makers in the region.

As part of their efforts to realize these goals, the Section coordinated the multisectoral study on *Challenges and Opportunities of the New International Agreement (Uruguay Round): Post-Uruguay Preparations and Adjustments in Selected Sectors*, and contributed the statistical supplement on *Crude Oil, Petroleum Products and Petrochemicals*. This umbrella study underscored the potential of the ESCWA member countries to participate fully in the new economic order, not only as major trading partners of countries in other regions but also trading blocs. A related activity, the *Expert Group Meeting on the Challenges and Opportunities of the New International Trade Agreement (Uruguay Round): Post-Uruguay Preparations and Adjustments*, was held in Kuwait on 24-26 November 1997. The Meeting aimed at raising awareness among the member States of the implications of the World Trade Organization (WTO) for the future of trade in oil and oil-related industries in the region.

In the area of money, banking and finance, the Section conducted two studies: the *Role of Financial Markets in Privatization in the ESCWA Region*, which examined the role the financial markets in the member countries can play to facilitate privatization and the measures needed to enhance this role; and *Regional Cooperation in the Mobilization, Management and Allocation of Financial Resources in the ESCWA Region*, which assessed the current status of cooperation in the region and the methods that should be followed to mobilize financial resources and improve institutional performance.

Under the umbrella study on the *Impact of the Peace Process on Selected Sectors*, which was coordinated by the Industry Section, a study was completed on *The Impact of the Peace Process on Trade in Services: The Tourism Sector in the ESCWA Region, Case Studies on Egypt, Jordan and Palestine*, which assessed the efforts of the ongoing peace process on developments in the tourism sector and identified the impediments to a favourable outcome.

Also published by the Section was the *Follow-Up Study on Trade Policy Aspects of Environmental Measures in the ESCWA Member Countries: Case Studies on Textiles Industry in Egypt*,

***Jordan and the Syrian Arab Republic.*** The original study assessed the environmental impact of technology in textiles for some major textile producers and exporters in the region, while the follow-up study assessed the impact of the new international environmental measures. The ***Assessment of Trade and Identification of Prospects for the Development of International Trading Companies in the ESCWA Member Countries*** examined, on a selected basis, the role of trading companies in executing foreign transactions and the need to enhance this role in the light of the liberalization of the international trading system.

Furthermore, the Section made substantial contributions to the ***Survey***, consisting of two chapters each year analysing developments in the external trade and payments sector, and in the monetary, finance and banking sectors in the region.

(c) ***Joint UNCTAD/ESCWA Unit on Transnational Corporations***

This Unit is responsible for analysing the role of transnational corporations in the economic development of the region. It meets this objective by compiling and analysing data on different aspects of transnational corporations in the region. It identifies problems and assesses the need for technical assistance to resolve the problems.

In 1996-1997, the Unit produced a document on ***Trade of the Arab World with China, 1987-1994: Composition and Trends***, which included the three-volume ***Statistical Supplements*** on imports and exports classified by SITC; imports and exports classified by country; and imports and exports of the Chinese trading partners classified by SITC. Preparations were also made for an intergovernmental meeting on the enhancement of interregional flows of goods, services and investment between China and the Arab world, but the event was postponed by the co-sponsors.

In addition, the Unit completed the ***1997 Compendium on National Legislation Governing Foreign Direct Investment in the Arab Countries: Original Arabic Text and Authoritative English Versions, Volume I-XIII***; a study on ***Foreign Investment Legislation Reflecting Environmental Concerns in the ESCWA Region: The Cases of Egypt and Jordan***, which showed the shortcomings in the existing set-up and proposed remedies; and a study examining the ***Interlinkages between Trade, Investment and***

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*Transfer of Technology: Implications in the Case of an Arab Common Market*, which was issued in three volumes and covered petroleum products, machinery and equipment, and agriculture.

Finally, a draft project proposal was prepared on the establishment of a regional centre for trade efficiency, which would be instrumental in training officials from member countries on different aspects of trade efficiency, including WTO disciplines and trade points; and a contribution was made to the *Survey*.

### **3. Social Development Issues and Policies Division**

The basic objective of this Division is to develop an integrated approach to follow up on selected priority issues. These issues are derived from the recommendations and programmes of action emanating from four global conferences: the International Conference on Population and Development; the World Summit for Social Development; the Fourth World Conference on Women; and the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II). These conferences shared the common goal of improving the material, as well as the non-material, quality of life. Despite differences in emphasis (box 9), they addressed the same core issues. One of these issues concerned the creation of a unified mechanism for monitoring and evaluating the implementation in the region of the recommendations and programmes of actions of world conferences. Other issues that required follow-up included strengthening the institutions of civil society; alleviating poverty in the Arab countries; and strengthening national capacities on gender and the empowerment of women.

#### **Box 9. An ESCWA mechanism to follow up on international conferences**

One of the major concerns of the ESCWA secretariat during the biennium 1996-1997 was the establishment of a specific mechanism to follow up on United Nations global conferences.\* This ESCWA mandate is based on those General Assembly resolutions requiring the United Nations Secretariat to undertake follow-up activities for each world conference at the global, regional and national levels. United Nations Headquarters prepared the United Nations System Conference Action Plan to integrate the recommendations of relevant world conferences. This action plan constitutes the worldwide framework for follow-up activities.

**Box 9 (continued)**

At the regional level, the regional commissions were mandated to undertake follow-up action. Accordingly, ESCWA has initiated a series of parallel activities to achieve an integrated approach for follow-up within the ESCWA secretariat (multidisciplinary/interdivisional) and among the United Nations agencies (inter-agency).

In view of the above, ESCWA has adopted for its programme of work a number of issues that cut across several fields. These were introduced in its 1996-1997 programme of work and firmly consolidated in its 1998-1999 programme of work. Among these issues two are parallel: the setting of norms and standards, and the establishment of legislative measures in both the economic and social sectors. Basically, the latter is an integral part of the programme of action for follow-up to global conferences, as the objectives and recommendations of these conferences set a standard for what is considered an acceptable quality of life for the people, for their physical as well as their non-physical well-being. Environmental issues, for example, fall into this area of concern.

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\* In the 1990s, a series of major United Nations global conferences shaped a worldwide consensus on future development imperatives and priorities:

In **Rio de Janeiro**, in 1992 (3-14 June), the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development gathered the world community to discuss the linkages between these elements; in **Vienna**, in 1993 (14-25 June), at the World Conference on Human Rights, world leaders and representatives of civil society debated the basic value of human rights for development; in **Cairo**, in 1994 (5-13 September), the International Conference on Population and Development re-established population as a central aspect of development; in **Copenhagen**, in 1995 (6-12 March), at the World Summit for Social Development, heads of State and Governments committed themselves to eradicating poverty, promoting full employment and reversing social disintegration; in **Beijing**, in 1995 (4-15 September), at the Fourth World Conference on Women, the world community called for the empowerment and advancement of women, including their full participation on the basis of equality; in **Istanbul**, in 1996 (3-14 June), the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) called on world leaders to meet the challenges of an increasingly urbanized world by providing better housing for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century; in **Rome**, in 1996 (13-17 November), the World Food Summit issued the Rome Declaration on World Food Security and the World Food Summit Plan of Action.

**Box 9 (continued)**

ESCWA also set up a multidisciplinary/interdivisional task force to follow up on the recommendations of the global conferences within the context of the overall programme of work.

Furthermore, ESCWA took the initiative, within the context of the Regional Inter-Agency Coordination Group, to formulate a flagship project on integrated follow-up to global conferences, subject to review by UNDP as well as by UNICEF, UNFPA, UNIFEM and other United Nations partners in the ICG. The project builds on the ongoing activities of each agency, expanding them by providing an integrated, inter-agency, and inter-disciplinary approach. The goals of the project include:

- (a) Providing technical assistance to the Governments in order for them to establish their own information systems. ESCWA will establish the regional information system and will then, through the resident coordinators, help the member States to establish national information systems that can be linked to the regional system;
- (b) Pursuing an advocacy programme to increase official and public awareness of the integrated recommendations of the conferences;
- (c) Enhancing the capacities of national and regional institutions involved in follow-up activities;
- (d) Supporting the development of the Regional Inter-Agency Coordination Group as the regional mechanism for inter-agency collaboration.

**(a) Population Section**

The primary concerns of the Population Section include monitoring and analysing population developments; compiling and disseminating information on population; and building national capacities in the formulation of population policies and the integration of population variables into national planning, bearing in mind the implications of population issues for the quality of life.

In the biennium 1996-1997, the Population Section undertook the following research and information-dissemination activities: (a) contributed annual chapters to the multidisciplinary *Survey*, within

the framework of monitoring population trends in the ESCWA member countries; (b) published issues No. 44 and 45 of the annual *Population Bulletin of ESCWA*. This publication, which was introduced around two decades ago, is a compendium of studies on population issues in the Arab world; (c) launched a *Database on demographic estimates and projections* for harmonizing the storage, processing and tabulation systems for population data in countries of the region; and (d) drawing on the above database, produced another issue of the recurrent publication *Demographic and Related Socio-Economic Data Sheets*, No. 9-1997.

In order to promote regional cooperation and build national capacities in the formulation of population policies, a UNFPA-supported population project for the Arab countries was implemented. It comprised four main categories of activity:

(a) Establishing a *Population Policy Integrated Information System*, which aimed at providing end-users with an information network in both English and Arabic, easily accessible through personal computers;

(b) Organizing a series of workshops. The four training sessions included the *First Training Workshop on Computer Software Packages for Population Policies and Sustainable Development* (Amman, 7-11 April 1996); *Training Workshop on Population Policies and Sustainable Development: Health Care, Education and Housing* (Amman, 8-12 September 1996); *Training Workshop on Population Policies and Sustainable Development: Food and Environment* (Amman, 29 June -3 July 1997); and *Training Workshop on Population Policies and Sustainable Development: Reproductive Rights and Reproductive Health* (Amman, 28 September - 2 October 1997);

(c) Organizing two meetings of the heads of the national population commissions in the Arab region. The first meeting focused on the impact of structural adjustment programmes on population (Amman, 9 October 1996); the second dealt with population dynamics, urbanization and environment (Amman, 1-4 December 1997);

(d) Preparing the study on *Population Policies in Egypt, Jordan and Yemen*.

In addition to the above, the Population Section was the focal point within the Social Development Issues and Policies Division for both technical and substantive preparations for the *First Session of the Committee on Social Development* (Amman, 25-26 March 1997), to which the Human Development Section, Women and Development Unit, and Human Settlements Section also contributed.

(b) *Human Development Section*

The objectives pursued by the Human Development Section included improving the quality of life by identifying ways and means to alleviate poverty, promote sustainable human development, develop the institutions of civil society and address the requirements of groups with special needs.

To address both the conceptual and operational aspects of the problem of poverty (box 10), the Human Development Section has, since 1994-1995, undertaken a series of mutually supportive multidisciplinary activities. Thus in 1996-1997 the Section prepared the *Exploratory Study on approaches to the Social Impact of Structural Adjustment Policies*, and the series, *Eradicating Poverty Studies*. In all, the series consisted of seven publications, including studies on poverty in Iraq, Lebanon and the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. An activity supporting this study, the *Expert Group Meeting on Improving Standards of Living in the Arab Mashreq Countries* (Cairo, 16-18 November 1997), reviewed national policies for eradicating poverty. The operational dimension of activities on poverty consisted of a project on "*Community development services*", initiated in 1995 in collaboration with AGFUND and UNDP/UNV, which covers selected rural areas in Egypt and the Syrian Arab Republic. The project aims at mobilizing local capabilities and resources and promoting self-reliance. The success of this project has prompted the donors to replicate this experience in other countries in the region.

**Box 10. ESCWA's regional approach to poverty-related issues**

A. Since 1994, ESCWA has been approaching issues of poverty eradication in a multidisciplinary manner, involving several different substantive divisions. ESCWA's work in this field was planned in three distinct but interrelated phases. These included:

**Box 10 (continued)****1. The study of the size and characteristics of poverty**

ESCWA has already completed this phase. Several technical and methodological studies concerning the measurement of poverty in Western Asia were issued. In addition, country profiles for Lebanon, Iraq and the West Bank and the Gaza Strip were prepared and the major characteristics and determinants of poverty in the region were identified.

**2. Reviewing national poverty eradication policies**

In November 1997, ESCWA organized an expert group meeting focusing on national poverty eradication policies. Plans call for this review of national policies to continue through the biennium 1998-1999.

**3. Major tools and measures to eradicate poverty**

Work to elaborate appropriate tools and measures to assist in eradicating poverty will be initiated in 1998-1999. However, ESCWA has already undertaken two major projects in this field that include: (a) promoting community development in selected ESCWA countries; and (b) organizing workshops for establishing small businesses and self-employment.

B. In 1998-1999, ESCWA will continue its multidisciplinary work, with the involvement of additional divisions in the process. By necessity, activities that follow-up on global conferences deal with the issue of poverty, which is a theme that runs through all the conferences. These activities can be categorized as follows:

1. **Critical assessment and study of poverty**, which includes the following: (a) two studies on the manifestations of and approaches to alleviating poverty in Western Asia: (i) poverty and youth, and (ii) the role of income-generation activities in eradicating poverty and improving the standard of living in local communities; (b) the social impact of structural adjustment, with special emphasis on unemployment; and (c) urban settlements and poverty. While the above four studies are regional in perspective, ESCWA also completes biennially a study on Yemen, the only LDC in the region, entitled *Review of the Progress Made by the Republic of Yemen in the Implementation of the New Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the 1990s*.

2. **Assessment of the needs of disadvantaged groups in society in urban and rural areas** will be undertaken in a study on the promotion of new and renewable sources of energy, with particular emphasis on rural and remote areas; see also 1(a) and (b) above on youth and the unemployed.



**Box 10 (continued)**

3. A **critical assessment of community development as a tool for eradicating poverty and as a self-help mechanism** will include the following studies: (a) the developmental role of the informal sector in community development: the cases of Egypt and Yemen; (b) the role of non-governmental organizations in local community development; (c) a critical assessment of local community development experiences in the Arab world; (d) development of rural communities by strengthening institution-building: two cases; (e) a manual on community development services, produced in response to the need for such a tool to guide field work; (f) microcredit lending facilities to poor women in rural and urban areas; and (g) small- and medium-sized industrial enterprises in selected ESCWA member States: strategies, policies and support institutions.

4. To guide the work and facilitate the **exchange of information and networking on poverty** and other social development issues, an integrated information system on social policies and measures in the areas of human development, gender, population and human settlements is being developed. Again, the issue of poverty cuts across these four areas.

In promoting the concept of sustainable human development, the Section undertook a number of activities under the auspices of a UNDP-assisted project, "*Preparatory assistance for regional support of national efforts in pursuit of sustainable human development*". This project promoted national and regional efforts to adopt and implement the concept and methodology of sustainable human development. During the biennium 1996-1997, these activities included:

(a) Seven studies on sustainable human development in selected areas: *Financing Human Development in the Arab World*; *Sustainable Human Development and Macroeconomics: The Case of the Arab World*; *Employment and Human Development Issues in the Arab World Countries*; *Measuring Human Development in Western Asia*; *Human Development Measurement with Special Reference to the Arab States*; *Human Development: An Attempt to Formulate an Arab Point of View in Concept and Measurement*;

and *Concepts of Science, Work and Social Solidarity in Islamic Arab Thought*;

(b) Operationalizing the concept of sustainable human development by means of advisory services in two areas: (i) establishing human development networks in the ESCWA member countries. Such networks were well established in Bahrain, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Yemen, and were initiated in the Syrian Arab Republic, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates and the West Bank and the Gaza Strip; and (ii) providing support to UNDP in the form of technical advisory services, rendered to the ESCWA member countries for the preparation of their national human development reports.

The needs of special groups, specifically the disabled, were addressed by integrating **community-based rehabilitation of the disabled** into the project on "*Community development services*"; and also by the creation of the **Regional Centre for Rehabilitation and Training of Blind Girls/Women** in Amman. The Centre, established in cooperation with AGFUND and the Government of Japan, prepares blind women for careers in computer technology. So far, a total of 10 women have been trained, four of them as trainers.

Other activities of the Human Development Section included preparing the **Report to the Commission on Technical Cooperation Activities for the Improvement of the Quality of Life in Human Development** and a study on **Selected Social Trends in Western Asia**, which focused on health and employment. The Section also disseminated information on social issues through its contributions to the **Survey of Economic and Social Developments in the ESCWA Region**, as well as through its **Database on national policies and measures concerning social development**, which, since it was launched, has become part of an umbrella project on policies in the social sector.

(c) *Women and Development Unit*

In 1996-1997, the main objective of this Unit was to improve the quality of life for women in the region. This was to be achieved by following up on the implementation of the recommendations of the Fourth World Conference on Women (FWCW), (Beijing, September 1995). The Unit focused on compiling and disseminating

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quantitative and qualitative information on the status of Arab women. Efforts were made to promote the participation of non-governmental organizations in the development process and in decision-making. The activities of the Unit also included sensitizing society to gender issues and assisting the member States in the empowerment of women.

In meeting the objective of disseminating information, the Unit completed two studies under the series *Arab Women and Development*. These were a *Critique of Personal Status Codes in Selected Arab Countries* and the *Values and Self-Identity of Bedouin and Urban Women* (in Arabic). The Unit also made a contribution to the *Survey*; and it prepared a publication entitled *Indices on the Situation of Arab Women: a Critical Review* (in Arabic).

To further the objectives of the FWCW, the Unit produced a revised version of the *Review and Assessment of the Progress Achieved for the Advancement of Arab Women in the Light of the Nairobi Forward-Looking Strategies* (in Arabic). This document reviewed, on the basis of information obtained from national reports, the situation of women in the 22 Arab countries, as well as the plans of action developed by these countries in preparation for the FWCW.

A number of efforts were made to strengthen the institutions that assist in empowering women in the ESCWA member countries. Activities carried out by the Unit that contributed to capacity-building in this area at the national level included:

(i) Providing technical assistance to the Government of Kuwait in conducting the Workshop on Women and Decision Making: Towards Formulating a Strategy for the Advancement of Kuwaiti Women (Kuwait, May 1996);

(ii) Organizing the *Expert Group Meeting on Assessment of the Role of the Non-Governmental Organizations in the Occupied Territories and their Prospects of Networking under the Palestinian Authority* (Bir-Zeit, West Bank, December 1997);

(iii) Contributing to a multidisciplinary study on the subject in item (ii) above.

To address gender issues, the Unit compiled gender-specific data, in cooperation with ESCWA's Statistics Division. This included maintaining a *Database on policies, measures and programmes concerning women and development*. The database was launched in 1995 and covers Jordan and Lebanon. In 1996-1997, data were compiled on policies adopted by member States relating to the advancement of women and the cohesion of the Arab family. ESCWA was also active in the Amman-based *Inter-Agency Task Force on Gender*, established in 1995 with UNIFEM as convenor and, later, with ESCWA as convenor.

(d) *Human Settlements Section*

The functions of the Human Settlements Section included improving the quality of life by promoting and monitoring human settlements policies and disseminating information on human settlements issues; analysing the needs of selected special population groups and communities in urban and rural areas, and promoting sustainable human settlements policies.

