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**REPORT OF
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2000-2001**



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Preface

This report reviews the activities and outputs of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) for the biennium 2000-2001. The report has been prepared pursuant to ESCWA resolution 158 (XIV) and reaffirmed in resolution 196 (XVII), dated 31 May 1994, which requests that the Executive Secretary prepare a detailed report on the activities, plans and programmes of the Commission for submission to the Economic and Social Council in those years when no session is held.

The report provides a comprehensive review of the programme of work for 2000-2001. With a view to providing the member States with an account of the activities of the Commission, the report details outputs by the five substantive divisions of ESCWA. Additionally, it focuses on the major achievements of ESCWA during the biennium, highlights the advisory services that were provided to members and describes the cooperation and coordination with regional and international organizations in areas of mutual interest.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AFFI	Arab Federation for Food Industries
AGFUND	Arab Gulf Programme for United Nations Development Organizations
AIDMO	Arab Industrial Development and Mining Organization
ALI	Association of Lebanese Industrialists
API	Arab Planning Institute
ASER	Arab Society for Economic Research
BGR	Federal Institute for Geosciences and Natural Resources of Germany
CAEU	Council of Arab Economic Unity
CAMHR	Council of Arab Ministers of Housing and Reconstruction
CAMRE	Council of Arab Ministers Responsible for Environment
CARDNE	Regional Centre for Agrarian Reform and Rural Development for the Near East
CAWTAR	Center of Arab Women for Training and Research
CCA	Common Country Assessment
CEDARE	Centre for Environment and Development for the Arab Region and Europe
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
DESA	Department of Economic and Social Affairs
ECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
ECE	United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
ECOSOC	United Nations Economic and Social Council
EDI	electronic data interchange
EIA	environmental impact assessment
ERF	Economic Research Forum for the Arab Countries, Iran and Turkey
ESCWA	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia
EU	European Union
FDI	foreign direct investment
FES	Friedrich Ebert Stiftung
GAFTA	Greater Arab Free Trade Area Agreement
GATS	General Agreement on Trade in Services
GCC	Gulf Cooperation Council
GDP	gross domestic product
GIS	geographic information system
GUCCIAAC	General Union of Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture for Arab Countries
HDM	highway development and management model
ICARDA	International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas
ICTs	information and communication technologies
IDRC	International Development and Research Centre
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
ILO	International Labour Organization
IMF	International Monetary Fund
INP	Institute of National Planning
IRI	Industrial Research Institute
ISIC	International Standard Industrial Classification
ISO	International Organization for Standardization
IT	information technology
ITSAM	Integrated Transport System in the Arab Mashreq
ITU	International Telecommunication Union
LAS	League of Arab States
MIS	management information system
MTP	medium-term plan
NAPA	Network of Arab Planning and Architecture Research and Academic Institutions
NBN	National Broadcasting Network
NGO	non-governmental organization
ODA	official development assistance
PAM	policy analysis matrix

ABBREVIATIONS *(continued)*

PMMS	pavement maintenance management systems
POPIN	population information network
PPIS	population policies information system
RCG	United Nations Regional Coordination Group
REPM	renewable energy promotion mechanism
S&T	science and technology
SMEs	small and medium-sized enterprises
SNA	system of national accounts
SPS	sanitary and phytosanitary measures
TBT	technical barriers to trade
TEIA	transboundary environmental impact assessment
TNC	transnational corporation
TRIPs	Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights
UNCHS	United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat)
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP/ROWA	United Nations Environment Programme Regional Office for West Asia
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
UNRISD	United Nations Research Institute for Social Development
UNSD	United Nations Statistical Division
UNV	United Nations Volunteers
WSC	World Summit for Children
WSSD	World Summit on Sustainable Development
WTO	World Trade Organization
WWC	World Water Council

I. ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN BY THE COMMISSION SINCE THE TWENTY-FIRST SESSION

A. REVISIONS TO THE MEDIUM-TERM PLAN FOR THE PERIOD 2002-2005

1. The proposed revisions to the medium-term plan (MTP) for the period 2002-2005 and to the programme of work for the period 2002-2003 were on the agenda at the fourth special session of the Commission (Beirut, 11 March 2002). Representatives of all ESCWA members were present with the exception of Palestine whose delegate was unable to attend because of the tension in the West Bank.
2. The proposed revisions to the MTP and the programme of work were in response to suggestions made during the twenty-first session. Some delegates felt that ESCWA activities needed to be more focused if their implementation on a regional level were to be improved. Moreover, the revisions were deemed necessary to respect the spirit of the United Nations Millennium Declaration¹ and the policy of the Secretary-General to increase the focus on and the impact of the activities undertaken by the United Nations.
3. In light of these proposed revisions, ESCWA is currently restructuring the secretariat to take stock of those changes in the MTP and the work programme.² Other improvements being considered include the following: establishing a regional think tank to assist ESCWA to better identify and respond to the needs of the region; increasing public awareness with regard to the work of ESCWA; and mobilizing additional resources to increase the impact of activities.