The Section met its objective of disseminating information on human settlements matters by publishing four issues of the *News Bulletin on Human Settlements in the Arab World* (Nos. 5, 6, 7 and 8), in collaboration with the League of Arab States and Habitat. In addition, the *Database on human settlements policies*, initiated in 1995, with an emphasis on housing and urbanization, was further developed under an umbrella project on policies in the social sector. The Section also made a contribution to the *Survey*.

In connection with urban and rural settlements, the Section undertook activities related to two special population groups: youth and the disabled. Studies were completed on *Youth in the Urban Environment in the ESCWA Member Countries* and *Accessibility for the Disabled in the Urban Environment in the ESCWA Region: Planning and Design Solutions*. In addition, the staff of this Section provided technical assistance to Lebanon in rehabilitating its urban environment to meet the needs of the disabled. This effort resulted in the publication, by SOLIDERE, of a book on *Accessibility for the Disabled: A Design Manual for a Barrier-Free Environment*. A study on *Community Participation in Urban Development in the ESCWA Region* addressed capacity-building for the community at large.

The promotion of sustainable human settlements policies in urban, rural and desert areas was the focus of a number of activities undertaken by this Section. A study on *Secondary Cities and Sustainable Urban Development* (in Arabic) was completed and an expert group meeting on the subject was held (Amman, November 1997). The concerns of an ESCWA member with special needs, Palestine, were addressed in a study on the *Situation of Palestinian Cities and Villages and Prospects for Development* (in Arabic), which assessed the magnitude of the housing problem; estimated housing needs until the year 2005; and proposed a strategy for housing development. The Ministry of Housing in Oman also benefited from the services of ESCWA, which involved providing advice on formulating a framework for housing policies until the year 2020.

Additionally, the Section held, in collaboration with the United Arab Emirates University in Al-Ain, the *Symposium on Environmentally Sustainable Human Settlements Development in Desert Regions* (Al-Ain, October 1996). This topic increased in significance in the context of its impact on development decisions in the Gulf countries, where the preservation of the cultural components of Bedouin society is an integral part of the framework of development plans.

#### **4. Sectoral Issues and Policies Division**

The aims of this Division revolved around promoting the harmonization of norms and standards, especially in the industry and transport sectors; fostering the transfer of technology in the region and building technological capabilities; and promoting sound agricultural policies.

##### **(a) Industry Section**

The objectives of the Industry Section included providing access to relevant information and the standardization thereof, as a critical factor in the effective launching and efficient operation of business enterprises; promoting industrial norms and standards; and studying the effects on the industrial sector of global and regional developments and trends such as the formation of the WTO, privatization, and the peace process with Israel.

Three activities undertaken by this Section helped to promote access to information on industry in the region: the Section's contribution to the *Survey of Economic and Social Developments in the ESCWA Region*; the *Survey and Assessment of Sources of Information in Industry in the Region*; and the *Survey of National Institutes of Standards in the ESCWA Region*. With the object of providing information on international norms and standards, the Section organized the *Workshop on Total Quality Management and ISO 9000, with Special Reference to the Cement Industry* (Abu Dhabi, May 1996).

To address the global trend of reactivating the role of the private sector in industrial development as a tool for improving the quality of life, the Industry Section has been engaged, for the past few years, in providing start-your-own-business courses and in creating appropriate training material to accompany them. These efforts resulted in the development of a training manual, "*Promotion of entrepreneurship: starting your own business in selected ESCWA countries*", as a guide for trainers. The Section was also involved in activities aimed at studying and promoting business incubation concepts, as the operational dimension of this set of activities, and in establishing pilot business incubators in several countries and areas in the region (Jordan, the Syrian Arab Republic and the West Bank and the Gaza Strip). This series of activities on the subject, which began in the biennium 1994-1995, culminated in *The Regional Seminar on the Assessment of the Role of Business Incubators in Economic Development* (Beirut, September 1996). This seminar aimed at appraising both regional and international efforts in this area and resulted in the publication of the *Report of the Regional Seminar on Assessment of the Role of Business Incubators in Economic Development*. Furthermore, a case study entitled *NGOs Operating Women's Income-Generating Microenterprises* was completed as part of the umbrella study on *Assessment of the Role of Non-Governmental Organizations and Prospects for Networking among Them in the Occupied Territories and under the Palestinian Authority*.

Other activities related to global trends and developments included a multidisciplinary study on the *Challenges and Opportunities of the New International Trade Agreements (Uruguay Round) for ESCWA Member Countries in Selected Sectors*. The Section's contribution to this study was *Textiles and*

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***Clothing Industry***, an analytical guide to the provisions of the Agreement on Textiles and Clothing and to those provisions of selected GATT agreements having a direct impact on major producers and exporters; and a study on ***Women's Research and Development Opportunities in Selected ESCWA Member Countries***.

The Industry Section also addressed one of the major regional developments, the process of peace with Israel, by undertaking a multisectoral study on the ***Impact of the Peace process on Selected Sectors***, contributing ***Textiles and Electronics Industries***, and coordinating contributions from other sections. An expert group meeting on the subject was also held (Amman, June 1997). This study analysed the changes that had taken place in the industrial sector of selected ESCWA member countries and reviewed changes resulting from peace initiatives, including their potential benefits and hazards.

(b) *Technology Section*

The main objectives of activities undertaken by the Technology Section consisted in promoting the transfer and diffusion of modern technologies; assessing and enhancing endogenous science and technology capabilities and formulating related policies; providing information on science and technology; and promoting regional cooperation in science and technology. All these activities were designed and implemented with a view to keeping abreast of global technological advancements and addressing emerging global challenges.

To provide information on science and technology, the Section issued two publications: ***Science and Technology Indicators: Basic Concepts, Definitions and Prospects for Development***; and the ***Directory of Research and Development Institutions in the ESCWA Member Countries***.

Activities pertaining to technological capacity-building and to the transfer and diffusion of modern technologies included the study on ***Environmentally Sound Technologies in the Tanning Industry***, which targeted proven modern technologies. These technologies permit a considerable reduction in hazardous effluents and in water consumption in the tanning industry. In addition, the study focused

on processes incorporating significant information technology inputs. The study on *Biotechnology in the ESCWA Member Countries: Sectoral Issues and Policies* also fell within this category. It reviewed the uses of biotechnology in agricultural production, food processing and the manufacture of selected pharmaceuticals.

Activities related to assessing and promoting science and technology capabilities included the study, *Assessment of Research and Development in Selected ESCWA Member Countries: Local Technological Inputs*. An expert group meeting (Beirut, 1-3 December 1997) considered the same subject, in addition to modalities that may be implemented in promoting R and D capabilities. The study, *Science and Technology Indicators: Basic Concepts, Definitions and Prospects for Development*, addressed the need to implement improved indicators in the assessment of science and technology systems in the ESCWA member countries, including outputs and input elements and qualitative as well as quantitative measures.

Activities within the same framework included the study, *Implications of WTO/TRIPS for Technology Transfer in the Pharmaceutical Industry*, which was the Technology Section's contribution to the multidisciplinary activity on *Challenges and Opportunities of the New International Trade Agreements (Uruguay Round) for ESCWA Member Countries in Selected Sectors*. The section's study addressed techno-economic issues pertaining to the pharmaceutical industry in selected ESCWA member countries and highlighted prerequisites and possibilities for future action within the framework of WTO/TRIPS regimes.

To meet the objective of providing information on science and technology, the Section issued a *Directory of Research and Development Organizations in the ESCWA Member Countries*.

(c) *Transport Section*

In the biennium 1996-1997, the harmonization of norms, standards and concepts in the field of transport, with special reference to transport facilitation information technology; modal and multimodal transport and the development of interregional links; and the dissemination of information on transport-related issues were the core objectives of the Transport Section.

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With the purpose of disseminating information on the transport sector, the Section published issues No. 7 and 8 of the *Transport Bulletin*, which is one of the few publications worldwide that provide transport-related information on the ESCWA region; a contribution was also made to the multidisciplinary *Survey of Economic and Social Developments in the ESCWA Region*; and assistance was rendered to the secretariat of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) in setting up a transport information system covering both land and maritime sectors.

Several activities were undertaken to address the issue of harmonization of norms, standards and policies. *Regional Guidelines for Transport Agreements and Conventions* analysed the status and application of international and regional transport regimes. *The Expert Group Meeting on Border-Crossing Formalities and Agreements for Transport of Goods and Passengers* (Cairo, November 1996), together with a study and a report to the Commission on the subject, discussed practical recommendations aimed at facilitating regional transport and reducing delays at border crossing points.

With respect to promoting intraregional and interregional transport links, activities undertaken included an *Expert Group Meeting on Multimodal Transport—Ports: Economic Restructuring and Global Trends* (Beirut, October 1997) and a study on the subject; and the *Expert Group Meeting on Intra- and Interregional Transport Links and Infrastructures* (Beirut, November 1997) and a report on the subject.

Other activities of the Transport Section included the *Report on the Activities of the Transport and Communications Decade in Western Asia: Phase II (1992-1996)*. Furthermore, the Transport Section jointly conducted, with the Arab Security Studies and Training Centre, an affiliate of the League of Arab States, the *Training Workshop on Traffic Regulations in Major Cities* (Amman, October 1996). Also within the framework of technical assistance, advice on the road transport sector was provided to the Palestinian Authority.

(d) *Agriculture Section*

The Agriculture Section continued to pursue its goals of disseminating information on agriculture in the region; bridging the food gap in the region by promoting the coordination and integration of agricultural policies, as well as evaluation of these policies and capacity-building of the member States in agricultural policy formulation; and rehabilitating the agricultural sector in areas with special needs in the ESCWA region, specifically in Palestine.

To accomplish the objective of disseminating and analysing information on agriculture, the Section made a substantial contribution to the *Survey of Economic and Social Developments in the ESCWA Region* and issued the annual publication *Agriculture and Development in Western Asia*, issues No. 18 and No. 19.

In terms of agricultural policies, the Section completed the *Evaluation of Agricultural Policies (Policy Analysis Matrix [PAM] Approach)*, which consisted of three national studies, one each for Egypt, Jordan and the occupied territories. The studies, aimed at determining future price and trade policies in the agricultural sector, employed the PAM approach to reveal the extent of policy distortions in agriculture and estimate the comparative advantage of each crop. Other activities in agricultural policy included two training workshops on *Agricultural policy analysis* (Amman, November 1996; and Gaza, July 1997) to enhance the ability of Government officials in the ministries of agriculture of the respective countries to apply various techniques of agricultural policy analysis, with a focus on the use of PAM.

In addition to the study and training workshops on PAM mentioned above, the Section continued to address the issue of rehabilitation of the agricultural sector in the occupied territories. Within this context, the Section prepared the "*Proposal for a general framework for an agricultural development policy for the occupied territories*". It also prepared two project documents: one on the "*Rehabilitation of agricultural cooperatives in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip*" and another on a "*Strategy for agricultural development in the occupied territories*". In addition, within the same context, a study on *NGOs Operating in the Agriculture Marketing Sector* was prepared as a contribution to the multidisciplinary activity on the *Assessment of the Role of Non-Governmental Organizations and*

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***Prospects for Networking among them in the Occupied Territories and under the Palestinian Authority: Case Studies*** (in Arabic).

The promotion and integration of agricultural policies in the region was the subject of the ***Expert Group Meeting on Promoting Regional Coordination and Integration in Food and Agriculture*** (Beirut, November 1997) and was followed by a study on the subject. These concerns were also the subject of another study, ***Long-Term Perspectives on Food and Agriculture Production in the ESCWA Region*** (in Arabic).

In addition, the Section contributed a study entitled ***Agriculture under GATT and WTO, with Special Reference to Egypt*** as part of the multidisciplinary activity on ***Challenges and Opportunities of the New International Trade Agreements (Uruguay Round) for ESCWA Member Countries in Selected Sectors***; and participated with AOAD in conducting the ***Workshop on the Implications of the GATT Agreement for the Region*** (Amman, May 1996).

### ***5. Statistics Division***

Activities in the Statistics Division in the period 1996-1997 centred on harmonizing statistical norms and standards in the ESCWA region and promoting the use of internationally recognized statistical standards; developing and updating sectoral statistical databases in the economic and social fields to facilitate the work of various divisions at ESCWA and to provide the ESCWA member States with reliable data; providing, on a recurrent basis, statistical series on selected topics; and providing support to regional advisory services. These services were rendered to the ESCWA member States on technical issues relating to statistical surveys and censuses and to the implementation of the 1993 United Nations' System of National Accounts (SNA).

To this end, as part of its efforts to develop databases and other technical material, the Statistics Division maintained the ***Labour Force Statistics Database*** by updating the data on each member State on the basis of information obtained from national surveys and censuses. This database contains labour force demographic and socio-economic data tables and aggregates, and allows feedback from end-users to be incorporated in later versions. Other databases

include the *Database on social statistics*; the *Database on industrial statistics*; and the *Database on national accounts*.

Furthermore, in response to system-wide mandates calling for the integration of women into the development process, the Statistics Division, in cooperation with the Centre of Arab Women for Training and Research (CAWTAR) in Tunisia, instituted a *Database on gender statistics and indicators for the Arab countries*, which is accessible to individual researchers as well as to organizations. Gender issues were further addressed by the issuance of a wall chart comparing *Women and Men in the Arab Countries*; and by the publication of the study, *Arab Women 1995: Trends, Statistics and Indicators*, which profiled and analysed the status of women in the 22 Arab countries. The study also reviewed women's demographic distribution and characteristics; household composition and family life; health conditions; educational attainment and employment status, and their participation in public life. In addition, it suggested policy measures to help improve the situation of women at all levels. Another activity, the *Regional Workshop on the Development of National Gender Statistics Programmes in the Arab Countries* (Tunis, 9-14 June 1997), had as its goal the training of participants in the following areas:

- (a) To identify critical gender issues in their countries;
- (b) To specify statistics and indicators needed to assess and monitor the situation of women and men;
- (c) To select statistical tables to be used to highlight the gaps and disparities between women and men;
- (d) To choose effective ways of presenting and disseminating the information to a wide range of users.

In order to develop and disseminate statistical information and data in the biennium 1996-1997, the following recurrent publications, which address a variety of economic and social concerns, were issued:

- (a) The *External Trade Bulletin of the ESCWA Region, Eighth Issue* provided summary tables on overall trade, trends and the share of the region in total world trade; information on intra-
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regional trade; and data on the geographical distribution of trade for individual ESCWA member countries for the period 1985-1995;

(b) The *National Accounts Studies of the ESCWA Region, Bulletins No. 16 and No. 17*, included selected indicators on aggregates of national accounts; consolidated accounts in national currencies; and provided estimates of GDP by expenditure and economic activity at current and constant prices, stated in both national currencies and United States dollars for purposes of comparison;

(c) To facilitate comparison among countries of the region, the *Statistical Abstract of the ESCWA Region, No. 16 and No. 17* covered eight topics: population and human settlements; education and health; national accounts; agriculture, forestry and fishing; industry and electricity; transport, communication and tourism; foreign trade; and financial statistics and prices;

(d) The *Compendium of Social Statistics and Indicators, Fourth Issue* provided data and indicators on the social and economic changes taking place in the ESCWA region. This information was expected to be of value in monitoring and assessing the impact of the various policies and for programmes social and economic development as well as in gauging the progress achieved;

(e) The *Bulletin of Industrial Statistics for the Arab Countries, Issue No. 3* covered the following for each Arab country: the industrial sector share of GDP; industrial statistics by country, exports and imports according to international economic classifications; and main industrial products by commodity;

(f) The *Statistical Newsletter, issues 2 and 3* (in Arabic) disseminated information on basic developments in statistics in the region.

To further the objective of developing and disseminating statistical information, a feasibility study entitled *Requirement Analysis Study for the Establishment of an Integrated Statistical Information System (ESIS)*, was prepared prior to implementation of this system at ESCWA.

To propagate international standards and norms in statistics in the region, the Division conducted the *Regional Training Workshop on PopMap for Windows and Internet* (Damascus, 12-17 October 1996). The workshop aimed at strengthening the capacity of national organizations and experts in the use of computer software for collecting, processing, analyzing and disseminating population and related data, and included training on the project software, PopMap. Another activity, the *Seminar on the International Comparison Programme (ICP) in the ESCWA Region* (Amman, 21-23 October 1996), was organized as part of the ICP project being carried out in cooperation with the World Bank (box 11).

**Box 11. The International Comparison Programme  
in the ESCWA region**

The International Comparison Programme (ICP) began in 1968 as a project of the United Nations. Each of the more than 100 countries that are members of ICP has participated in at least one of its six consecutive phases over the last three decades. Each phase was defined by the reference year for which price surveys and national accounts data were collected and internationally compared. The reference year for the last phase was 1993. Its results were published in 1995 and 1996 for the regional comparisons made in Europe, Africa, and Asia and the Pacific.

The ESCWA member countries joined the ICP for the first time in 1995, following an agreement made between the World Bank and the ESCWA secretariat to launch the ICP in the ESCWA region and to implement it in close cooperation with the central statistical organizations of the region. At the beginning, nine of ESCWA's 13 member States consented to full participation in the ICP. These were Bahrain, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, the Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen. The results of the ICP comparisons were presented and discussed at a seminar held in October 1996 in Amman, which was attended by a large number of statisticians and economists from Arab institutions and governmental departments. A report entitled *Purchasing Power Parities, Volume and Price Level Comparisons for the Middle East, 1993*, was published by ESCWA and distributed widely to users in governmental departments, universities, research centres and Arab organizations. In 1996, two additional ESCWA member countries, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, carried out their price surveys and joined the ICP, enabling ESCWA to execute another series of calculations covering the data on 11 out of the 13 ESCWA member countries.

**Box 11 (continued)**

The advantage of the ICP exercise was that it permitted for the first time a comparison of the economies of the region in terms of purchasing power parities (PPP) instead in terms of the foreign exchange rate of domestic currencies to the United States dollar. By using a certain number of concepts and indicators, it allowed for improved identification of the structure of the national economies and their comparison at the regional level. The main indicators which were used in the comparison included the following:

- (a) PPP rates for GDP and its components;
- (b) Real value of GDP and its components;
- (c) Price level indices, measuring the discrepancy between the PPP and the foreign exchange rate;
- (d) Relative price and quantity structure of GDP in terms of main expenditure components (household and Government consumption, capital formation).

This World Bank/ESCWA joint project should be considered as a first step towards involving the countries of the region in the execution of the ICP. The ESCWA data will be incorporated in a global report, being prepared by the World Bank, in which the results of various regional surveys will be linked together in a consistent framework. It is also anticipated that the next phase, in 1999, will be implemented in the ESCWA region, taking advantage of the considerable experience gained by ESCWA professionals and those in the participating countries from the previous round of the ICP.

Also organized in connection with promoting international standards and norms were a workshop on the *Implementation of the 1993 System of National Accounts*, convened in Abu Dhabi on 7-17 June 1997 (box 12); the *Training Workshop on Industrial Statistics and Their Link to the United Nations System of National Accounts (SNA)* (Beirut, 12-18 November 1997), in cooperation with the Arab Industrial Development and Mining Organization (AIDMO); and the *Workshop on the Strategies for the 2000 Round of Population and Housing Censuses in the ESCWA Member Countries* (Cairo, 6-10 December 1997), which addressed ways and means of improving census-taking methods in the Arab countries, including the application of appropriate technology in census planning and

implementation, in the light of the plans and actions adopted by major United Nations' conferences.

Other activities included servicing the *Second Session of the Statistical Committee*, held in Amman on 24-26 February 1997.

**Box 12. Implementation of the 1993 System of National Accounts  
in the ESCWA region**

The 1993 System of National Accounts (1993 SNA) was adopted by the United Nations Economic and Social Council in its resolution 1993/5 of 12 July 1993, which recommended that the member States consider using the 1993 SNA as the international standard for the compilation of statistics on their national accounts. The Council further recommended that international organizations consider the 1993 SNA and its concepts when they review standards for particular fields of economic statistics and endeavour to achieve consistency with the 1993 SNA. Since then, ESCWA has made serious efforts to prepare for the implementation of the System, as described below.

In an effort to lay the groundwork and build the technical cadres required for the application of the 1993 SNA, the ESCWA secretariat organized 13 workshops and training courses in different ESCWA countries from 1995 to 1997. There were 293 participants, including 258 from the ESCWA member States and 35 from other Arab countries. ESCWA aimed at clarifying the statistical requirements for the application of the System in a way that served the objectives associated with national accounts and satisfied the analytical needs of each State.

Immediately after the 1993 SNA was published, ESCWA began work on its translation into Arabic; once completed, the professionally formatted, easy-to-use translation was made available to specialized national accountants in the countries of the region and other Arab countries. The Arabic version of the 1993 SNA was the first translation to be issued.

Most of the ESCWA member countries began implementing the 1993 SNA in cooperation with ESCWA. The implementation of the System is expected to provide decision makers, planners and researchers with the material needed for economic and social analysis. It will also provide a means to obtain economic and statistical measurement on social and economic standards of living, economic development, level of poverty, productivity, employment, financial position, income distribution, social security and inflation.



## D. REGIONAL ADVISORY SERVICES

### *1. Background*

The purpose of the ESCWA regional advisory service programme is to assist the member countries in their national efforts to overcome various obstacles to economic and social development and to promote sustainable national development. In this endeavour, regional advisory services are made available by ESCWA in response to requests received from Governments in the region. Advisory missions are carried out on an individual or a joint, multidisciplinary basis, with particular attention being paid to the needs of the least developed and other disadvantaged countries in the region.

In addition to giving advice to member Governments on various issues such as implementation of international recommendations and agreements, ESCWA's regional advisers participate in and present papers at meetings and seminars; arrange training workshops; provide technical support to Government bodies; and assist in the preparation and formulation of project proposals. The Technical Cooperation Division at ESCWA services the programme by managing and coordinating requests received from Governments, making travel arrangements and disseminating mission reports to the respective member States (box 13).

### *2. Fields covered by regional advisory services*

Regional advisory services are provided by ESCWA regional advisers in the following 12 fields: agriculture, energy issues, environment, industrial development, social development, statistics (data processing and national accounts), surface water, technology, telecommunications, water resources, and WTO/GATT issues.

#### **Box 13. Advisory services provided to member States**

**Bahrain** - Advisory services were provided on the revision of the procedures and regulations emanating from the adoption of new laws on electricity and water; the preparation of project manuals to enhance performance levels and increase productivity in the labour, services and industrial production sectors; price and volume indices; national accounts and the application of the 1993 SNA; and the

**Box 13 (continued)**

promotion of population-related activities. In addition, technical assistance was provided to Bahrain on issues related to the WTO.

**Egypt** - Advisory services were provided on data processing and its applications, and the application of the GIS; development of new and renewable sources of energy; formulation of a plan regarding the 1993 SNA; biogas technology incubators and solar dryers for rural areas; commercial aspects of the future of telecommunications, and legal and economic aspects of WTO agreements; the impact of the Uruguay Round/WTO agreements on the land transport sector; and the preparation of a plan for holding a conference on the development of the social sectors.

**Iraq** - Advisory services were provided on the preparation of a work plan for a sustainable human development network; and on the design and implementation of data processing systems for sample surveys on food crops, in cooperation with FAO.

**Jordan** - In addition to a survey and workshop on energy consumption in the family sector, advisory services were provided on energy consumption in the transport sector; establishment of an environmental management unit at Irbid Municipality; development of chemical industries; implementation of the 1993 System of National Accounts; groundwater protection legislation and monitoring networks, and the formulation of a national water policy; the integration of Jordan into the global economy project; the promotion of the exportation of textiles; preparation of a plan on a preliminary list of customs tariffs; and preparation of a strategy for human resources development.

**Kuwait** - Advisory services were provided on the 1993 SNA; the preparation of a regional workshop on environmental information systems for decision-makers; and trade development and the mechanisms of operation of the WTO.

**Lebanon** - Advisory services were provided on setting water and air quality standards, including developing and establishing administrative standards for environmental reporting, auditing and inspection; trade development and the impact of the establishment of the WTO, including assessing Lebanon's ability to join the WTO; and the conditions of the training centres for social development services, including preparation of a project document on their expansion and improvement. These services also comprised strengthening coordination within the public sector; establishing investment projects in the engineering

**Box 13 (continued)**

infrastructure industries and promoting R and D in Lebanon; and developing the Port of Beirut and the telecommunications sector.

**Oman** - Advisory services were provided on new procedures for upgrading and improving the level of service at the Information and Documentation Centre; on national accounts for the household and expenditures survey; the 1993 SNA; evaluation of studies on the economic survey; and efficient utilization of water resources.

**Palestine** - Advisory services were provided on the household survey on demographic and economic conditions of the Palestinian community in Lebanon; a comprehensive statistical plan for the Palestinian communities in both Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic; and emerging issues related to international trading centres and their implications for the Palestinian economy.

**Qatar** - Advisory services were provided on industrial solid waste disposal operation and management, including assessment of the procedures for waste disposal designed by the local authorities; establishment of an agriculture information centre, including the means of building its organizational structure and the technical requirements of its database; assessment of the environmental impact of development projects in order to streamline the design and approval procedures; preparation of a project document on GIS; identification of ways and means of updating and developing existing water legislation; institutionalization of the environmental impact assessment process; social development issues; and WTO issues.

**Saudi Arabia** - In addition to a general review of computer systems and follow-up on project implementation, advisory services were provided on new methodologies of data processing in statistical surveys; preparation of the first and second phases of the National Development Plan for Science and Technology for 2000-2020 for King Abdul Aziz City for Science and Technology; the development of environmental indicators and indices; institutionalization and management of the environmental impact assessment process; and application of the 1993 SNA.

**Syrian Arab Republic** - Advisory services were provided on the implementation of water projects, including the preparation of hydrological maps, hydrological data processing and hydrological networks; the promotion of national accounts by

**Box 13 (continued)**

applying the 1993 SNA; the work programme, structure and resources of the Industrial Testing and Research Centre; and social development needs.

**United Arab Emirates** - Advisory services were provided on the establishment of a renewable energy programme in Fujairah; assessment of the final results of the first and second stages of the national household budget survey; preparation of national policies for environmental protection and assessment; project formulation for the introduction of a computer-based information system in the northern Emirates; the results of the household budget survey; the 1993 SNA; management training in the area of water resources; development of an integrated federal environmental impact assessment policy for all of the Emirates; and WTO issues.

**Yemen** - Advisory services were rendered on industrial planning and policies within the framework of a World Bank-funded project, "*Support for the Preparation of the First Five-Year Development Plan (1996-2000)*"; an environmental survey of the industrial region in Hadhramaut Governorate; the preparation of an outline for the master plan study for electricity generation network expansion for the years 1996-2016; sustainable development of water projects; establishment of a national human development network; establishment of a centre for women's studies; and development plans for local community centres and NGOs.

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- For an explanation of household surveys, see p. 77, footnote 3.

It should be noted that the posts for the regional advisers on agriculture and surface water were vacant during the period 1996-1997. In addition, the two posts for the regional advisers on telecommunications and technology were only filled as of September and October 1997. A selection of advisory services rendered during 1996-1997 is reported below by area of expertise.

The Regional Adviser on **Energy Issues** furnished advice to member States on the preparation and implementation of national policies, plans and programmes for the development of the electric power sector; the promotion of renewable energy resources, ensuring adequate supplies of energy to rural and remote areas; and the

implementation of renewable energy projects, including environmental impact assessment. In the biennium 1996-1997, advisory services were provided to Bahrain on revising the procedures and regulations emanating from the adoption of new laws in the energy sector; to Egypt on biogas technology incubators and solar dryers for rural areas, and on the development of new and renewable sources of energy; to Jordan on the preparation of a survey and a workshop on energy consumption in the family sector (carried out jointly with the Regional Advisers on Environment and the Regional Advisor on Data Processing), and on the preparation of a study on energy consumption in the transport sector; to Saudi Arabia on the first and second phases of the National Development Plan for Science and Technology for 2000-2020 for King Abdul Aziz City for Science and Technology (a multidisciplinary undertaking in cooperation with the Regional Advisers on Environment and Technology); to the United Arab Emirates on the establishment of a renewable energy programme in Fujairah; and to Yemen on the preparation of an outline for a study on the master plan for expansion of its electricity generation network from 1996 to 2016.

The Regional Adviser on **Environment** rendered advice on various environmental issues, such as the promotion of environmental management and the identification and formulation of relevant projects, as well as on strengthening regional cooperation in the area of environment. Services were provided to Bahrain on revising the procedures and regulations emanating from the adoption of new laws in the energy and water sectors; to Jordan on establishing an environmental management unit at Irbid Municipality; to Lebanon on setting water and air quality standards, as well as on developing and establishing administrative standards for environmental reporting, auditing and inspection; to Qatar on industrial solid waste disposal operation and management, including assessment of the procedures for waste disposal designed by the local authorities and assessment of the environmental impact of development projects in order to streamline the design and approval procedures; to Saudi Arabia on the development of environmental indicators and indices, and on the preparation of policies for the institutionalization and management of the environmental impact assessment process; to the United Arab Emirates on establishing a renewable energy programme in Fujairah, and on developing a compatible, integrated and harmonized federal Environmental impact assessment policy concerning all Emirates; and to Yemen on the environmental survey

of the industrial region in Hadhramaut Governorate (a joint mission with the Regional Adviser on Industrial Development).

The Regional Adviser on **Industrial Development** provides advice on industrial economics and assists in the identification of investment opportunities. Support is also available for preparing investment project profiles and for conducting diagnostic studies to raise productivity in small and medium-scale enterprises. The Regional Adviser also assists in the design of training programmes for project identification and in the review and formulation of industrial policies and strategies. In the area of industrial development, six of the ESCWA member States, as well as the GCC, benefited from this service. For Bahrain, assistance was offered in the preparation of project manuals to enhance the level of performance and increase productivity in the labour, service and industrial production sectors. Jordan benefited from a review of the Industrial Development Bank study on the development of the chemical industry in Jordan. For Lebanon, the Regional Adviser prepared a concise summary of investment projects for the General Union of Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture for Arab Countries and conducted an assessment, in addition to promoting research and development for the National Council for Scientific Research. For the Syrian Arab Republic, the Regional Adviser reviewed the work programme, structure and resources of the Industrial Testing and Research Centre and formulated recommendations. Assistance to the United Arab Emirates was provided through a presentation on the Arab food industries, the WTO, and the ISO 9000 and 14000 series of international standards at the Conference on Food Industries, organized by the Arab Federation for Food Industries. Help was provided to Yemen in the area of industrial planning and policies, within the framework of a project funded by the World Bank, "*Support for the preparation of the first five-year development plan (1996-2000)*". Finally, services were offered to the Council of Ministers of Labour and Social Affairs of the Gulf Cooperation Council in Bahrain with regard to productivity improvement in the industrial sector of the GCC countries.

The Regional Adviser on **Social Development** provided advice on enhancing the optimal use and development of human resources, on upgrading vocational skills and on mapping social development policies. Advice was also provided on social and

community development services. In this context, Iraq was assisted in the preparation of a work plan for a sustainable human development network. By participating in the work of the preparatory committee for a national conference on social work, the Regional Adviser assisted Jordan in the development of a strategy for human resources development. Lebanon benefited from a review and assessment of the conditions at its training centres for social development services, followed by the preparation of a project document on their development and improvement, including development of the programme of work of the national employment institutions. Assistance to Oman included a review and evaluation of a number of studies of the economy, and preparation of a paper and work plan for education. Qatar and the Syrian Arab Republic were advised on social development needs. Yemen received assistance in the establishment of a national human development network; the creation of a centre for women's studies; and the plans for development of local community centres and NGOs.

The Regional Adviser on **Statistics: Data Processing** provided advice on developing and updating major economic and social databases, and on designing and conducting integrated household surveys and training programmes.<sup>3</sup> In this area, services were rendered to Egypt on issues relevant to the application of the Geographical Information System (GIS). In addition, a lecture on the implications of technological advancement in censuses was presented at the *Workshop on the Strategies for the 2000 Round of Population and Housing Censuses in the ESCWA Member Countries*. The Regional Adviser on Statistics: Data Processing, in

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<sup>3</sup> Household surveys are an essential part of national statistical services, complementing population and housing censuses. A population and housing census is part of the fundamental statistical base of a country. It provides an inventory of the nation's human resources, demographically and geographically. Since population censuses cannot be repeated frequently, the information may quickly become outdated. Sample household surveys, therefore, provide a basis for updating census information either for the nation as a whole or for broad geographical areas. The relationship is essentially a complementary one between an infrequent but geographically detailed cross-section, represented by the census, and the much more frequent time series provided by the surveys, which reflect continuous changes in society. The objectives of the household survey programme include (a) substantially reducing costs, compared to a full-scale census; (b) probing specific issues in depth; (c) increasing the accuracy of the outcome by sampling; and (d) saving time.

collaboration with FAO, assisted Iraq by reviewing the design and implementation of a data processing system for sample surveys on food crops. Jordan was assisted in preparing a survey on energy consumption in the family sector and in evaluating the modalities and results of the survey. Jordan also benefited from papers prepared on technical cooperation in statistics and, in collaboration with the Regional Advisor on Statistics: National Accounts (see below), a report on the activities of the regional household survey projects. Oman was advised concerning procedures for upgrading and improving the level of services at the Information and Documentation Centre. For Palestine, services included organizing a workshop concerning the household survey on the demographic and economic situation of the Palestinian community in Lebanon, and contributing to the preparation of a project on "*Surveys of Palestinian families*". Advice to Qatar facilitated the establishment of an agricultural information centre, including the means of building its organizational structure and the technical requirements for a database. Assistance was also provided to the GIS/GPS Conference, held in Doha in March 1997, on Teamwork: Bringing Integrated Information to Our Fingertips. Saudi Arabia benefited from advice on the establishment of a database on transport; on the implementation and operation of the database of the Ministry of Municipal and Rural Affairs; and on the application of new methodologies in the data processing of statistical surveys. ESCWA also assisted by revising a new system designed for implementation and follow-up on projects using computers. For the United Arab Emirates, help was offered in assessing the final results of the first and second stages of the national household budget survey, and in formulating a project for the introduction of a computer-based information system in the northern Emirates.

The Regional Adviser on **Statistics: National Accounts** provided advice on adapting the national accounts and related systems and classifications of the ESCWA member States to the international requirements set forth in the System of National Accounts. Services were rendered to Bahrain, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Oman, Saudi Arabia and the Syrian Arab Republic concerning implementation of the 1993 SNA. In the case of Lebanon, this included evaluation of the preparation process for the data sheets; for Oman, a training workshop was held. In addition, the Regional Adviser assisted Bahrain with price and volume indices and with the national accounts for 1996. Additional assistance was

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provided to Jordan concerning the activity of the Regional Household Survey Project, and to Lebanon on the national accounts for 1996. Oman benefited from a review and evaluation of studies on the economy, as well as assistance concerning national accounts for the household and expenditures survey. Services to the United Arab Emirates included a training programme for an industrial survey, involving the preparation of a manual on the format, methodology and results of the survey.

The Regional Adviser on **Technology** advised and assisted member States in all matters pertaining to the formulation and implementation of their national science and technology policies and plans; dealt with pertinent issues such as development-related R and D, and technology acquisition, adaptation and assessment; assisted in the identification, formulation, appraisal and execution of technical assistance, as well as with investment projects and programmes in the technology field; and prepared technical papers and background documents for science- and technology-related meetings and workshops. In the biennium 1996-1997, services were rendered to Saudi Arabia in regard to the second phase of the National Development Plan for Science and Technology for 2000-2020 for King Abdul Aziz City for Science and Technology.

The Regional Adviser on **Telecommunications** provided assistance to member States in all matters pertaining to the formulation and implementation of their national policies and plans in the telecommunications sector; dealt with related issues such as the integration of communications networks, globalization and other trends in communications and management, and the shifting boundaries between the public and private sectors; assisted in identifying the need for technical assistance and in formulating, appraising and executing investment projects and programmes in the field of telecommunications; and prepared technical papers and background documents for communications and information technology. Service to Jordan consisted in the presentation of a paper on "*EDI application in trade facilitation and transport in the ESCWA region*" at a meeting concerning Jordan and the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership Agreement.

The Regional Adviser on **Water Resources** provided advice on groundwater resources with an emphasis on development, conservation and management at the national and regional levels, and

on problems arising from shared water resources. Assistance was provided to Bahrain in revising the procedures and regulations emanating from the new laws in the water sector. The Regional Adviser worked in collaboration with a team of local experts to assist Jordan in formulating a national water policy. Jordan also benefited from technical papers that were presented at a workshop on ground water protection. Assistance to Qatar included the review and assessment of existing water legislation, and identification of appropriate ways and means to update and develop such legislation. In an effort that involved the preparation of hydrological maps, hydrological data processing, and hydrological networks, ESCWA provided services to the Syrian Arab Republic. These services included reviewing and monitoring the implementation of water projects and preparing special forms for data collection and analysis. For the United Arab Emirates, assistance was provided in the preparation of training materials; and training in the management of water resources was provided for the municipality of Fujairah.

The Regional Adviser on **WTO/GATT Issues** advised the member States on issues emanating from the establishment of the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the recently concluded Uruguay Round of multilateral trade agreements. The Regional adviser assisted Egypt by lecturing on the commercial aspects of the future of telecommunications at a seminar organized by the International Telecommunication Union. Advice was also provided on the preparation of a comprehensive study on the impact of the results of the Uruguay Round/WTO on the land transport sector, and on the development of membership in the WTO. For Jordan, a plan for a preliminary list of customs tariffs was prepared. Kuwait was advised on development, and on the mechanisms of operation as well as the work of the WTO. Services provided to Lebanon concerned trade development and the impact of the establishment of the WTO, as well as Lebanon's ability to join the WTO. Assistance to Palestine focused on the emerging issues related to international trading centres and their implications for the Palestinian economy. At the Doha Seminar on International Commercial Arbitration, organized by the GCC Commercial Arbitration Centre, ESCWA presented a technical paper on the settlement of disputes governed by the WTO. Assistance to the United Arab Emirates included a lecture on the implications of the WTO for the telecommunications sector in the GCC countries and a review of a study on the implications of the

General Agreement on Trade in Services for the economy of the United Arab Emirates.