B. ACTIVITIES OF ADVISORY BODIES

1. United Nations Regional Coordination Group

4. The United Nations Regional Coordination Group (RCG) for the ESCWA region was established in 1999.³ ESCWA hosts the RCG web page on its web site with the aim of providing information and documentation pertaining to RCG activities.
5. The RCG held a meeting in April 2000 to follow up on the decisions of the first meeting in April 1999 and to discuss the following: coordination and cooperation between the various United Nations entities operating in the region; the Millennium Report of the Secretary-General; the follow-up on the implementation of programmes of action that resulted from United Nations world conferences; the mobilization of resources for regional programmes and projects; and the sectoral meetings between the United Nations system and the League of Arab States (LAS) and its specialized agencies on youth and employment.
6. In April 2001, the RCG reviewed the coordination and cooperation among United Nations entities in Western Asia, examined various socio-economic issues with particular regard to peace-building in the region and investigated ways of presenting a common front at world conferences and other global meetings.

2. Meetings of subsidiary bodies

7. Since the twenty-first session, out of the six specialized subsidiary bodies of ESCWA two have convened, namely, the Committee on Energy and the Committee on Transport:

¹ United Nations Millennium Declaration (New York, 6-8 September 2000).

² For more information, see the *Report of the Fourth Special Session* of the Commission (E/2002/41, E/ESCWA/S-4/5).

³ The Regional Inter-Agency Coordination Group, established by ESCWA in 1995, was redesigned as the Regional Coordination Group (RCG) in April 1999.

(a) The Committee on Energy met, *inter alia*, to discuss the activation and follow-up on the use of the regional Renewable Energy Promotion Mechanism (REPM) (Beirut, 11-12 October 2001);

(b) The Committee on Transport reached an agreement on railways in the Arab Mashreq during its third session (Beirut, 5-7 March 2002). This agreement is being translated into English and French and will be published and submitted for signature to the Ministers of Transport in ESCWA countries. In addition, the Committee recommended the following: the establishment of national committees for the purpose of facilitating transport and trade; and the implementation of the first phase of a database for road transport.

C. COOPERATION AND COORDINATION

8. ESCWA has continued to cooperate with the United Nations Secretariat and its specialized bodies and agencies and with regional and international organizations in carrying out its activities. In addition, ESCWA has sought to step-up its collaboration with institutions of civil society and with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) as a means of increasing the impact of its activities and in recognition of the vital role they can play in the development process.

9. Efforts were exerted to increase the efficiency of cooperation and to address the needs of the ESCWA member States while complying with the main themes and priorities of the United Nations system. In 2001, ESCWA coordinated its activities with 17 United Nations agencies, 18 non-governmental and civil society institutions, 11 international and 19 regional organizations. The scope of this cooperation included, but was not limited to, the following: attending various events and offering substantive contributions; undertaking a number of studies and reports; co-hosting and co-sponsoring several meetings; and co-financing a number of projects. Highlights of some of the main activities jointly undertaken with other entities are presented below.

1. *United Nations Secretariat*

10. ESCWA has maintained long-standing collaborative relations with a number of offices of the United Nations Secretariat. Foremost among them has been the cooperation with the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) in the field of social development. Cooperation with DESA during this biennium covered a number of issues, including youth, community-based rehabilitation, enhancing accessibility for the disabled in south Lebanon, and population studies. In addition, ESCWA and DESA collaborated with regard to pension funds and other aging issues.

2. *Other United Nations bodies and specialized agencies*

11. ESCWA has maintained long-standing cooperation and collaboration with a number of other United Nations bodies. The main cooperative activities in this biennium were as follows:

(a) **United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (UNCHS).** Joint activities with UNCHS included projects on Urban Indicators and Good Urban Governance and Secure Tenure;

(b) **United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD).** Cooperation with UNCTAD was extended to cover issues of debt and foreign direct investment (FDI), in addition to matters relating to the World Trade Organization (WTO). The latter included the organization of the following high-level meetings: the Informal High-Level Arab Experts Meeting in Connection with the Preparation for the Fourth WTO Ministerial Conference (Doha, 22-23 September 2001); and the Arab Ministerial Meeting in Preparation for the Fourth WTO Ministerial Meeting (Beirut, 29-30 October 2001);

(c) **United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).** UNDP/Iraq is funding a project that aims to improve the quality of the *National Human Development Report*. The Flagship Project, also referred to as the project on Integrated Regional Follow-up by the Arab States to the United Nations Global Conferences, is being implemented with UNDP and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF);

(d) **United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).** Two letters of agreement were signed with UNESCO, which, respectively, set the terms of cooperation in establishing the Network of Arab Planning and Architecture Research and Academic Institutions (NAPA), and defined the terms for undertaking the project on educational systems based on modern information and communication technologies (ICTs);

(e) **United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA).** Three ESCWA projects are currently being implemented in collaboration with UNFPA. These are: the Population Policies in the Arab Region, which seeks to apply the population policies information system (PPIS); the Technical Support Services, which aims to provide technical support to the Government of Jordan in the field of population statistics; and the development and maintenance of the Population Information Network (POPIN) homepage, whose objective is to promote the dissemination of population and development information for the Arab Countries;

(f) **United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO).** ESCWA and UNIDO signed a joint communiqué to confirm their cooperative commitments in the following fields: development of a regional scheme for accreditation; market access facilitation; technology innovation; technology foresight groups; and proper technology application for the alleviation of poverty;

(g) **United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD).** In addition to attending board meetings of UNRISD, ESCWA and UNRISD intend to coordinate activities with regard to social policies in the region;

(h) **United Nations Statistical Division (UNSD).** Collaboration with UNSD focused on the system of national accounts (SNA) and on economic and social indicators. ESCWA and UNSD agreed to undertake a project over the period 2002-2004 that seeks to strengthen the statistical capacity in the region;

(i) **United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE).** ESCWA has been a strong proponent of the Mediterranean Initiative Projects, which tackle the issues of energy, environment and conservation of natural resources. These Projects are being developed with other regional commissions, namely, ECA and ECE;

(j) **United Nations Environment Programme Regional Office for West Asia (UNEP/ROWA)** ESCWA joined efforts with UNEP/ROWA and the Council of Arab Ministers Responsible for Environment (CAMRE) in preparing for the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development.

12. ESCWA has participated in a number of cross-agency activities and outputs. Foremost among these during the biennium under study was the Regional Project on the Development of National Gender Statistics Programme in the Arab Countries, which was funded by UNDP, the International Development and Research Centre (IDRC), UNESCO and UNICEF. The Project examined ways to produce, use and disseminate gender statistics as a first step towards making policies and programmes more gender-balanced.

3. International organizations

13. ESCWA participated in various meetings and undertook mutual consultation on issues of common interest with a number of international organizations. Examples of this cooperation include the following:

(a) A Memorandum of Understanding was signed with WTO to cooperate in extending trade-related technical assistance to member countries with a view to expanding their trading capabilities. In addition, WTO agreed to organize training courses for ESCWA staff members on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPs) and on the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS);

(b) Assistance is being provided by the World Bank to strengthen the following capacities of ESCWA member countries: to analyse strategies and options in the areas of the agricultural trade and WTO negotiations; and to help implement Phase III of the MedPolicies Initiative on Trade and Environment;

(c) Over the past five years, the Federal Institute for Geosciences and Natural Resources of Germany (BGR) has been providing invaluable contribution to ESCWA and to the region in the area of water resources. It is financing a project that aims to improve the management, exploitation and protection of water resources in the region. In addition, BGR provides advisory services to ESCWA and its member countries;

(d) Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES) cooperated with ESCWA in undertaking field surveys for the various case studies that were included in the publication *Comparative Study of National Strategies and Policies with Regard to Foreign Direct Investment in the ESCWA Region*. In addition, FES co-sponsored with the Association of Lebanese Industrialists (ALI) the *Directory of Support Services for Small and Medium Enterprises in Lebanon*.

4. Regional organizations

14. ESCWA and LAS and its subsidiary bodies continued to collaborate on a number of issues, mainly in the follow-up to recommendations of global conferences. Other areas of cooperation were in the fields of labour, children, population, employment, WTO, water scarcity, energy, technology and statistics.