## E. TECHNICAL COOPERATION ACTIVITIES

### 1. *Background*

Technical cooperation in the form of field projects was provided in response to specific Government requests or by means of proposals formulated by the substantive divisions within the context of ESCWA's work programme, which was organized around such interdisciplinary areas as management of natural resources (energy, water, environment); follow-up on recommendations of international and regional conferences; economic reform and liberalization policies and their impact; and the harmonization of norms, standards and legislative instruments in various sectors (industry, transport and agriculture). Field projects implemented by ESCWA reflected these priority areas, as well as regional priorities, in meeting the overall development needs singled out for action by United Nations legislative bodies. Different kinds of inputs were combined to meet particular needs and to enhance the complementary functions of the regular programme of activities.

The implementation of technical assistance projects financed by extrabudgetary resources was carried out by means of close collaboration between the substantive divisions and the Technical Cooperation Division. Thus, the Technical Cooperation Division provided administrative support and the substantive divisions provided the expertise necessary for the implementation of projects. The aim was to ensure timely and efficient project delivery.

Extrabudgetary resources were sought from donors to finance field projects supplementary to ESCWA's regular work programme. Some efforts to mobilize resources were initiated in 1996-1997, including the establishment of a *Database on international and regional donor agencies*. In addition, a directory of these agencies entitled *A Guide for Assistance for Development in the Early 1990s: International Donor Agencies* was published and distributed. In coming years, the database will be further developed and regularly updated. In addition, two recurrent publications on international and regional donor agencies will be published once every two years.

## 2. Sectors of activity

During 1996-1997, ESCWA initiated or continued implementation of technical cooperation activities in the areas of energy, water, environment, privatization, the WTO, population, community development, human development, human settlements, industry, technology, and statistics. A summary of these activities is provided below.

### (a) Energy

Financial assistance was provided by the French Trust Fund in the preparation of an ESCWA study entitled *Assessment of Privatization of the Electric Power Sector in Selected ESCWA Member Countries*, which aimed at analysing the current situation in the region and developing a strategy for the privatization of electric power generation. The four volumes of the study included a regional overview and three case studies on Egypt, Jordan and Yemen.

### (b) Water resources

The contract between ESCWA and the BGR for the second phase of the project on "*Advisory services to ESCWA member States in the field of water resources*" was signed in 1996. Implementation of the project was completed during the period 1996-1997. The project was comprised of the following elements: a basalt aquifer study; regional studies; and advisory services. The objectives of the project included providing advisory services in the field of water resources; conducting joint projects with the member States concerned (Iraq, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, and the Syrian Arab Republic) on water resource assessment, exploration and development at the regional and subregional levels; undertaking a study on the regional carbonate aquifer system; and developing guidelines for groundwater protection. In 1996-1997, advisory services were rendered to participating countries upon their request; the study, *Investigation of the Regional Basalt Aquifer System in Jordan and the Syrian Arab Republic*, was completed; and a draft report on the Paleogene aquifer investigation was prepared, as well as a draft study on groundwater quality control and conservation in the ESCWA region.

ESCWA also finalized a water resource project funded by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the Islamic

Development Bank (IDB) and published the final report, *Water Resources Assessment in the ESCWA Region Using Remote Sensing and GIS Techniques*. The general aim of the project was to improve management of scarce ground and surface-water resources within the ESCWA region, focusing on those resources which are shared by different countries. More specifically, the project promoted regional cooperation in the field of water resources. Activities included assisting member States to introduce and utilize remote sensing technology and the geographic information system (GIS) as applied to the field of water resources, particularly groundwater exploration and development, artificial groundwater recharge, surface water development, storage, harvesting and flood control; and encouraging optimum utilization of the available water resources. Bahrain, Iraq, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, the Syrian Arab Republic, the United Arab Emirates and Yemen participated in the project, which has now been completed.

With ESCWA/IDB funding, three trainees from the ESCWA member States and areas participated in the IDB *Training Course on Farm Water Management and Rationalization*, held in Egypt in May and June of 1996. The course aimed at imparting the technical skills required for more efficient management of water resources. The three participants were from Palestine, the Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen.

*The Expert Group Meeting on the Development of Non-Conventional Water Resources and Appropriate Technologies for Groundwater Management in the ESCWA Member Countries* was held in Bahrain in October 1997, with funding from UNEP, the French Trust Fund and the BGR. The objectives were to review the efforts and achievements of the ESCWA member States in developing their non-conventional water resources and consider the applications of appropriate technologies in the management of such resources. Recommendations emanating from the meeting included an action plan and proposals to promote the development and utilization of such resources in the region.

(c) *Environment*

Since October 1997, a two-year project entitled "*National environmental strategy for the United Arab Emirates*" has been underway. This project, implemented in cooperation with UNDP and

the Government of the United Arab Emirates, aimed at assisting the recently established Federal Environmental Agency (FEA) in preparing a national environmental strategy and a national environmental action plan, which were to be used as key instruments for the promotion of sustainable development in the United Arab Emirates. The establishment of the FEA was a clear indication of the United Arab Emirates' commitment to develop and design its environmental management practices in accordance with the principles of Agenda 21.

(d) *Privatization*

The *Expert Group Meeting on Institutional Aspects of Privatization* was convened in Beirut in December 1997 with financial assistance from the Friedrich Naumann Foundation and the Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture of Beirut and Mount Lebanon, and in cooperation with UNCTAD, the World Bank and DESA. The objectives were to discuss this timely topic and to formulate recommendations to policy makers for future actions needed to assess the privatization process.

(e) *World Trade Organization*

The *Expert Group Meeting on the Challenges and Opportunities of the New International Trade Agreement (Uruguay Round): Post-Uruguay Preparations and Adjustments* was held in Kuwait in November 1997. The meeting aimed at discussing the implications of the WTO for the ESCWA member countries; identifying opportunities; and assisting the ESCWA member countries with regard to WTO requirements. The meeting was convened with financial assistance from the Friedrich Naumann Foundation and the Arab Planning Institute, and in cooperation with UNCTAD and the WTO.

(f) *Population*

The project on "*Population policies in the Arab countries of the ESCWA and North Africa regions*", funded by UNFPA, aimed at assisting the formulation and implementation of comprehensive population policies in the countries of the Arab region, within the context of their integrated national development programmes. These efforts were in keeping with the overall objectives of the Second

Amman Declaration on Population and Development in the Arab World adopted in 1993, the Arab Plan for the Protection, Care and Development of Childhood (Tunis, 1992) and the Programme of Action adopted by the International Conference on Population and Development (Cairo, 1994). In this regard, the following activities were undertaken: a *Database on policies and measures covering population* was established; expert group meetings were conducted; workshops were held; and a study on *Population Policies in Egypt, Jordan and Yemen* was completed.

(g) *Community development*

The “*Community development services*” project, financed by AGFUND, continued to be implemented during the biennium 1996-1997 in cooperation with UNDP/UNV. It covered rural communities in Egypt and in the Syrian Arab Republic. The project aimed at mobilizing the support of local communities to improve their living conditions; developing rural cooperation and supporting local development cooperatives; and establishing revolving funds to support income-generating activities. The project also aimed at providing training programmes and extension services in order to improve agricultural productivity, develop local skills and improve the status and role of rural women. A project document on women’s participation in local community development in rural areas was finalized, and preparation of a comprehensive manual on local community development was initiated.

(h) *Human development*

In cooperation with the Centre for the Rehabilitation and Training of Blind Girls/Women in Jordan, which is funded by the Regional Bureau of the Middle East Committee for the Affairs of the Blind (in Riyadh), ESCWA continued its support of an AGFUND-funded project on “*Establishing the regional computer training centre for blind girls/women*”. In addition to receiving contributions from ESCWA, AGFUND and the United Nations Voluntary Fund on Disability, the project was supported by the Government of Japan, which provided human resources and equipment through a bilateral arrangement. The objectives were to establish a permanent regional training mechanism for blind girls and women in computer applications and operations, and to prepare blind girls and women in careers related to computer technology. During the biennium 1996-

1997, 10 women, including four trainers, completed the first two training courses.

The UNDP-funded project "*Preparatory assistance for regional support to national efforts in pursuit of sustainable human development*", which was initiated in 1995, aimed at promoting sustainable human development (SHD) in the Arab region by establishing SHD national networks; assisting UNDP national offices, upon request, in the preparation of national human development reports; disseminating information on national human development experiences; and preparing studies. In the period 1996-1997, national SHD networks were already well established in Bahrain, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Yemen. During the same period, projects were initiated in Qatar, the Syrian Arab Republic, the United Arab Emirates, and the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Furthermore, focal points for SHD networks were appointed in each participating country and the first coordination meeting for the focal points was held in Cairo in 1997. In addition, a number of studies were prepared, including six on Iraq and one each on Lebanon and Yemen; and ESCWA participated in three national workshops that were undertaken as part of the project's activities.

A study on the *Concepts of Science, Work and Social Solidarity in Islamic Arab Thought* (in Arabic), was prepared and published with UNDP funding. The study focused mainly on employment, education and social solidarity, taking into account the cultural aspects of development.

(i) *Human settlements*

In the area of human settlements, the objectives included monitoring the housing sector in selected countries; provision of inputs to a human settlements policy database; and assisting in the development of policy recommendations and the formulation of an operational strategy for sustainable human settlements. In addition, the study *Country Profiles on Housing Policies and Urbanization* (in Arabic) was prepared for Egypt and Jordan with funding from UNDP and the Urban Management Programme.



(j) *Industry*

A *Workshop on Total Quality Management and ISO 9000, with Special Reference to the Cement Industry* (Abu Dhabi, May 1996) was organized in cooperation with UNIDO and ISO, and with funding from the French Trust Fund, the Friedrich Ebert Foundation and the General Industry Corporation, United Arab Emirates. The goal of the workshop was to present industrialists in the United Arab Emirates with accurate and timely information regarding the concepts of total quality management as well as the ISO 9000 international standard and related codes.

*The Regional Seminar on Assessment of the Role of Business Incubators in Economic Development* was held in Beirut in September 1996, in cooperation with the Friedrich Ebert Foundation and UNDP. The objectives of the seminar were to clarify the concept of business incubators and explore its problems and potentials; to acquaint decision-makers in Government and private sector institutions with the experience of business incubators worldwide and initiatives undertaken in the ESCWA region; and to deliberate on the conditions leading to success or failure in projects aiming at the establishment of incubators.

The *Expert Group Meeting on the Impact of the Peace Process on Selected Sectors* was organized in Amman in June 1997, co-sponsored by ESCWA, the Friedrich Ebert Foundation and the ERF. The purpose of the Meeting was to deliberate on progress achieved in the peace process and its impact on the development of the industrial sector in the ESCWA region, and to assess the opportunities and challenges brought about by such progress; to review the changes that had taken place in Arab-Israeli industrial relations and the related problems; and to discuss the expected impact of the peace process on the industrial relations between the countries of the region and the rest of the world, particularly the European Union. A related study, also sponsored by the Friedrich Ebert Foundation, was published in 1997.

The *Expert Group Meeting on the Challenges and Opportunities of the New International Trade Agreement (Uruguay Round): Post-Uruguay Preparations and Adjustments* (Kuwait, November 1997), was conducted with the financial support of the Friedrich Naumann Foundation and the Arab Planning Institute, with

the aim of raising awareness in the region concerning the implications of WTO for the future of trade in the ESCWA region.

ESCWA also implemented a project on the "*Establishment of engineering infrastructure industries in the ESCWA region*", which was funded by UNDP. The objectives of the project were reformulated in order to facilitate its completion during the first half of 1997, and a publication highlighting 15 project profiles, including six that were elaborated into prefeasibility studies, was prepared.

In cooperation with the Department for Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), ESCWA provided advisory services to a project on "*Support for the preparation of the first five-year development plan (1996-2000) of the Republic of Yemen*". A report on the manufacturing sector as an integral part of the economic development plan was prepared.

(k) *Technology*

A study on ***Biotechnology in the ESCWA Member Countries: Sectoral Issues and Policies***, which assessed the use of biotechnology in the agriculture, pharmaceutical and food processing industries, was prepared with financial assistance from the Government of the Netherlands. In addition, the ***Expert Group Meeting on the Assessment and Promotion of Research and Development in the ESCWA Member Countries***, which considered some of the constraints that severely inhibit the efficiency and effectiveness of R and D activities in the ESCWA region, was carried out in cooperation with UNESCO/ROSTAS.

(l) *Statistics*

The ***Regional Training Workshop on PopMap and Internet*** was held in Damascus in October 1996 with funding from GTZ, UNFPA, Qatar and Saudi Arabia. The workshop trained participants from the ESCWA member countries to use the Windows version of PopMap and the Internet.

The International Association for Research in Income and Wealth funded a project with the aim of revising the Arabic translation of the 1993 System of National Accounts (SNA) and

preparing a camera-ready manuscript of the 1993 SNA document (box 12). Both activities were completed in 1996.

During the biennium 1996-1997, ESCWA continued its work on the World Bank-financed project on the "*International Comparison Programme (ICP) in the ESCWA member countries*". Eleven ESCWA countries have so far joined the Programme (box 11); and the first phase of the field work was completed in 1997. A second phase is envisaged in 1998-1999, pending approval of additional funding by the World Bank.

Implementation of the AGFUND-funded project on the "*National household survey capability programme*" in the ESCWA region also continued. Member Governments were provided with advisory services and were given assistance in organizing regional and national training programmes. Support was also provided for the translation and publication of technical documents and for the participation of experts in workshops and technical meetings. Cooperating agencies included United Nations Headquarters (UNSD), UNICEF, UNFPA, ILO and WHO. In December 1997, AGFUND also agreed to fund a project on the "*Statistical plan for providing and establishing databases on the Palestinian Refugees in Syria and Lebanon during 1998-2000*". The project will be implemented in 1998.

The project on "*Development of national gender statistics programmes in the Arab countries*" entered full operation in 1997 (box 14). Cooperating and funding agencies included UNICEF, UNDP, CAWTAR and the International Development and Research Centre (IDRC). The project aimed at strengthening the capacity of statistical offices to produce and disseminate gender-specific statistical data at the national and regional levels, in an effort to influence policies and programmes as well as benefit women. Participants included the following countries and areas: Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia, Yemen and the occupied territories. In 1997, a regional training workshop was held in Tunis and various activities were carried out at the national level, including establishing steering committees and national working groups; conducting national workshops; and compiling data in preparation for national publications on women and men. Also in connection with this project, an analytical statistical publication on *Arab Women 1995: Trends, Statistics and Indicators*

was finalized in English with support from CAWTAR and UNSD. The Arabic version is in preparation and will be completed in 1998.

**Box 14. Development of national gender statistics programmes in the Arab countries**

The Statistics Division of ESCWA, in collaboration with CAWTAR, IDRC, UNICEF and UNDP launched, in January 1997, a two and half-year project on the development of national gender statistics programmes in the Arab countries, with ESCWA as the executing agency at both the national and regional levels. Presently, the project is being implemented in nine participating countries: Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Oman, Palestine, the Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia and Yemen.

In general terms, the project aims at strengthening the national capacities of these countries in the production, use and dissemination of statistics related to gender issues at the national and regional levels, in an effort to help influence policies and programmes as well as promote changes for the benefit of women.

Project objectives include:

(1) Creating awareness of gender statistics among national offices, policy makers, researchers and women's advocates; underlining the important role gender statistics play in policy formulation and programming; and identifying the statistics and indicators needed to measure the achievement of national goals related to gender issues. The above is to be achieved:

(a) By producing a flyer describing the project's national activities and expected outputs;

(b) By producing an integrated list on the minimum data requirements for gender statistics, which can be used by regional publications and those of other United Nations Organizations.

(2) Preparing a national gender statistics publication for each participating country. This is to be achieved:

(a) By creating a network of specialists who are experts in the field of gender statistics and who can be used as resource persons for the gender statistics publications;

**Box 14 (continued)**

- (b) By producing a gender statistics publication on the situation of women and men in each participating country.
- (3) Identifying key gender-related issues in the Arab region as well as assessing data availability and existing gaps in national statistical systems in an effort to develop national plans of action and devise mechanisms to redress these deficiencies. Intended actions include:
  - (a) Preparing a report to identify data gaps, assess data needs, and present strategies to improve the collection of gender statistics at the national level;
  - (b) Developing national plans of action and implementation mechanisms to improve statistics on gender issues;
  - (c) Implementing mechanisms to improve statistics on gender issues.
- (4) Developing an Arab gender statistics database using the data set compiled under the project. This will lead to a regional publication on the situation of women and men in the Arab countries.
- (5) Developing strategies to improve the national gender statistics system for each of the participating countries.
- (6) Formulating a plan to replicate the pilot programme in the remaining Arab countries.

A Letter of Agreement between ESCWA and the Central Statistical Organization (CSO) of Yemen was signed, authorizing the implementation of the UNDP project on "*Poverty alleviation and employment generation*". Under the agreement, ESCWA will act as a cooperating agency, providing technical support to the CSO in Yemen in the implementation of the project. The Chief Technical Advisor was recruited in late 1997; full implementation of the project will start in 1998.



## **Chapter IV**

### **Cooperation and coordination with United Nations Agencies and International, Regional and Subregional Organizations**





## **IV. COOPERATION AND COORDINATION WITH UNITED NATIONS AGENCIES AND INTERNATIONAL, REGIONAL AND SUBREGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS**

### **A. BACKGROUND**

ESCWA cooperates with a number of organizations within the United Nations system as well as with institutions at the regional, subregional and international levels. These arrangements fall into three categories: general agreements; agreements that stipulate cooperation in specific substantive areas; and agreements that identify a particular area or project. Cooperative efforts with the above organizations are also undertaken on an ad hoc basis, as the need arises.

Agreements and contracts with other United Nations organizations are generally maintained to streamline and consolidate work in areas of common interest. They are, likewise, maintained with international, regional, subregional and governmental organizations for the purpose of implementing joint activities, mobilizing resources, exchanging technical expertise and making concerted efforts to address issues of mutual interest. Below is a description of activities in which ESCWA collaborated with other organizations.

### **B. UNITED NATIONS ORGANIZATIONS AND AGENCIES**

#### *1. United Nations Secretariat and other bodies in the United Nations system*

##### *(a) United Nations Headquarters*

ESCWA and the Department for Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) continued to coordinate their efforts to respond to issues arising from the nineteenth special session of the General Assembly New York, 23-28 June 1997, which reviewed and appraised the implementation of Agenda 21; and to follow up on activities related to the World Summit for Social Development. In addition, ESCWA contributed to the proposed system-wide medium-term plan for the advancement of women (1996-2001) which was submitted to the fortieth session of the Commission on the Status of Women (11-22 March 1996); and to the report of the Secretary-General on gender, women and the family. ESCWA contributed to the documentation for the third session of the Committee on Natural Resources (6-17

May 1996) and submitted a paper on ESCWA's activities in the area of water resources. In addition, representatives from ESCWA joined a discussion of sustainable energy in the Arab States at the Meeting and Workshop of the Steering Committee on Energy (Bahrain, 19-22 May 1997); and presented a paper at the Conference on Demand-Side Management (DSM) and the Reforming Energy Market (Cairo, 15-17 December 1997). ESCWA was also represented at the Workshop on Gender Mainstreaming (Geneva, 15-17 September 1997), convened by the Division for the Advancement of Women in cooperation with the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development.

Other activities that ESCWA carried out in cooperation with United Nations Headquarters, Statistics Division (UNSD), included the revision of the study, *Arab Women 1995: Trends, Statistics and Indicators*; efforts related to the Population Information Network (POPIN); and implementation of the 1993 System of National Accounts in the ESCWA region. In addition, ESCWA participated in the twenty-ninth and thirtieth sessions of the Commission on Population and Development held on 26 February-1 March 1996 and on 24-28 February 1997 respectively. ESCWA also participated in the meeting of the Inter-Agency Task Force on Population held in New York on 19-22 May 1997; and organized the *Regional Training Workshop on PopMap and Internet* in cooperation with UNSD.