15. In the area of social development, ESCWA and the Arab Gulf Programme for United Nations Development Organizations (AGFUND) have collaborated on various projects. These include the following: the second phase of the project on Community Development Services; Braille computer training programmes for blind adults in the Arab region; and the project on the participation of women in community development in ESCWA rural areas, mainly in Egypt and the Syrian Arab Republic. This latter project was undertaken in cooperation with the United Nations Volunteers (UNV), Ministries of Agriculture in member States and a number of voluntary community organizations.

16. In addition, AGFUND, the Regional Centre on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development for the Near East (CARDNE) and the Mercy Corps International cooperated with ESCWA in the project on Training and Rehabilitation in Community Development in Egypt, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Palestine and the Syrian Arab Republic.

17. As a member of the Board of Trustees of the Center of Arab Women for Training and Research (CAWTAR), ESCWA continued to play a pivotal role on gender issues in the region.

18. Cooperation with the Union of Arab Banks focused on the study on "Financial services in selected Arab countries". In addition, the Union assisted in the study on "Trade in financial services".

19. ESCWA and the Arab Industrial Development and Mining Organization (AIDMO) cooperated in the following two publications: the *Directory on Arab Sources of Industrial Information* and the fifth issue of the *Bulletin of Industrial Statistics for the Arab Countries*, a joint publication issued once every two years.

II. PROGRESS MADE IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE WORK PROGRAMME FOR THE BIENNIUM 2000-2001

A. OVERVIEW

20. This chapter provides the salient features of the work programme for the biennium 2000-2001. A total of 88 per cent of quantifiable programme outputs were completed during the period. Moreover, 14 outputs were added, representing 6 per cent of the total, of which 8 were by legislation and 16 activities were terminated, or 7 per cent of total outputs, 14 of which were by legislation.

21. The many achievements during the biennium were mitigated by some drawbacks both in the implementation of multidisciplinary activities and in addressing cross-cutting issues. Extrabudgetary resources, which reinforce the regular work programme and make it more effective, remained modest. Keen to explore parallel avenues for the purpose of fund-raising, the secretariat will provide member States with proposals regarding specific activities to be funded from extrabudgetary activities and will hold a pledging conference during each session of the Commission.

22. Despite these budgetary constraints, a number of small projects were implemented and two important projects were extended, namely, on local community development and on gender.

23. Furthermore, a major achievement was the signing of the Agreement on International Roads in the Arab Mashreq, which constitutes a first step towards increasing regional trade and augurs well for the efforts aimed at regional integration. Another key development was the formation of a Consultative Committee on Scientific and Technological Development and Technological Innovation as a means both of enhancing the relevance of technology-based inputs to socio-economic development in member countries and of advocating partnership between Governments and NGOs. These developments were in line with the recommendations following the twenty-first session of the Commission.

24. Valuable assistance was provided to member countries in their preparations for the Fourth Ministerial Meeting of the WTO. This assistance came in the form of a preparatory meeting that was hosted by ESCWA with a view to harmonizing positions. In addition, the Commission published 25 booklets on WTO issues to convey the core issues thereby encouraging a more effective participation.

25. In August 2001, ESCWA launched its redesigned web site following a beta test period of three years. The web site offers extensive information with regard to the operations and activities of the secretariat and includes library services with an electronic catalogue, press releases and links to United Nations organizations. A web site in Arabic was launched in November 2001. It offers a more limited service and aims primarily to serve as a platform for the exchange of ideas and information related to WTO. These web sites are in keeping with the serious efforts that are being exerted to increase the dissemination of information about ESCWA and its activities.

26. A brief account is provided below of the outputs and activities completed under the regular programme of work. The programme performance covers the biennium 2000-2001 and is grouped according to thematic subprogrammes where each subprogramme corresponds to one of the five substantive divisions within ESCWA.

B. REGULAR PROGRAMME OF WORK

Subprogramme 1. Management of natural resources and environment

27. This subprogramme, which is implemented by the Energy, Natural Resources and Environment Division, aims to promote the efficient and sustainable use of energy and water resources and to foster regional cooperation in the areas of energy, water and environment.

28. In the area of water, the Committee on Water Resources held its fourth session (Beirut, 14-17 November 2000). One of the major outcomes of this meeting was the formation of a working group to investigate the rational management of water resources in the region. The directives of this working group include the following: to assess reform policies of the water sectors in member countries; to provide training through workshops on various water issues; and to facilitate the exchange of experiences and expertise. A subsequent ad-hoc meeting (Beirut, 12-13 November 2001) initiated steps to gather country profiles of various reform policies to be submitted to the fifth session of the Committee on Water Resources, scheduled for October 2002.

29. Additionally, ESCWA co-organized with UNEP/ROWA the Expert Group Meeting on the Implication of Groundwater Rehabilitation on Water Resources Protection and Conservation (Beirut, 14-17 November 2000). The Meeting, which was co-sponsored by BGR and the Ministry of Energy and Water in Lebanon, had the following aims: to review the status of groundwater pollution at the national level; to discuss the aspects of groundwater rehabilitation techniques and their application under different geological environments; to examine the stage of monitoring and protection of groundwater sources; and to increase awareness of the impact of water pollution on health and the environment. A study entitled "Implications of groundwater rehabilitation on water resources protection and conservation: artificial recharge and water quality improvement in the ESCWA region" briefly reviewed the groundwater situation in the region, the reasons for its pollution and the means to protect and rehabilitate aquifers with a view to improving water management and monitoring.

30. A number of activities were undertaken to enhance the capacity of member States to manage their shared surface and groundwater resources. These activities are vital given the growing competition between riparian countries with regard to limited water resources. The situation is compounded by a legal framework for the management of shared water resources in the region that does not address the issue in a consistent and comprehensive way. In light of this, ESCWA:

(a) Co-organized with the Centre for Environment and Development for the Arab Region and Europe (CEDARE) the Expert Group Meeting on Legal Aspects of Management of Shared Water Resources in the ESCWA Region (Sharm-el-Sheikh, Egypt, 8-11 June 2000). The Meeting, which was co-sponsored by UNEP/ROWA, BGR, the World Water Council (WWC) and LAS, aimed to raise awareness on the legal aspects of the management of shared water resources and to contribute to the harmonization of environmental standards in the water sector;

(b) Presented a study devoted to the "Assessment of legal aspects of the management of shared water resources in the ESCWA region". The study reviewed the status, nature and extent of regional cooperation regarding major shared aquifers in the region; the level of regional cooperation regarding aquifers; the international legal aspects of shared aquifers;⁴ and the legal principles promoted in these conventions and applications at various levels within the region.

31. Additionally, the study on the "Enhancement of institutional arrangements with regard to water legislation enforcement and improvement of institutional functions in selected ESCWA countries" (in Arabic) provided an analytical framework to assess the adequacy of the institutional arrangements for water management and evaluated the capacity of the existing water institutions in the region.

32. Thanks to funding by BGR, a number of activities were undertaken in the field of water resources to provide member countries with advisory service. These include: updating the computerized data system through geographic information system (GIS); undertaking research and studies; and providing advisory services to member States and regional organizations on water issues.

⁴ These include the Seoul Rules on International Groundwaters; the Bellagio draft treaty; and the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Non-Navigational Uses of International Watercourses.

33. The issue of water desalination plays a particularly important role in those countries with low water resources, such as the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC). The role of water desalination was addressed in the following two studies:

(a) "The role of desalinated water in augmentation of the water supply in selected ESCWA member countries" reviewed the recent advances in desalination technology in the GCC countries, the role of desalination in meeting the domestic water demand, and the costs of desalination from different processes compared to the costs of development from other water sources;

(b) "Energy options for water desalination in selected ESCWA member countries" surveyed existing energy supply systems in desalination plants, evaluated their energy consumption and investigated future possible renewable energy systems. In addition it presented a preliminary cost analysis of desalinated water using available energy supply options.

34. In the field of energy, the Committee on Energy held its third session (Beirut, 11-12 October 2001). It emphasized the importance of regional interconnection of electrical grids, the establishment of a regional natural gas network and the need to facilitate the flow of relevant data in the region.

35. The Expert Group Meeting on Disseminating Renewable Energy Technologies in ESCWA Member States (Beirut, 2-5 October 2000) discussed opportunities and challenges in the development of renewable energy with emphasis on solar energy; potentials and prospects for renewable energy electricity generation; experiences relating to large-scale renewable energy applications; and market development strategies. Additionally, ESCWA initiated the Seminar on the Initiation of the ESCWA Renewable Energy Promotion Mechanism (REPM) (Beirut, 5 October 2000). The Seminar sought to present the background, status and recommended actions with regard to REPM. With the exception of Saudi Arabia, all ESCWA member States have agreed to join REPM.