(b) *United Nations Office in Geneva*

ESCWA submitted a statement on its recent population-related activities and plans to the nineteenth session of the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC), Subcommittee on Demographic Estimates and Projections (Geneva, 25-27 June 1996); and continued its cooperation with the ACC Subcommittee on Rural Development.

(c) *Economic Commission for Europe*

ESCWA provided information to ECE on initiated or planned activities pertinent to the chemical industry. At the request of ECE, and in an effort to harmonize the activities of the two commissions as well as to promote the adoption of international conventions in the transport field, ESCWA reviewed the land transport agreements and conventions developed by the ECE Land Transport Committee and forwarded them to the LAS General Secretariat for its input. Additionally, ESCWA participated in the opening session of the

meeting of the ECE Centre for Facilitation of Procedures and Practices for Administration, Commerce and Transport (CEFACT) held in Geneva on 16-21 March 1997, and met with ECE officials to discuss joint activities for the biennium 1998-1999.

(d) *Economic Commission for Africa*

ESCWA and ECA exchanged information on activities in the field of remote sensing and GIS techniques. In this context, ESCWA participated in the Ninth United Nations Regional Cartographic Conference for Africa, held by ECA at its headquarters in Addis Ababa from 10 to 17 November 1996, and presented a paper entitled "*Thematic mapping for development and management of shared water resources in the ESCWA region*".

(e) *Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean*

ESCWA coordinated with ECLAC the organization of the ***Expert Group Meeting on Multimodal Transport—Ports: Economic Restructuring and Global Trends*** (Beirut, 27-29 October 1997).

(f) *Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific*

ESCWA continued to cooperate with ESCAP on the implementation of ESCWA regional activities for phase II (1992-1996) of the Transport and Communications Decade for Asia and the Pacific; and on the ESCAP study, "Prospects for container shipping and port development: intra-regional container trade".

(g) *United Nations Conference on Trade and Development*

A Memorandum of Understanding is the basis for cooperation between UNCTAD and ESCWA. During 1996-1997, activities included the participation of ESCWA in the eighth Asian Ministerial Meeting of the Group of 77 (Amman, 6-11 January 1996) in preparation for the ninth session of UNCTAD (UNCTAD IX), and in UNCTAD IX itself (Midrand, South Africa, 27 April - 11 May 1996). In addition, discussions were held with UNCTAD on multimodal transport issues (Amman, March 1996), and ESCWA provided substantive comments on the UNCTAD study entitled "Implications of the post-Uruguay Round international trading system for petroleum-exporting countries and for international trade

in petroleum and petroleum products". ESCWA helped organize and contributed to the joint UNCTAD/UNDP/WTO/ Government of Jordan National Workshop on the Implications of the Uruguay Round for Jordan (Amman, 22-23 September 1996); participated in the UNCTAD Workshop on the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership between Jordan and the European Union (Amman, 25 September 1996); and participated in the UNCTAD seminar on the impact of the WTO on the Arab countries (Geneva, 18-22 November 1996). ESCWA also held discussions with UNCTAD, WTO, UNIDO and ECE officials on efficiency. ESCWA made substantive contributions to the UNCTAD Workshop on Analyzing the Impact and Dynamic Effects of the Uruguay Round Agreements on Development: Methodological Issues and Country-Specific Studies (Geneva, 3-4 March 1997), and UNCTAD participated in two expert group meetings organized by ESCWA. The first of these was the *Expert Group Meeting on Challenges and Opportunities of the New International Trade Agreement (Uruguay Round): Post-Uruguay Preparations and Adjustments* (Kuwait, 24-26 November 1997); the second was the *Expert Group Meeting on Institutional Aspects of Privatization* (Beirut, 1-3 December 1997). ESCWA participated in the UNCTAD/ISO Expert Meeting on Trade and Investment Impacts of Environmental Management Standards, Particularly the ISO 14000 Series, on Developing Countries (Geneva, October 1997) and in the UNCTAD expert group meeting on information technology in transit arrangements (Geneva, May 1997).

(h) *United Nations Development Programme*

ESCWA cooperated with UNDP on the joint project on preparatory assistance for regional support of national efforts in pursuit of sustainable human development, including the provision of support in the preparation of national reports on sustainable human development in the Arab countries. Additional collaborative efforts included the implementation of a field project on community development services; activities related to housing policies and urbanization; and the implementation of the recommendations of the Fourth World Conference on Women. ESCWA also attended the Symposium on Gender and Human Development in the Arab Region organized by UNDP and CAWTAR (Tunis, 20-22 May 1996); and participated in the Round Table on the Promotion of Syrian Export Development in the Light of the New International Trading System, organized by UNDP (Damascus, 3-4 June 1996). UNDP and ESCWA cooperated in the preparation of inputs to or commentaries

on reports in the areas of integrated water management, Agenda 21, business incubators, ISO 9000, trade policy and export promotion. Additionally, ESCWA collaborated with UNDP in the formulation of a flagship project document on “*integrated follow-up to United Nations global conferences*” by United Nations agencies at the regional level. Finally, ESCWA conducted the ***Current Situation of Water Resources in the ESCWA Region: Training Course on Water Resources Management***, organized by UNDP (Fujairah, United Arab Emirates 22-24 November 1997), and a joint project with UNDP and AIDMO on engineering infrastructure. The summary of this project was published by ESCWA under the title ***Study on the Establishment of Engineering Infrastructure Industries in the Arab Countries***.

(i) *United Nations Development Fund for Women*

In the biennium 1996-1997, cooperation with UNIFEM pertained to activities in follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women. UNIFEM and ESCWA have also, at different times, been the convenors of the Inter-Agency Task Force on Gender established by the Amman-based Regional Inter-Agency Coordination Group. In addition, ESCWA and UNIFEM agreed, through a Letter of Understanding, to engage in more formal cooperation in the area of enterprise development. In this regard, ESCWA provided technical assistance to the UNIFEM project on strengthening institutions for the development of women’s enterprises (which covers Jordan, Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic and the occupied territories) by carrying out activities related to entrepreneurship training, business counselling and information, and the establishment of business incubators for women. In order to share experiences with other “start your own business” trainers within the region, the ***Simulation Exercises and Learning Labs Development Camp*** was jointly organized in Amman on 6-11 December 1997 by ESCWA, UNIFEM and the Development Employment Fund in Jordan (DEF), with funding assistance from GTZ and the Social Development Project at the DEF.

(j) *United Nations Environment Programme*

ESCWA cooperated with UNEP in the preparation of several reports, including the Task Manager's report on the regional implementation of Agenda 21, which was submitted to the Commission on Sustainable Development and to the 1997 Special Session of the General Assembly for its review. ESCWA also submitted a report on the state of the environment in the ESCWA region for inclusion in the UNEP publication, Global Environmental Outlook: State of the Environment Report for 1996. In addition, UNEP cooperated in the organization of the *Expert Group Meeting on Development of Non-Conventional Water Resources and Appropriate Technologies for Groundwater Management in the ESCWA Member Countries* (Manama, 27-30 October 1997).

(k) *United Nations Population Fund*

ESCWA coordinated its efforts with UNFPA in the implementation of the UNFPA-supported project on "*Population policies in the Arab countries of the ESCWA region and North Africa*", which focused on institution-building and advocacy and had as one of its main outputs a regional relational database on population policies of the Arab countries. UNFPA also supported several expert group meetings on the topic, in addition to four workshops on the integration of population variables into the development planning process.

(l) *United Nations Centre for Human Settlements*

ESCWA cooperated with the other regional commissions and with Habitat in preparations for the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II), providing comments and feedback on the draft agenda; and subsequently participated in Habitat II (Istanbul, 3-14 June 1996). In addition, ESCWA participated in a regional conference on localizing the Habitat agenda at the municipal level (Beirut, 6-8 October 1997) and made a presentation on the role of small cities in sustainable urban development. ESCWA also provided inputs to reports submitted to the sixteenth session of the Commission on Human Settlements; and participated in the task force in follow-up to Habitat II.

(m) *United Nations University*

ESCWA participated in the fifth UNU Global Environmental Forum on Freshwater Resources in Arid Lands (Tokyo, 13 June 1996) and presented a paper on "*Fresh water resources of the Arabian Peninsula*".

2. *Specialized agencies*(a) *International Labour Organisation*

ESCWA cooperated with the ILO in the implementation of a joint activity focusing on the establishment of community-based vocational rehabilitation programmes in rural areas in the Syrian Arab Republic; and in conducting the *Training Course on Management of Technical Cooperation* (Amman, 6-17 October 1996). In addition, ESCWA completed with ILO a joint study on poverty in two sectors in Lebanon; and translated the ILO manual on surveys of economically active population, employment, unemployment and underemployment. ESCWA also contributed a resource person to each of three workshops held by the ILO Turin International Training Centre: the Strategy Formulation Workshop on the Creation and Development of Small and Medium Enterprises in Arab Mediterranean Countries (Turin, Italy, 2-6 September 1996); the seminar on Start Your Own Business within the Context of Support Policies and Programmes (Muscat, 16-17 March 1997); and a course on Improving the Performance of Private Enterprises (Turin, October 1997). In addition, ESCWA conducted several sessions on entrepreneurial and business awareness at the national seminar organized by the ILO on How to Start and Sustain Your Business (Sana'a, 16-18 November 1997). ESCWA also participated in the ILO Meeting of Experts on Labour Statistics (Geneva, 14-23 October 1997); and in the ILO regional seminar on Micro and Small Enterprise Promotion for Women in the Arab Region (Amman, 2-4 December 1997), at which ESCWA presented a paper on training concepts and the ESCWA experience in the area of entrepreneurship development and new business creation.

(b) *Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations*

ESCWA and FAO carried out the *Expert Group Meeting on Promoting Regional Coordination and Integration in Food and Agriculture* (Beirut, November 1997). ESCWA also cooperated

with FAO in the preparation of several agricultural studies in line with chapter 14 of Agenda 21 on promoting agriculture and rural development, for submission to the 1997 Special Session of the General Assembly for the review and appraisal of the implementation of Agenda 21. ESCWA also participated in the Expert Consultation on National Water Policy Reforms in the Near East Region, organized by FAO in Beirut on 9-10 December 1996; and in the Regional Seminar on Present and Future Prospects of Urban Food Distribution Systems in the Near East Region (Beirut 11-15 August 1997). ESCWA cooperated with FAO/RNE and UNDP (Jerusalem Office) in conducting the *National Training Workshop on Food and Agricultural Policy Analysis in the Occupied Territories* (Gaza, 19-31 July 1997)

(c) *United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization*

Cooperation with UNESCO centred on the *Expert Group Meeting on the Assessment and Promotion of Research and Development in the ESCWA Member Countries* (Beirut, 1-3 December 1997), at which UNESCO presented a study on updating science and technology indicators. Subsequently, this study was jointly published by the two organizations. In addition, ESCWA undertook the responsibility of translating a UNESCO document entitled "Cultural dimensions of development: towards a practical approach". ESCWA also participated in the Seventh International Hydrology Programme (IHP) Meeting for the Arab region and Workshop on Integration of Isotope Field Investigations into Water Projects in Water Scarce Areas (Rabat, 8-12 September 1997).

(d) *World Health Organization*

ESCWA participated in the WHO Regional Workshop on Water Conservation and Reuse: Practical Approaches and Strategies (Amman, 4-7 March 1996), presenting a paper entitled "*Overview of the water situation in the ESCWA region*"; and in the Sixth Meeting of the Technical Advisory Committee for the WHO Regional Centre for Environmental Health Activities (CEHA) held in Amman on 26-28 May 1997.



(e) *World Bank*

Discussions were held with the World Bank regarding the assessment of water resources in the ESCWA region and on action in follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women. Discussions were also held in Amman from 16 to 20 June 1996 regarding the continued implementation of the International Comparison Programme (ICP) in the ESCWA region, including a seminar on the topic held in Amman on 21-23 October 1996. In addition, ESCWA attended the 1996 Annual Meetings of the International Monetary Fund and World Bank Group (Washington, D.C., 1-3 October 1996), and participated in the First Meeting of the Mediterranean Development Forum (Marrakesh, Morocco, 12-17 May 1997), organized by the World Bank and the Government of Morocco.

(f) *United Nations Industrial Development Organization*

ESCWA participated in the UNIDO Workshop on the Role of Industry in the Development and Rational Use of Water Resources in the Arab Region (Amman, 13-15 May 1996), at which it presented the paper, "*Perspective of water supply and demand in the ESCWA region*". ESCWA participated in activities related to UNIDO's publication, Industrial Development Global Report 1997: Financing Industrial Development. These included assisting with the preparations for the Expert Group Meeting on the Role of Investment in Industrial Development (Vienna, 21-22 October 1996) and contributing information on the industrial investment environment in the ESCWA member States and North Africa to the above Report. Moreover, in cooperation with UNIDO and AIDMO, ESCWA published the *Survey and Assessment of Sources of Information in Industry in the Region*. UNIDO also cooperated with ESCWA in activities related to ISO 9000; to the implications of WTO for international trade in textiles and clothing in the ESCWA member countries; and to research and development; and to the *Regional Seminar on Assessment of the Role of Business Incubators in Economic Development* (Beirut, 11-13 September 1996). The two organizations also collaborated on the Workshop on High Technology in Lebanon: Software and Internet (5 December 1996).

## C. INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

### **1. Centre for Arab Gulf Studies at the University of Exeter United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland**

ESCWA participated in the fourteenth international Symposium on Water and Arab Gulf Development: Problems and Policies, organized by the Centre for Arab Gulf Studies (Exeter, 10-12 September 1996), and presented two papers: "*Integrated approach to water resource development and management in the GCC countries*" and "*Prospects of non-conventional water resources in the Arabian Peninsula*".

### **2. Chamber of Industry and Commerce in Cologne, Germany**

ESCWA participated in the Middle East/North Africa (MENA) symposium on Ready-Made Garments and Textile Manufacturing Technology (Cologne, 9 October 1997) and made a presentation on the implications of the WTO for international trade in textiles and clothing in the ESCWA region.

### **3. Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (Foundation)**

Collaboration between ESCWA and the Friedrich Ebert Foundation is based on a Memorandum of Cooperation between the two entities. In this regard, ESCWA collaborated with the Foundation, UNDP and UNIDO on the organization of the *Workshop on Total Quality Management and ISO 9000 with Special Reference to the Cement Industry* (Abu Dhabi, 21-23 May 1996); and the *Regional Seminar on Assessment of the Role of Business Incubators in Economic Development* (Beirut, 11-13 September 1996). ESCWA also cooperated with the Foundation, the German Arab Chamber of Commerce in Amman and the Delegation of German Industry and Trade in organizing awareness campaigns in Jordan, Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic on the implications of the WTO for international trade in textiles and clothing in the ESCWA member countries.

#### **4. Friedrich Naumann Stiftung (Foundation)**

ESCWA participated in the conference on the Reality of Trade: International Conference on WTO Accession, held by the Friedrich Naumann Foundation (Amman, 28-29 April 1996) and made a presentation on the "Aspects of the WTO agreement on textiles and clothing" in the ESCWA region. The Foundation also collaborated with ESCWA in the organization of the *Expert Group Meeting on Institutional Aspects of Privatization* (Beirut, 1-3 December 1997).

#### **5. German Agency for Technical Cooperation**

In collaboration with GTZ, with which ESCWA has had a Memorandum of Understanding since 1992, ESCWA organized the *Regional Training Workshop on PopMap and Internet* (Damascus, 12-17 October 1996); and the *National Training Workshop on Food and Agricultural Policy Analysis* (Amman, 3-20 November 1996). GTZ also supported ESCWA in the collection of field data for use in a series of studies by ESCWA on *Agricultural policy analysis*.

#### **6. International Centre for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas**

In March 1997, ESCWA and ICARDA held a meeting regarding the coordination of joint activities for the biennium 1998-1999. ICARDA also participated in and presented a paper at the ESCWA/FAO *Expert Group Meeting on Promoting Regional Coordination and Integration in Food and Agriculture* (Beirut, 17-19 November 1997).

#### **7. International Commission on Irrigation and Drainage**

ESCWA participated in the Sixteenth International Congress on Irrigation and Drainage held in Cairo, 15-22 September 1996.

#### **8. International Organization for Standardization**

The ISO cooperated with ESCWA in the organization of the *Workshop on Total Quality Management and ISO 9000 with Special Reference to the Cement Industry* (Abu Dhabi, 21-23 May 1996), and also on preparations for the ESCWA publication *Survey of National Institutes of Standards in the ESCWA Region*.

### ***9. Konrad Adenauer Foundation***

Under the sponsorship of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation, ESCWA participated in the Conference on Jordan and the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership Agreement: Economic Opportunities and Challenges (Amman, 22-23 October 1997) and made a presentation on the implications of the WTO for international trade in textiles and clothing in the ESCWA region.

### ***10. Urban Management Programme***

ESCWA collaborated with the Regional Bureau of the Urban Management Programme on a joint activity on urbanization policies as a contribution to the *Database on human settlements policies*, for which two country profiles on urbanization policies were prepared.

### ***11. World Energy Council***

Contacts were made with the WEC to coordinate efforts as well as exchange views concerning the issue of privatization of the energy sector. In this context, and upon the request of the WEC, the study, *Assessment of Privatization of the Electric Power Sector in Selected ESCWA Member Countries* was prepared for presentation at the 17<sup>th</sup> Congress of the WEC, to be held in Houston, Texas, in September 1998.

## **D. REGIONAL AND SUBREGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS**

### ***1. League of Arab States***

A Memorandum of Understanding between ESCWA and the League of Arab States (LAS) was originally signed in 1983 and was subsequently renewed in 1995. This ongoing collaboration with LAS, its specialized agencies and affiliated bodies, within the context of the ESCWA programme of work, is mainly in the form of report preparation and reciprocal participation in meetings. Specific examples of ESCWA's cooperation with LAS and its affiliates are given below.

At the request of LAS, ESCWA provided technical support and other services to the Arab Conference on the Formulation of a Unified Arab Programme and a Follow-up Mechanism for the Action Plan of the Fourth World Conference on Women: the Conference of

Arab Ministers of Social Affairs (Amman, 25-29 September 1996). ESCWA also participated in the Arab Telecommunication Policies and Economics Colloquium organized by LAS, the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and the European Union (EU), held in Cairo from 28 to 30 September 1996, and presented a paper entitled "*Development of telecommunications capabilities in the Arab countries: roles for regional organizations*", which included a discussion of modalities for networking R and D efforts. The Commission participated in the twenty-first session of the Standing Statistical Committee of LAS (21-22 November 1996); and cooperated with LAS in organizing the *Expert Group Meeting on Border-Crossing Formalities and Agreements for the Transport of Goods and Passengers* (Cairo, 4-7 November 1996). Other joint efforts in this area were related to port development and a pricing structure for Arab ports.

Additionally, ESCWA cooperated with LAS, the Arab Demographers' Association, the Cairo Demographic Centre, and the International Union for the Scientific Study of Population on the preparations for the first Arab Regional Population Conference (Cairo, 8-12 December 1996) and presented a paper at the Conference, "*Gender statistics in the Arab countries: current issues and future plans*". ESCWA also participated as a member in meetings of the Arab Expert Committee (23-27 February and 25-27 August 1997), formed by decision of the fourteenth session of the LAS Council of Arab Ministers of Housing and Reconstruction. Upon the request of the meeting, ESCWA prepared a draft Arab strategy for follow-up to Habitat II.

Cooperation with the **Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development** (AFESD) pertained to ESCWA's activities in community development, human development and poverty eradication. In addition, at the Second Symposium on Water Resources in the Arab World organized by AFESD and ACSAD (Kuwait, 8-10 March 1997), ESCWA presented a paper entitled "*Water resources: the need for planning and management in the ESCWA region*".

Activities carried out by ESCWA in collaboration with the **Arab Industrial Development and Mining Organization** (AIDMO) are reviewed under section 3 below.

ESCWA cooperated with the **Arab Labour Organization** (ALO) in formulating strategies for sustainable human development in the Arab world; and ALO participated in the *Expert Group Meeting on Improving Standards of Living in the Arab Mashreq Countries*, convened by ESCWA (Cairo, 16-18 November 1997).

ESCWA and the **Arab Monetary Fund** (AMF) co-sponsored a workshop entitled *Implementation of the 1993 System of National Accounts* (Abu Dhabi, 7-17 June 1997). In addition, the AMF participated in two ESCWA expert group meetings: *Challenges and Opportunities of the New International Trade Agreement (Uruguay Round): Post-Uruguay Preparations and Adjustments* (Kuwait, 24-26 November 1997); and *Institutional Aspects of Privatization* (Beirut, 1-3 December 1997).

ESCWA and the **Arab Organization for Agricultural Development** (AOAD) held annual coordination meetings to exchange views and identify activities of mutual interest. In this regard, ESCWA collaborated with AOAD on preparations for the *Workshop on the Implications of the GATT Agreement for the Region*, held in Amman on 22 and 23 May 1996. Additionally, AOAD participated in the *First Session of the Committee on Water Resources* organized by ESCWA (Amman, 30 March 1997); and in the *Expert Group Meeting on Water Legislation in the ESCWA Region* (Amman, 24-26 November 1996). ESCWA also contributed to two training workshops organized by AOAD by delivering two lectures, one at a national training workshop on strengthening the role of women's organizations in rural development (Amman, May 1997) and the other at a regional training workshop on the implementation and management of agricultural projects (Amman, July 1997).

In an effort to promote environmental cooperation in the Arab region, ESCWA participated in the meetings of the **Joint Committee on Environment and Development in the Arab Region** (JCEDAR), of which LAS is a member. ESCWA also prepared a report on the regional implementation of Agenda 21 for the Eighth Meeting of the Council of Arab Ministers Responsible for Environment (Cairo, 27-28 November 1996).

ESCWA submitted to the **Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries** (OAPEC) the outline of a paper to be presented at the Sixth Arab Energy Conference (Damascus, 10-13

May 1997). The paper was entitled "*Energy conservation in the ESCWA region*".

ESCWA delivered four lectures at the Training Course on Groundwater Protection, organized by the **Arab Centre for the Studies of Arid Zones and Dry Lands (ACSAD)** and held in Amman on 6-10 December 1997.

### ***2. Arab Gulf Programme for United Nations Development Organizations***

ESCWA's cooperation with AGFUND stems from the project agreement signed in 1993 by the two organizations. Under this agreement, programmed activities related to community development services are carried out with financial support from AGFUND. In the period 1996-1997, these included the establishment of the ***Regional Computer Training Centre for Blind Girls/Women*** in Amman and implementation in the ESCWA region of the "*National household survey capability programme*".

### ***3. Arab Industrial Development and Mining Organization***

A Memorandum of Cooperation between ESCWA, AIDMO and UNIDO was signed in 1994. Thus, in collaboration with AIDMO and UNIDO, ESCWA prepared the publication, ***Survey and Assessment of Sources of Information in Industry in the Region***. In addition, ESCWA provided a list of items for discussion with AIDMO on activities proposed for joint implementation, including a study on the impact of the new international agreement on the textiles and clothing industry. ESCWA also attended the regular ministerial meeting of AIDMO held in June 1996; and presented a paper at the first meeting on the Industrial Technology Information Exchange System (Rabat, 11-12 December 1996), organized by AIDMO and UNIDO. ESCWA and AIDMO also issued a joint publication, ***Bulletin of Industrial Statistics for the Arab Countries: Issue No.3***, and conducted the ***Training Workshop on Industrial Statistics and Their Link to the United Nations System of National Accounts (SNA)***, held in Beirut from 12 to 18 November 1997.

#### **4. Arab Institute for Training and Research in Statistics**

ESCWA participated in the twenty-first meeting of the Board of Directors of the Arab Institute for Training and Research in Statistics, held in Amman from 22 to 23 July 1996.

#### **5. Arab Planning Institute**

ESCWA maintains a Memorandum of Understanding with the Arab Planning Institute (API). Under this arrangement, ESCWA participated in the API Symposium on Principles for Developing a Standard Country Model for the Assessment of Economic Policies (Cairo, 20-22 May 1996), and presented a paper on "*Standard economic models and their uses and the experience of ESCWA in this regard*". The API also cooperated with ESCWA in the organization of the *Expert Group Meeting on the Challenges and Opportunities of the New International Trade Agreement (Uruguay-Round): Post-Uruguay Preparations and Adjustments*.

#### **6. Arab Security Studies and Training Centre**

In collaboration with the Arab Security Studies and Training Centre, ESCWA conducted the *Training Workshop on Traffic Regulations in Major Cities* (Amman, 7-25 October 1996).

#### **7. Association of Lebanese Industrialists**

ESCWA participated in the Workshop on the Identification of New Technologies to enhance the Competitiveness of Lebanese Industry, organized by the Association of Lebanese Industrialists and UNIDO (Beirut, 4-5 December 1996), for which a paper was prepared entitled "*Technology transfer and technology policy*".

#### **8. Centre of Arab Women for Training and Research**

ESCWA cooperated with CAWTAR in finalizing the study on *Arab Women 1995: Trends, Statistics and Indicators*. The two organizations are currently involved in implementing a project on the development of national gender statistics programmes in the Arab countries. ESCWA also collaborated with CAWTAR in the organization of the *Regional Workshop on the Development of National Gender Statistics Programmes in the Arab Countries* (Tunis, 9-14 June 1997); and participated in the seminar on



Formulating a Strategic Plan for CAWTAR (Tunis, 28-30 July 1997).

#### **9. Economic Research Forum for the Arab Countries, Iran and Turkey**

ESCWA participated in the Economic Research Forum (ERF) Conference on Labour Markets and Human Resource Development (Kuwait, 16-18 September 1996). In 1996, ESCWA, the ERF and the Friedrich Ebert Foundation jointly published *Selected Proceedings: Expert Group Meeting on Industrial Strategies and Policies and Managerial and Entrepreneurial Skills under Conditions of Global and Regional Change* for the two expert group meetings held concurrently in Bahrain from 20 to 23 November 1995. The ERF also contributed to the *Expert Group Meeting on the Impact of the Peace Process on Selected Sectors*, organized by ESCWA and held in Amman from 23 to 25 June 1997. In addition, ESCWA attended the fourth annual conference on regional trade, financial and labour markets in transition organized by ERF (Beirut, 7-9 September 1997); and ESCWA prepared an article on trends in international and regional trade in textiles and clothing for the ERF publication, Economic Trends in the MENA Region: 1997.

#### **10. Federation of Arab Institutes for Economic and Social Research**

ESCWA participated in the FAIESR seminar on Prerequisites for Development in the Middle East in the Light of Regional and Global Development (Cairo, 24-26 September 1996) and presented a paper entitled "*Foreign and foreign direct investment: can they be the engine of economic growth in the Arab countries?*".

#### **11. Gulf Cooperation Council**

ESCWA cooperation with the GCC was established by a Memorandum of Understanding between the two organizations, signed in 1983. Under this arrangement, ESCWA participated in the Training Workshop on the 1993 SNA and the ICP for the GCC Countries, held by the Gulf Cooperation Council (Muscat, 25 October-5 November 1997), delivering lectures on the subject. ESCWA also prepared a paper on the city and the family in the Arab world, to be presented to a meeting on the topic. This meeting, scheduled for 1998, was to be organized by the Executive Bureau of

the Council of Ministers of Labour and Social Affairs of the GCC. ESCWA also participated in GCC meetings concerning the preparation of a unified database for transport. The draft report on this effort was prepared by ESCWA and adopted by the GCC.

### ***12. Islamic Development Bank***

The IDB and ESCWA have maintained a cooperative agreement since 1987. Accordingly, ESCWA participated in the Regional Workshop on Water Conservation and Reuse: Practical Approaches and Strategies, organized by the IDB and WHO (Amman, 4-7 March 1996); and in the Workshop on Policies and Methods of Promoting IDB Member Countries' Exports of Textiles and Ready-made Garments to European Markets (Amman, 2-5 August 1997). Furthermore, ESCWA provided funding for the participation of three trainees from its member States and areas (representing Palestine, the Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen) in the seven-week IDB Training Course on Farm Water Management and Rationalization (Kafr el-Sheikh, Egypt, 11 May - 27 June 1996).

### ***13. Agricultural Food Marketing Association for the Near East and North Africa***

ESCWA presented a case study on urban food marketing in greater Amman at the AFMANENA Regional Seminar on Present and Future Prospects of Urban Food Distribution Systems in the Near East Region, held in Beirut from 11 to 15 August 1997.

### ***14. Near East-North Africa Regional Agricultural Credit Association***

ESCWA's representative participated as a resource person in a workshop on agricultural credit for marketing (Damascus, 27-29 May 1997), organized by NENARACA in cooperation with FAO and AFMANENA. At this seminar, which concerned inventory credit as an innovative mechanism of marketing credit, ESCWA presented its summary of a paper on the experiences of Ghana, India, Mali and the Philippines with respect to this subject.

**15. Al-Urdun Al-Jadid Research Centre**

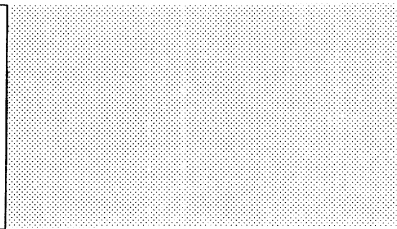
ESCWA presented a paper entitled "*The Middle Eastern project and the future of Arab economic integration*" at the Al-Urdun Al-Jadid Research Centre seminar on the Jordanian Economy in Its Regional Framework: Future Outlook (Amman, 26-29 May 1996). ESCWA also participated in the Centre's Conference on Regional Economic Cooperation in the Mediterranean (Amman, 8-9 July 1996).

**16. Water Science and Technology Association**

ESCWA co-sponsored the *Third Gulf Water Conference* (Muscat, 8-13 March 1997), which was organized by WSTA, the Secretariat of the Gulf Cooperation Council and Sultan Qaboos University, Oman. ESCWA presented three papers: "*The environmental considerations of brine-water disposal from desalination plants*"; "*Investigations for the development of ground water management strategies in the eastern coastal plains of the United Arab Emirates*"; and "*Water supply augmentation through artificial groundwater recharge techniques*".



**Chapter V**  
**Assessment and Future  
Prospects**





## V. ASSESSMENT AND FUTURE PROSPECTS

The purpose of this concluding chapter is to present a few observations on the overall performance of ESCWA during the biennium 1996-1997.

### A. LIGHT AT THE END OF THE TUNNEL

The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) has often found its progress hampered by a legacy of constraints. In his statement at the inauguration of the new ESCWA headquarters on 20 March 1998, Secretary-General Kofi Annan remarked that "the life of the Commission has been a veritable Odyssey through the Middle East, reflecting the changes and unrest ... in the region". "During the quarter of a century it has been in existence, the Commission has moved no fewer than six times". A November 1993 report of the Office of Inspections and Investigations affirmed that "few United Nations Programmes have had to deal with as many external constraints as have affected the work of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia".

However, it seems that in spite of the adverse conditions, ESCWA's efforts to overcome these limitations, and its efforts to survive and improve, are bringing about many tangible results. We can already see the light at the end of the tunnel.

In 1997, ESCWA found a permanent headquarters in one of the most beautiful facilities in the United Nations system. Almost 25 years after its establishment, ESCWA is back home in Beirut. Referring to the move to the new building, the Secretary-General eloquently described it as "more than a building of bricks and mortar". It is a total rebirth of the organization. The relocation operation itself benefited from careful planning and orderly implementation. Not only were the complex logistic, technical, legal, financial and programmatic concerns integrated and implemented smoothly, but more importantly, the operation was realized with no disruption whatsoever. The rate of performance of activities, recorded at 81 per cent in 1996-1997, was one of the highest in ESCWA's history. This could not have been achieved without the total commitment of the staff, and it has given them a new sense of achievement.

ESCWA's move to its new headquarters is only the visible sign of the changes that have taken place. No less important have been the measures taken to reform the organization. From 1994 to

1997, ESCWA undertook a series of reform initiatives. The member States in their ministerial session expressed their satisfaction with these measures by adopting ESCWA resolution 216 (XIX) of 7 May 1997 on organizational and programme changes and modifications introduced by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia since 1994.

The vacancy rates which had placed ESCWA at the greatest disadvantage among the different departments and programmes in the United Nations System have substantially been redressed, bringing the organization to normality.

Overcoming the many problems of the past has by no means reduced the challenges of the future. On the contrary, freed from the majority of its constraints, ESCWA is now called upon to assume greater responsibility in the fields of social and economic development. In one of the most turbulent regions of the world, ESCWA, as the United Nations organization for this region, should rise to the challenges. The aspirations and stakes are extraordinary; and so are the challenges.

#### **B. CHALLENGES FOR THE FUTURE**

In the 1995 report, it was pointed out that three major issues or problems faced ESCWA's management; an identity problem; an image problem; and a management culture problem. As for the identity problem, as a regional organization ESCWA has to focus on its comparative advantage. The Secretary-General, in his March 1998 address, captured the essence of ESCWA's relevance to the region when he stated: "The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, as an impartial body promoting universal values, is uniquely qualified to help meet emerging regional and geo-economic challenges. ESCWA's position between Europe and Africa makes it a natural gateway between regions".

While the existence of a real need in the region for ESCWA's services is fundamental to its success, it is far from sufficient. For ESCWA to serve the region effectively, its member States must understand this need as well as perceive ESCWA as the proper organization to respond to it. The task ahead is to create this awareness, projecting the image of ESCWA as the leading regional organization and a place where its members may naturally turn for



help. Perception and reality, therefore, are equally important to the success of its work. This process will take time.

Finally, ESCWA has to build a managerial culture commensurate with the changes in the times. Organizations in today's world are required to be more competitive, yet more transparent. To achieve this transparency, in addition to broadening the knowledge base of the staff, management must cultivate in them a sense of belonging, and an identification with the mission of the organization. These are the challenges that ESCWA must live up to.

Aware of the gravity of the issues raised in this regard, the Executive Secretary invited a number of eminent persons from the region to meet on ESCWA's premises on 18 and 19 December 1996 for an exchange of views on the role and the future of the Commission.<sup>4</sup> The salient points of this discussion are summarized below.

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<sup>4</sup> The participants in the *Meeting of Eminent Persons on the Role and the Future of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia*, well-known for their long experience in their respective disciplines as well as in work at the international level, represented intellectual trends in most of the ESCWA member countries. A list of the experts who were present is given below.

(a) Mr. Ibrahim Hilmy Abdel-Rahman (Egypt) - economic consultant, former Minister of National Planning and Administrative Development, and First Executive Director of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO);

(b) Mr. Ibrahim Yusuf Izz al-Din (Jordan) - Member of the Upper House of Parliament, former Minister of Information, Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs, and Head of the Civil Service Commissions;

(c) Mr. Elias Saba (Lebanon) - economic and financial consultant, former Minister of Finance, Minister of National Defence and Deputy Prime Minister;

(d) Mr. Tayseer Abdel Jaber (Jordan) - Director General of the Arab Consultative Centre of Jordan, former Executive Secretary of ESCWA, Minister of Labour, and Minister of Social Development;

(e) Mr. Gamil Mattar (Egypt) - political writer and Director of the Arab Centre for Development and Future Research, former Deputy Chief of the Palestinian Affairs Department at the League of Arab States, and Director of the Arab Fund for Technical Assistance to African and Arab Countries;

(f) Mr. Salah Eddin Hafez (Egypt) - Deputy Editor-in-Chief of *Al-Ahram* newspaper and Secretary-General of the Federation of Arab Journalists;

### *1. International changes<sup>5</sup>*

Radical economic, social and political changes are taking place at the global level, reflected primarily in the remarkable technological advances in all fields, especially in transport, communications, information, atomic energy, space and genetic engineering. Coupled with the removal of high barriers that impeded trade and financial flows, these changes have led to the creation of a dense financial and cultural network linking all countries together, hence to globalization and interdependence. This phenomenon is expected to strike deeper roots over the next few years as a result of the comprehensive liberalization process initiated by the Uruguay Round of multilateral trade agreements.

Large economic blocs, most notably the European Union, the North American Free Trade Agreement, and similar regional groupings in East Asia and the Pacific, have also emerged in recent years.

Meanwhile, significant progress has been made over the last two decades in the areas of democratization and respect for human rights, particularly since the collapse of the Soviet Union and the socialist bloc.

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(g) Mr. Ali Ahmad Otaïqa (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) - Secretary-General of the Arab Thought Forum in Amman, former Assistant to the General Director of the United Nations Development Programme/Regional Director of the Bureau for Arab States in New York and Secretary-General of the Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries;

(h) Ms. Laila Sharaf (Jordan) - Member of the Upper House of Parliament and former Minister of Information;

(i) Mr. Muhammad Said El-Nabulsi (Jordan) - President of the Trust House for Financial and Investment Consultancy, former Governor of the Central Bank of Jordan and former Executive Secretary of ESCWA;

(j) Mr. Mohammad Said Al-Naggar (Egypt) - Professor of Economics at Cairo University and Head of *Al-Nida' Al Jadid* society, former Executive Director at the World Bank and Director of the United Nations Economic and Social Office in Beirut.

<sup>5</sup> The following sections are based on the "Report of the Meeting of Eminent Persons on the Role and the Future of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia", Amman, 18-19 December 1996 (E/ESCWA/CAB/1997/1).

The participants in the Meeting discussed the significance of such changes for the role and future of the Commission, emphasizing the following points:

(a) The greater competitiveness in the world economy which requires the Commission to assist member States in adopting those economic policies which secure effective participation in the world economy;

(b) The important advantages in the world economy for countries which have met the requirements for profiting by the international division of work, as achieved by the Four Tigers<sup>6</sup> and an increasing number of other developing countries;

(c) The risks associated with lagging behind in international competitiveness;

(d) The increasing gap of inequality between the rich and the poor at the international, regional and country levels and the associated social and political consequences, some of which are manifested in different forms in many countries and territories of Latin America, Africa and the Arab region;

(e) Cultural and civil problems arising from accelerated economic, informatic and technological globalization.

## ***2. Regional developments***

The regional environment has also been affected by far-reaching developments as indicated by a review of the changes in the following three areas:

### ***(a) Arab-Arab developments***

Panel discussions at the Meeting emphasized that in view of the fateful challenges ahead, it was of the utmost importance that Arab solidarity be maintained and that all the reasons for discord and disunity be removed. If the level of Arab complementarity achieved

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<sup>6</sup> The "Four Tigers" are Hong Kong (China), the Republic of Korea, Singapore and Taiwan. Notwithstanding recent setbacks in the region, these four economies remain highly competitive.

since the establishment of the League of Arab States has not fulfilled expectations, efforts should be made to look again into all available alternatives for enhancing and expanding Arab cooperation in the economic, social, political and cultural spheres. The participants stressed the importance of enhancing cooperation between ESCWA and the League of Arab States and its specialized agencies, to serve the best interest of the ESCWA member States through the implementation of joint programmes, projects and activities and the exchange of views, experience and information and statistical data. However, the participants decided that it was currently inappropriate to expand the Commission's membership to include all the Arab States.

(b) *Arab-Israeli and Middle Eastern developments*

The most important of these developments was considered to be, the progress achieved in the settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict. At the time of this meeting, significant advances had been made in the peace process after the 1993 Oslo Agreement. For all the difficulties encountered in the negotiations, there was a persistent hope that a comprehensive and lasting peace would be achieved. However, the difficulties have increased of late, to the point of posing a threat to the future of peace and stability, with the result that hope has given way to frustration and a feeling akin to despair. To discuss the shape and future of the region under peace has therefore become an unrealistic exercise. Nonetheless, the discussions produced certain basic points, the most important of which was that ESCWA should maintain its present membership; that it was currently out of the question for the Commission to expand its membership to include all non-Middle Eastern Arab countries, as that would result in duplication with the League of Arab States and its organizations, or the inclusion of non-Arab Middle Eastern countries, judged inappropriate under the current circumstances.

Some participants were of the view, however, that if a just and comprehensive peace were achieved, a new reality would emerge, and many aspects of the situation—including ESCWA membership in relation to other, potentially emerging regional institutions—would have to be reviewed. It was agreed that ESCWA should closely monitor the progress of all research, studies and events connected with regional issues which had implications for member States, particularly those related to water, refugees, regional development and joint projects.

(c) *Arab-European developments*

European interest in the Arab countries in the Middle East and North Africa has increased recently. A number of bilateral partnerships and cooperation agreements have been concluded between the European Union and certain Arab countries, and other countries are in the process of concluding similar agreements. The panel discussions expressed the view that, as the European Union refused to negotiate with the Arab countries collectively, insisting that such agreements be concluded on a bilateral basis, the Arab States should coordinate their efforts and that such agreements should be coupled with similar or more comprehensive agreements among Arab countries. It was felt that it would obviously be wrong to eliminate trade and non-trade barriers between the European Union and the Arab countries but maintain such barriers among the Arab countries themselves.

### *3. Country developments*

A large number of ESCWA member countries are undertaking comprehensive economic reform programmes, with or without agreement with the International Monetary Fund or the World Bank. This process often involves transforming an economic system based on public-sector and State control over most economic activities into another, based on private-sector and individual initiatives.

It was recognized that such a transformation did not mean that the State was to abandon economic participation altogether, but rather that the State had basic functions under a market economy. The participants, therefore, stressed the need for the ESCWA research, consultancy and training programmes to focus on the following topics:

- (a) Competition and monopoly policies, including the promotion of competition among private-sector enterprises and the abolishment or strict control of monopolies;
- (b) Consumer protection;
- (c) Privatization;
- (d) Components of the process of transition to an export economy;

- (e) Sustainable development, including environmental protection;
- (f) Issues pertaining to the liberalization of foreign trade following the Uruguay Round, with special reference to new areas in this field (services, intellectual property, and investment laws affecting foreign trade;)
- (g) The advantages and disadvantages of free zones;
- (h) The development of Arab financial markets;
- (i) The establishment and operation of small- and medium-scale enterprises, especially in governorates and towns that have not been adequately developed;
- (j) Technical aspects of European partnership agreements with countries of the region and the impact of new relations with the European Union on Arab economic cooperation.

The participants pointed out that since the ESCWA region is basically a desert area, the preservation of water resources and water quality is a vital issue. Agriculture accounts for most water use in the region, and significant technological advances have been made in agriculture all over the world as a result of rapid developments in the biological sciences, which are expected to become a basic feature of the next century. It was therefore recommended that the ESCWA programme include a study of water and agricultural issues, in terms of the effect of technical advances, the benefits of continuous modernization, and the identification of successful international applications in these fields. As a result, a special programme is to be established in cooperation with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and other international institutions to follow up the progress in these fields for the benefit of all ESCWA member States.

While the participants felt it was necessary to highlight the increasing importance of such topics, they acknowledged that the programme of ESCWA was developing satisfactorily, in step with international, regional and country developments, and that it actually addressed a number of these topics.

#### ***4. The social dimension and human development***

The participants stressed the importance of the social dimension of development. They pointed out that a narrow definition of growth concentrating on the rate of growth in GDP fails to provide an accurate indication of economic welfare. Consequently, the participants stressed the need to adopt the principles of human development, suggesting that the Arabic rendering of the term should be made to correspond accurately to that concept, as the English term has humane and humanitarian implications; to this end, ESCWA should focus on the following:

- (a) Social justice under market economies;
- (b) Social security networks;
- (c) Poverty and the increasing gap between the rich and the poor;
- (d) Human resources development, including education, health and housing;
- (e) Women and development;
- (f) Problems associated with urbanization, including unplanned suburbs.

The participants stressed that human development cannot be confined to the social dimension and its relevant aspects. The emergence of the “good governance” concept in recent years has necessitated the introduction of the principles of grass-roots participation, transparency and accountability, and has led to more intensive efforts to combat corruption and enact the laws needed to avert any conflict of interest.

#### ***5. Constraints on ESCWA activities***

In reviewing the constraints on ESCWA activities, the participants observed that they were of two kinds: the first relates to the nature of ESCWA as both an intergovernmental organization and as part of the United Nations. Caution is therefore needed when dealing with sensitive issues that might meet with objections from one or more member countries. Any weakness in ESCWA is, as

noted in the discussions, largely due to a weakness in the parent organization, the United Nations itself.

The second kind of constraint relates to the limited financial resources available for the Commission, which prevents ESCWA from doing all it wants to do: priorities therefore have to be clear and the related programmes and activities carefully and prudently selected.

Within this context, the participants stressed the importance of securing extrabudgetary resources in cooperation with the private sector for some of the projects included within the Commission's programme of work.

#### ***6. The relationship between the Commission and member countries***

The participants agreed that, like other international and regional bodies, ESCWA derives its strength from the interest shown by its member countries in its activities and services, and that the only way to maintain that interest is to respond to their needs. It is therefore necessary to increase the activities of regional consultants in the provision of expert advice and specialized technical views, for dealing with specific issues.

Raising the interest of member States requires ESCWA to concentrate on activities in the fields of research, consultancy and training within both regular programmes and technical cooperation. The participants agreed that the real needs of the member countries should be identified through dialogue with the officials concerned in the Governments of these countries, in non-governmental organizations and in private-sector institutions. ESCWA should make every effort to support their programmes without affecting its own position in the light of international, regional and national realities. In this respect, some of the participants noted that the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) was an example to be followed. Member countries of ECLAC did not perceive their Commission as representing the presence of the United Nations among them but rather felt that they were part of the United Nations itself.



### ***7. The relationship between ESCWA and specialized international and regional organizations***

The ESCWA region is covered by many other specialized international and regional organizations, including FAO in agriculture, UNIDO in industry, and UNESCO in education and culture, as well as the League of Arab States, its organizations and various Arab funds. The participants agreed that the relationship between ESCWA and these organizations should be one of cooperation and mutual support rather than one of competition or conflict, taking into consideration the fact that specialized organizations enjoy an obvious relative advantage in respect of the technical aspects of the issues involved, while ESCWA enjoys such an advantage with regard to the regional aspects of these issues. It was felt that this distinction constituted a sound basis for cooperation among all parties, and it was only natural that such cooperation should be translated into joint programmes, projects and activities in various economic and social fields. For a review of the actual publications and activities ESCWA carried out during the biennium 1996-1997 in collaboration with other organizations, see chapter IV of this report.

### ***8. The questions of identity and image***

With respect to identity, it was agreed that, as mentioned above, ESCWA membership should be restricted to the Arab countries of Western Asia, at least for the foreseeable future.

The participants stressed the need to engage in continuous efforts to improve the image of ESCWA in the eyes of member countries and all other bodies and organizations with which it dealt. To this end, it was recommended that ESCWA:

- (a) Strengthen its relationship with the media by arranging for periodic interviews and by organizing training courses with media personnel;
- (b) Deepen its relationship with scientific and cultural bodies through mutual participation in meetings organized by both ESCWA and these bodies, adopting a "teamwork" approach under the leadership of eminent persons from outside ESCWA;

(c) Enhance its relationship with the public by making ESCWA publications accessible to all; this could be achieved by issuing simple pamphlets explaining research work and results in layman's terms and by correcting misconceptions and defining certain basic concepts. Television documentary programmes should be produced jointly with the private sector and with the participation of intellectuals and scientists, on particular economic and social issues of interest to the public, with the aim of increasing popular interest in ESCWA programmes and activities;

(d) Approach non-governmental organizations, which have increased in number in the ESCWA member countries and are undertaking effective development programmes. ESCWA should provide them with technical and financial training and research support. This should bring ESCWA and the popular base closer together, and create implementation mechanisms for the development projects initiated by ESCWA.

### ***9. Performance evaluation***

The participants stressed the great importance of developing the mechanisms and methods needed by ESCWA to evaluate its performance. A distinction should be made between quantitative and qualitative evaluation. Quantitative evaluation is clearly based on the quantity of research papers, bulletins and publications issued; the number of seminars, consultancies and training courses carried out; and the implemented proportion of the work programme planned by the Commission. However, qualitative evaluation is more difficult; the main considerations are perhaps the level of interest of the respective member countries in the Commission and the extent to which they feel that the services rendered meet their needs. Certain indicators can be used to assess this, including, for example, the rate and level of attendance at the meetings organized by the Commission for its member countries, the size of their demand for ESCWA publications, and the extent to which ESCWA receives adequate media coverage.

*10. The orientations of ESCWA activities*

The final section of the *Report of the Meeting of Eminent Persons* notes the participants' recognition of reforms introduced into the organizational and programme structure of ESCWA, particularly within the context of the ESCWA programmes of work for both the current (1996-1997) and next (1998-1999) bienniums and the Commission's medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001. The participants expressed their satisfaction with the orientation of the Commission as reflected in its work programmes, noting that significant developments in various aspects of the programme activities were largely in agreement with the orientations highlighted during the meeting discussions.

It was observed that, in view of the accelerating developments in the region, the Commission's future programmes should be sufficiently flexible to allow for revision and the incorporation of major new developments.



**Annex**

**SFLECTED LIST OF ESCWA PUBLICATIONS  
IN 1996-1997**

Symbol	Title
E/ESCWA/ED/1996/1/Rev.1	Survey of Economic and Social Developments in the ESCWA Region, 1995: Summary
E/ESCWA/ED/1996/3/Add.1	Survey of Economic and Social Developments in the ESCWA region 1995. Part II: Privatization in the ESCWA Region
E/ESCWA/ED/1996/5	Preliminary Overview of Economic Developments in the ESCWA Region in 1996 نظرة على التطورات الاقتصادية في منطقة الإسكوا في عام ١٩٩٦ (تقرير أولي)
E/ESCWA/SD/1995/7	التنمية البشرية في الوطن العربي: الأبعاد الثقافية والمجتمعية، سلسلة دراسات التنمية البشرية (رقم ٢) محمد عابد الجابري ومحمد محمود الإمام
E/ESCWA/SD/1995/8/Rev.1	Poverty in Western Asia: A Social Perspective Eradicating Poverty Studies Series (1)
E/ESCWA/SD/1995/8/Add.1/Rev.1	قياس الفقر في دول اللجنة الاقتصادية والاجتماعية لغربي آسيا (محمد حسين باقر) سلسلة دراسات مكافحة الفقر (٣)
E/ESCWA/SD/1995/8/Add.2	الفقر في لبنان (انطوان حداد) سلسلة دراسات مكافحة الفقر (٢)
E/ESCWA/SD/1996/4	تمويل التنمية البشرية في الأقطار العربية سلسلة دراسات التنمية البشرية (٣) (باسل البستاني)
E/ESCWA/SD/1996/6	التنمية البشرية المستدامة من المفهوم النظري الى التطبيق: دليل للعاملين في التنمية ورقة للمناقشة من برنامج الأمم المتحدة الانمائي

Symbol	Title
E/ESCWA/SD/1996/9	Report to the Commission on Technical Cooperation Activities for the Improvement of the Quality of Life in Human Development تقرير الى اللجنة عن أنشطة التعاون الفني لتحسين نوعية الحياة في مجال التنمية البشرية
E/ESCWA/SD-WOM/1996/1	Report to the Commission on Support to Technical Assistance Projects for the Advancement of Arab Women تقرير الى اللجنة عن دعم مشاريع المساعدة الفنية للنهوض بالمرأة العربية
E/ESCWA/HS/1995/3/Rev.1	Report to the Commission on Technical Assistance Activities Related to the Improvement of the Quality of Life in the Area of Human Settlements Development تقرير الى اللجنة عن أنشطة المساعدة التقنية المتعلقة بتحسين نوعية الحياة في مجال تنمية المستوطنات البشرية
E/ESCWA/HS/1996/1	Bedouin Settlements in Oman and Other Arab Countries: Development Projects, Experiences and Recommendations
E/ESCWA/HS/1996/2	The Effect of Modernization, Sedentarization and State Formation of Bedouin Societies in the Arab World
E/ESCWA/ENR/1995/14	Assessment of Water Quality in the ESCWA Region
E/ESCWA/ENR/1995/WG.1/20/Rev.1	Report of the Expert Group Meeting on the Implications of Agenda 21 for Integrated Water Management in the ESCWA Region Amman, 2-5 October 1995

Symbol	Title
E/ESCWA/ENR/1996/5	Proceedings of the Expert Group Meeting on the Implications of Agenda 21 for Integrated Water Management in the ESCWA Region Amman, 2-5 October 1995
E/ESCWA/ENR/1996/7	Water Resources Assessment in the ESCWA Region Using Remote Sensing and GIS Techniques: Final Report
E/ESCWA/ENR/1996/11	Investigation of the Regional Basalt Aquifer System in Jordan and the Syrian Arab Republic
E/ESCWA/ID/1996/2	Selected Proceedings: Expert Group Meeting on Industrial Strategies and Policies; Managerial and Entrepreneurial Skills Under Conditions of Global and Regional Change Bahrain, 20-23 November 1995
E/ESCWA/ID/1996/3	Report of the Workshop on Total Quality Management and ISO 9000 with Special Reference to the Cement Industry Abu-Dhabi, 21-23 May 1996
E/ESCWA/ID/1996/4	Report of the Regional Seminar on Assessment of the Role of Business Incubators in Economic Development, Beirut, 11-13 September 1996
E/ESCWA/TRANS/1996/1	Transport Bulletin No. 7 نشرة النقل، العدد السابع
E/ESCWA/TRANS/1995/2	استراتيجية الإسكوا الإقليمية لتطوير النقل المتعدد الوسائط
E/ESCWA/AGR/1994/10	سياسات الأراضي والمياه في منطقة الشرق الأدنى دراسات حالة عن مصر والأردن وباكستان
E/ESCWA/AGR/1995/14/Rev.1	أفاق التكامل الزراعي بين الأردن والجمهورية العربية السورية والعراق ولبنان

Symbol	Title
E/ESCWA/STAT/1995/IG.1/16	Report of the Statistical Committee on its First Session تقرير اللجنة الإحصائية عن دورتها الأولى
E/ESCWA/STAT/1996/10	وثيقة أعمال الندوة الأولى عن الإحصاء ونظم المعلومات الجغرافية التي عقدت خلال الفترة ١٥-١٦ آذار/مارس ١٩٩٥ بكلية الاقتصاد والعلوم السياسية - جامعة القاهرة
E/ESCWA/STAT/1996/11	وقائع أعمال الندوة الثانية عن الإحصاء ونظم المعلومات الجغرافية التي عقدت في ١١ آذار/مارس ١٩٩٦، كلية الاقتصاد والعلوم السياسية - جامعة القاهرة
E/ESCWA/STAT/1996/12	External Trade Bulletin of the ESCWA Region: 8th Issue نشرة التجارة الخارجية لمنطقة اللجنة الاقتصادية والاجتماعية لغربي آسيا العدد الثامن
E/ESCWA/STAT/1996/13	National Accounts Studies of the ESCWA Region: Bulletin No. 16 دراسات الحسابات القومية لمنطقة اللجنة الاقتصادية والاجتماعية لغربي آسيا: النشرة السادسة عشرة
E/ESCWA/STAT/1996/14	Regional Training Workshop on PopMap for Windows and Internet. Damascus, 12-17 October 1996 Final Report حلقة العمل الإقليمية للتدريب على برنامج بوب ماب لقواعد البيانات السكانية الجغرافية والإنترنت ١٢-١٧ تشرين الأول/أكتوبر ١٩٩٦
E/ESCWA/STAT/1996/15	Statistical Abstract of the ESCWA Region, Sixteenth Issue المجموعة الإحصائية لمنطقة اللجنة الاقتصادية والاجتماعية لغربي آسيا: العدد السادس عشر



Symbol	Title
E/ESCWA/POP/1996/WG.1/8	<p>First Training Workshop on Computer Software Packages for Population Policies and Sustainable Development: Final Report Amman, 7-11 April 1996</p> <p>ورشة العمل الأولى للتدريب على حزم البرامج الجاهزة لإعداد السياسات السكانية والتنمية المستدامة التقرير الختامي عمان، ٧-١١ نيسان/أبريل ١٩٩٦</p>
E/ESCWA/POP/1996/WG.2/15	<p>Training Workshop on Population Policies and Sustainable Development: Health Care, Education and Housing: Final Report Amman, 8-12 September 1996</p> <p>ورشة العمل التدريبية في مجال السياسات السكانية والتنمية المستدامة: الرعاية الصحية والتعليم والإسكان: التقرير الختامي عمان، ٨-١٢ أيلول/سبتمبر ١٩٩٦</p>
E/ESCWA/POP/1996/WG.4/2	<p>First Meeting of Heads of Nationals Population Councils and Committees in the Arab World: Final Report and Recommendations Amman, 9 October 1996</p> <p>الاجتماع الأول لرؤساء المجالس واللجان الوطنية للسكان في العالم العربي: التقرير الختامي والتوصيات عمان، ٩ تشرين الأول/أكتوبر ١٩٩٦</p>
E/ESCWA/STAT/1996/WG.2/11	<p>Report of the Seminar on the International Comparison Programme in the ESCWA Region Amman, 21-23 October 1996</p> <p>تقرير الندوة المعقودة حول برنامج المقارنات الدولية في منطقة الإسكوا/عمان ٢١-٢٣ تشرين الأول/ أكتوبر ١٩٩٦</p>

Symbol	Title
E/ESCWA/ED/1997/1/Rev.1	Survey of Economic and Social Developments in the ESCWA Region, 1996-1997. Summary مسح للتطورات الاقتصادية والاجتماعية في منطقة الإسكوا ١٩٩٦-١٩٩٧، موجز
E/ESCWA/ED/1997/2	Survey of Economic and Social Developments in the ESCWA Region, 1996-1997
E/ESCWA/ED/1997/2/Add.1	Survey of Economic and Social Developments in the ESCWA Region 1996-1997. Part II, Tourism and the Economies of ESCWA Member States
E/ESCWA/ED/1997/3	Role of Financial Markets in Privatization in the ESCWA Region
E/ESCWA/ED/1997/4	Preliminary Overview of Economic Developments in the ESCWA Region in 1997
E/ESCWA/ED/1997/5	Institutional Aspects of Privatization: A Comparative Approach in the ESCWA Region
E/ESCWA/ED/1997/6	Challenges and Opportunities of the New International Trade Agreements (Uruguay Round) for ESCWA Member Countries in Selected Sectors: Crude Oil, Petroleum Products and Petrochemicals
E/ESCWA/ED/1997/6/Suppl.1	Challenges and Opportunities of the New International Trade Agreements (Uruguay Round) for ESCWA Member Countries in Selected Sectors: Crude Oil, Petroleum Products and Petrochemicals Statistical Supplements
E/ESCWA/ED/1997/7	Regional Cooperation in the Mobilization, Management and Allocation of Financial Resources in the ESCWA Region

Symbol	Title
E/ESCWA/ED/1997/8	Impact of the Peace Process on Trade in Services: The Tourism Sector in the ESCWA Region, Case Studies on Egypt, Jordan and Palestine
E/ESCWA/ED/1997/9	1997 Compendium on National Legislation Governing Foreign Direct Investment in Arab Countries: Original Arabic Text and Authoritative English Versions (Volumes I-XIII)
E/ESCWA/ED/1997/10	Follow-Up Study on Trade Policy Aspects of Environmental Measures in the ESCWA Member Countries: Case Studies on Textiles Industry in Egypt, Jordan and the Syrian Arab Republic
E/ESCWA/ED/1997/11	Foreign Direct Investment Legislation Reflecting Environmental Concerns in the ESCWA Region, The Cases of Egypt and Jordan
E/ESCWA/ED/1997/12	Assessment of Trade and Identification of Prospects for the Development of International Trading Companies in the ESCWA Member Countries
E/ESCWA/ED/1997/13	Impact of Economic Reform Policies on Poverty in Selected ESCWA Member Countries: Egypt, Jordan and the Republic of Yemen
E/ESCWA/ED/1997/14	Report of the Expert Group Meeting on Institutional Aspects of Privatization in the ESCWA Region Beirut, 1-3 December 1997
E/ESCWA/ED/1997/15	Interlinkages between Trade, Investment and Transfer of Technology: Implications in the Case of an Arab Common Market

Symbol	Title
E/ESCWA/ED/1997/16	Review of the Progress made by the Republic of Yemen in the Implementation of the New Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the 1990s
E/ESCWA/POP/1997/1	النشرة السكانية (٤٤)
E/ESCWA/POP/1997/2	تقرير ورشة العمل التدريبية في مجال السياسات السكانية والتنمية المستدامة: الغذاء والبيئة عمان، ٢٩ حزيران/يونيو - ٣ تموز/يوليو ١٩٩٧
E/ESCWA/POP/1997/3	النشرة السكانية (٤٥)
E/ESCWA/POP/1997/4	التقرير الختامي ورشة العمل التدريبية في مجال السياسات السكانية والتنمية المستدامة: الحقوق الإيجابية والصحة الإنجابية عمان، ٢٨ أيلول/سبتمبر - ٢ تشرين الأول/أكتوبر ١٩٩٧
E/ESCWA/POP/1997/5	التقرير الختامي الاجتماع الثاني لروساء المجالس/اللجان الوطنية للسكان في العالم العربي حول السياسات السكانية والتنمية المستدامة: الواقع ومتطلبات التطوير عمان، ٤-١ كانون الأول/ديسمبر ١٩٩٧
E/ESCWA/POP/1997/6	Demographic and Related Socio-Economic Data Sheets No. 9 - 1997
E/ESCWA/POP/1997/7	Population Policies in Egypt, Jordan and Yemen
E/ESCWA/SD/1995/8/Rev.1	الفقر في غربي آسيا: منظور اجتماعي سلسلة دراسات مكافحة الفقر (١)
E/ESCWA/SD/1996/10	الفقر في العراق قبل وبعد حرب الخليج سلسلة دراسات مكافحة الفقر (٤)
E/ESCWA/SD/1996/7	التنمية البشرية: نحو محاولة لصياغة وجهة نظر عربية في المفهوم والقياس سلسلة دراسات التنمية البشرية (٤)

Symbol	Title
E/ESCWA/SD/1997/1	قياس التنمية البشرية مع اشارة خاصة الى الدول العربية سلسلة دراسات التنمية البشرية (٥)
E/ESCWA/SD/1997/2	التنمية البشرية المستدامة والاقتصاد الكلي: حالة العالم العربي سلسلة دراسات التنمية البشرية (٦)
E/ESCWA/SD/1997/3	Database on Poverty in the ESCWA Region Eradicating Poverty Studies Series (6)
E/ESCWA/SD/1997/4	التنمية البشرية المستدامة ومنهاج الاقتصاد الكلي: حلقات الارتباط الاستراتيجية ودلالاتها
E/ESCWA/SD/1997/5	وقائع ورشة العمل حول التجارب العملية للتنمية البشرية المستدامة القاهرة، ١٤-١٩ أيار/مايو ١٩٩٥ سلسلة دراسات التنمية البشرية (٧)
E/ESCWA/SD/1997/7	الفقر في الضفة الغربية وقطاع غزة: محاولة أولية لتقدير حجمه والتعرف على خصائصه ومحدداته سلسلة دراسات الفقر (٧)
E/ESCWA/SD/1997/8	Exploratory Study on Approaches to the Social Impact of Structural Adjustment Policies
E/ESCWA/SD/1997/9	قضايا التشغيل والتنمية البشرية في البلدان العربية سلسلة دراسات التنمية البشرية (٨) البعد الثقافي للتنمية: نحو مقاربة عملية
E/ESCWA/SD/1997/10	مفاهيم العلم والعمل والتكافل الاجتماعي في الفكر العربي الاسلامي سلسلة دراسات التنمية البشرية (٩)
E/ESCWA/SD/1997/11	التقرير الختامي والتوصيات اجتماع فريق خبراء بشأن تحسين مستويات المعيشة في دول المشرق العربي القاهرة، ١٦-١٨ تشرين الثاني/نوفمبر ١٩٩٧
E/ESCWA/SD-WOM/1996/2	استعراض وتقييم ما تم تنفيذه للنهوض بالمرأة العربية في ضوء اهداف استراتيجيات نيروبي التطلعية سلسلة دراسات عن المرأة العربية في التنمية (٢٤)

Symbol	Title
E/ESCWA/SD-WOM/1997/1	A Critique of Personal Status Codes in Selected Arab Countries <p>بحث نقدي لقوانين الأحوال الشخصية في بلدان عربية مختارة  سلسلة دراسات عن المرأة العربية في التنمية (٢٥)</p>
E/ESCWA/SD-WOM/1997/2	Values and Self-Identity of Bedouin and Urban Women: A Comparative Analysis <p>القيم والانتماء النفسي عند البدوية وابنة المدينة.  تحليل مقارنة  سلسلة دراسات عن المرأة العربية في التنمية (٢٦)</p>
E/ESCWA/SD-WOM/1997/3 E/ESCWA/ID/1997/5 E/ESCWA/AGR/1997/1	تقييم دور المنظمات غير الحكومية في الأراضي المحتلة وفرص التشابك فيما بينها في إطار السلطة الفلسطينية الجزء الأول: عام
E/ESCWA/ID/1997/6	تقييم دور المنظمات غير الحكومية في الأراضي المحتلة وفرص التشابك فيما بينها في إطار السلطة الفلسطينية الجزء الثاني: حالة المنظمات النسوية العاملة في تأسيس وإدارة المشاريع الصغيرة المولدة للدخل
E/ESCWA/AGR/1997/2	تقييم دور المنظمات غير الحكومية في الأراضي المحتلة وفرص التشابك فيما بينها في إطار السلطة الفلسطينية الجزء الثالث: حالة المنظمات العاملة في مجال تسويق المنتجات الزراعية
E/ESCWA/SD-WOM/1997/4	تقييم دور المنظمات غير الحكومية في الأراضي المحتلة وفرص التشابك فيما بينها في إطار السلطة الفلسطينية الجزء الرابع: حالة المنظمات العاملة في مجالي الصحة والتعليم
E/ESCWA/SD-WOM/1997/5	Indices on the Situation of Arab Women: A Critical Review
E/ESCWA/HS/1997/1	وضع النسر والتري الفلسطينية في الأراضي المحتلة ومسئوليات تطويرها

Symbol	Title
E/ESCWA/HS/1997/2	التقرير الختامي الندوة الإقليمية للتنمية المستدامة بينيا للمستوطنات البشرية في الأقاليم الصحراوية ٢١-٢٢ تشرين الأول/أكتوبر ١٩٩٦ العين، الإمارات العربية المتحدة
E/ESCWA/HS/1997/3 (Corr.1)	الفقر والماوى في منطقة غربي آسيا
E/ESCWA/HS/1997/4	Community Participation in Urban Development in the ESCWA Region
E/ESCWA/HS/1997/5	Accessibility for the Disabled in the Urban Environment in the ESCWA Region: Planning and Design Solutions
E/ESCWA/HS/1997/6	المدن الثانوية والتنمية الحضرية المستدامة
E/ESCWA/HS/1997/7	Youth in the Urban Environment in the ESCWA Member Countries
E/ESCWA/HS/1997/8	السياسات الإسكانية والتحضر: ملاح قطرية، المملكة الأردنية الهاشمية
E/ESCWA/HS/1997/9	السياسات الإسكانية والتحضر: ملاح قطرية، جمهورية مصر العربية
E/ESCWA/HS/1997/10 (Corr.1)	اجتماع فريق خبراء حول المدن الثانوية والتنمية الحضرية المستدامة عمان، ٢٤-٢٦ تشرين الثاني/نوفمبر ١٩٩٧
E/ESCWA/ENR/1997/1	Assessment of Privatization of the Electric Power Sector in Selected ESCWA Member Countries Volume I: <i>Overview</i>
E/ESCWA/ENR/1997/1/Add.1	Volume II: Case-Study of Egypt
E/ESCWA/ENR/1997/1/Add.2	Volume III: Case-Study of Jordan
E/ESCWA/ENR/1997/1/Add.3	Volume IV: Case-Study of Yemen
E/ESCWA/ENR/1997/2	Water Legislation in Selected ESCWA Member Countries

Symbol	Title
E/ESCWA/ENR/1997/3	Technical and Economic Aspects of the Establishment of a Regional Electricity Network
E/ESCWA/ENR/1997/4	Water Pollution in Selected Urban Areas in the ESCWA Region. Case Studies: Damascus, Gaza and Jeddah.
E/ESCWA/ENR/1997/5	Survey on Incorporating the Environmental Dimension into Development Plans. Conceptual, Theoretical and Operational Background
E/ESCWA/ENR/1997/5/Add.1	Incorporation of Environmental Concerns into Development Planning in the ESCWA Member Countries (Part II)
E/ESCWA/ENR/1997/6	Review of the Impact of Pricing Policy on Water Demand in the ESCWA Region with a Case Study on Jordan
E/ESCWA/ENR/1997/7	Transboundary Water Resources in the ESCWA Region: Utilization, Management and Cooperation
E/ESCWA/ENR/1997/8	Report of the Expert Group Meeting on Development of Non-Conventional Water Resources and Appropriate Technologies for Groundwater Management in the ESCWA Member States Manama, 27-30 October 1997
E/ESCWA/ENR/1997/9	Development of Non-Conventional Water Resources
E/ESCWA/ENR/1997/10	The Role of NGOs in the Water Sector in the ESCWA Member Countries
E/ESCWA/ENR/1997/11	تقرير لجنة الطاقة عن دورتها الأولى عمان، ٢٦-٢٧ تشرين الثاني/نوفمبر ١٩٩٧



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E/ESCWA/ENR/1997/12	التقرير الختامي اجتماع فريق خبراء بشأن إنشاء شبكة إقليمية وأقاليمية للطاقة الكهربائية عمان، ٢٥-٢٧ تشرين الثاني/نوفمبر ١٩٩٧
E/ESCWA/ENR/1997/13	تحسين كفاءة استخدام الطاقة من منظور إقليمي في دول الإسكوا
E/ESCWA/ENR/1997/14	Regional Programme for the Development of New and Renewable Energy Resources: Assessment and Prospects
E/ESCWA/ID/1997/1	Study on the Establishment of Engineering Infrastructure Industries in the Arab Countries
E/ESCWA/ID/1997/2	Report on Business Incubators in the ESCWA Region
E/ESCWA/ID/1997/3	كيف تؤسس مشروعاً خاصاً بك. دليل المدرب
E/ESCWA/ID/1997/4	Impact of the Peace Process on Selected Sectors: Textiles and Electronics Industries
E/ESCWA/ID/1997/7	Challenges and Opportunities of the New International Trade Agreements (Uruguay Round) for ESCWA Member Countries in Selected Sectors: Textiles and Clothing Industry
E/ESCWA/ID/1997/8	استعراض وتقييم مصادر المعلومات في القطاع الصناعي في منطقة الإسكوا
E/ESCWA/ID/1997/9 (Corr.1)	Women's Research and Development Opportunities in Selected ESCWA Member Countries
E/ESCWA/ID/1997/10	Survey of National Institutes of Standards in the ESCWA Region
E/ESCWA/TECH/1997/1	Biotechnology in the ESCWA Member Countries: Sectoral Issues and Policies

Symbol	Title
E/ESCWA/TECH/1997/2	Environmentally Sound Technologies in the Tanning Industry
E/ESCWA/TECH/1997/3	Summary of the Study on "Biotechnology in the ESCWA Member Countries: Sectoral Issues and Policies"
E/ESCWA/TECH/1997/4	Directory of Research and Development Institutes in the ESCWA Member Countries
E/ESCWA/TECH/1997/5	Assessment of Research and Development in Selected ESCWA Member Countries: Local Technological Inputs
E/ESCWA/TECH/1997/6	Science and Technology Indicators Basic Concepts, Definitions and Prospects for Development
E/ESCWA/TECH/1997/7	Challenges and Opportunities of the New International Trade Agreements (Uruguay Round) for ESCWA Member Countries in Selected Sectors: Implications of WTO/TRIPs for Technology Transfer in the Pharmaceutical Industry
E/ESCWA/TRANS/1997/1	Regional Guidelines for Transport Agreements and Conventions
E/ESCWA/TRANS/1997/2	نشرة النقل، العدد الثامن
E/ESCWA/TRANS/1997/3	Assessment of Intra- and Interregional Transport Links and Infrastructures
E/ESCWA/TRANS/1997/4	Policy and Project Proposals for the Development of Multimodal Transport System in the ESCWA Region
E/ESCWA/TRANS/1997/5	تقييم الإجراءات القائمة لعبور الحدود واتفاقات نقل السلع والأشخاص

Symbol	Title
E/ESCWA/TRANS/1997/6	التقرير الختامي اجتماع الخبراء المعنى بالنقل المتعدد الوسائط "إعادة الهيكلة الاقتصادية للموانئ والاتجاهات العالمية" بيروت، ٢٧-٢٩ تشرين الأول/أكتوبر ١٩٩٧
E/ESCWA/TRANS/1997/7	Report of the Expert Group Meeting on Intra- and Interregional Transport and Infrastructures Beirut, 18-21 November 1997
E/ESCWA/AGREB/XVIII	الزراعة والتنمية في غربي آسيا العدد (١٨)
E/ESCWA/AGREB/XIX	الزراعة والتنمية في غربي آسيا العدد (١٩)
E/ESCWA/AGR/1995/12/Rev.1	Resource Conservation Policies and Strategies for Agriculture: The Case of the Syrian Arab Republic
E/ESCWA/AGR/1997/3	Challenges and Opportunities of the New International Trade Agreements (Uruguay Round) for ESCWA Member Countries in Selected Sectors: Agriculture Under GATT and WTO, with Special Reference to Egypt
E/ESCWA/AGR/1997/4	إعادة تأهيل القطاع الزراعي في الأراضي الفلسطينية وثيقة مشروع حول إعداد استراتيجيات التنمية الزراعية
E/ESCWA/AGR/1997/5	إعادة تأهيل القطاع الزراعي في الأراضي الفلسطينية وثيقة مشروع لإعادة تأهيل التعاونيات الزراعية
E/ESCWA/AGR/1997/6	مقترح لإطار عام لسياسة تنمية زراعية للأراضي الفلسطينية
E/ESCWA/AGR/1997/7	Evaluation of Agricultural Policies in Egypt (Policy Analysis Matrix Approach)
E/ESCWA/AGR/1997/8	تطوير التنسيق والتكامل الزراعي والغذائي في منطقة غربي آسيا

Symbol	Title
E/ESCWA/AGR/1997/9	التقرير الختامي والتوصيات لاجتماع فريق خبراء حول تطوير التنسيق والتكامل الإقليمي في مجالات الأغذية والزراعة بيروت، ١٧-١٩ تشرين الثاني/نوفمبر ١٩٩٧
E/ESCWA/AGR/1997/10	الاستشراف الطويل الأمد للإنتاج الزراعي والغذائي في منطقة الإسكوا
E/ESCWA/AGR/1997/11	Evaluation of Agricultural Policies in the Palestinian Territories (Policy Analysis Matrix Approach)
E/ESCWA/STAT/1997/1	مسوح السكان الناشطين اقتصاديا والعمالة والبطالة والعمالة الناقصة
E/ESCWA/STAT/1997/2	Purchasing Power Parities; Volume and Price Level Comparisons for the Middle East, 1993. Results of the International Comparison Programme (ICP) for the ESCWA Region
E/ESCWA/STAT/1997/3	Arab Women 1995: Trends, Statistics and Indicators
E/ESCWA/STAT/1997/4	Bulletin of Industrial Statistics for the Arab Countries: Issue No. 3
E/ESCWA/STAT/1997/5	National Accounts Studies of the ESCWA Region (17)
E/ESCWA/STAT/1997/6	Compendium of Social Statistics and Indicators, Fourth Issue
E/ESCWA/STAT/1997/7	Report of Regional Workshop on the Development of National Gender Statistics Programmes in the Arab Countries Tunis, 9-14 June 1997
E/ESCWA/STAT/1997/8	Statistical Abstract of the ESCWA Region, 17 <sup>th</sup> Issue  المجموعة الإحصائية لمنطقة اللجنة الاقتصادية والاجتماعية لغربي آسيا: العدد السابع عشر

Symbol	Title
E/ESCWA/STAT/1997/IG.1/15	Final Report of the Statistical Committee
E/ESCWA/SD/1997/IG.1/7	Final Report of the Committee on Social Development
	التقرير الختامي للجنة التنمية الاجتماعية
E/ESCWA/C.1/19/14	تقرير اللجنة الفنية عن أعمال دورتها العاشرة
E/ESCWA/19/9	تقرير اللجنة عن دورتها التاسعة عشرة