36. Moreover, renewable energy was the topic of a report entitled "Regional approach for disseminating renewable energy technologies" that was produced in the following two parts:

(a) "Part I: The regional renewable energy profile" presented an assessment of the current status of renewable energy development based on the country profiles of nine member countries;

(b) "Part II: The progress achieved in initiating and activating the Renewable Energy Promotion Mechanism" presented a project proposal on the dissemination of renewable energy services for rural areas. In this context, ESCWA organized a workshop on wind energy capacity-building for member States (Cairo, 8-20 September 2001).

37. In a parallel effort, ESCWA convened the Expert Group Meeting on Energy for Sustainable Development in ESCWA Member States: Efficient Use of Energy and Greenhouse Gas Abatement (Beirut, 8-11 October 2001). The Meeting highlighted the following issues: the notable lack of efficiency in the use of energy resources in the region; the experience gained in developing policy measures and technological options for the efficient use of energy; the opportunities for greenhouse gas abatement within the transport and power sectors; the impact of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and of the Kyoto Protocol on the energy sector in the region; and the existing and prospective financial schemes for sponsoring sustainable energy systems.

38. The issue of increasing the efficiency of energy was further raised by two studies, which both focused on the case studies of Egypt, Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic. These were the following:

(a) "Efficient use of energy in the building sector: an analysis of options for selected ESCWA member States" (in Arabic), which classified the available options for energy efficiency and conservation. It highlighted and analysed energy schemes ranging from the use of efficient lighting using thermal insulation techniques to the adoption of energy control and management programmes;

(b) "Efficient use of energy in the industrial sector: an analysis of options for selected ESCWA member States", which examined three energy schemes, namely, industrial cogeneration, combustion control and waste heat recovery systems.

39. In the area of renewable energy, the Commission prepared a study on the "Potential and prospects for renewable energy electricity generation in the ESCWA region". The study addressed three types of renewable energy systems in three separate volumes, namely, wind and biomass, solar energy and solar photovoltaic. The latter two were issued in Arabic.

40. The Expert Group on Energy for Sustainable Development in ESCWA Member States: The Efficient Use of Energy and Greenhouse Gas Abatement (Beirut, 8-11 October 2001) discussed the options for mitigating the greenhouse emissions from the transport and power sectors, which are the two major polluting sectors in the region. This issue was further raised by the study entitled "Options and opportunities for greenhouse gas abatement in the energy sector of ESCWA region". Presented in two parts on, respectively, the transport and power sectors, the study examined the two case studies of Egypt and Lebanon.

41. Furthermore, an expert group meeting was convened on the Development of a Harmonized Environmental Assessment in the ESCWA Region and a Thematic Round Table on Regional Preparations for the 2002 Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable Development (Beirut, 9-13 April 2001). The Meeting, whose proceedings were subsequently published, aimed to propose means of harmonizing the environmental impact assessment (EIA), assist national environmental authorities in identifying appropriate mitigation measures and suggest innovative approaches to expedite progress in the implementation of Agenda 21 in the region. This was followed by a Regional Stakeholders Roundtable in Preparation for the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) (Manama, 23-25 September 2001), which was organized by UNEP/ROWA on behalf of the Joint Secretariat, a collaborative entity comprising UNEP/ROWA, ESCWA and CAMRE in cooperation with the Ministry of Municipal and Environmental Affairs of Bahrain.

42. Two other studies were completed on EIA issues. The first, entitled "A study on the evaluation of environmental impact assessment in selected ESCWA countries", identified the main obstacles to the formulation and implementation of EIA policies and evaluated the legislative, institutional and technical aspects of EIA policies in four States, namely, Egypt, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia and Yemen. The need for harmonizing EIA policies was further raised in the second study entitled "Development of guidelines for harmonized environmental impact assessment suitable for the ESCWA region". Additionally, this study examined the need for transboundary environmental impact assessment (TEIA) analysis as a regional policy; provided guidelines regarding ways to establish comparable EIA procedures; and highlighted the role that ESCWA could play in paving the way towards TEIA formulation.

43. As part of the preparatory process for the 2002 World Summit (Rio + 10), ESCWA undertook the study on "Sustainable development planning in ESCWA member States". The study reviewed the progress made in the region in achieving sustainable development and the successes and challenges that characterized the process. The progress was quantified with case studies from four countries, namely, Egypt, Jordan, the United Arab Emirates and Yemen.

Subprogramme 2. Improvement of the quality of life

44. This subprogramme, which is implemented by the Social Development Issues and Policies Division, has the following objectives: to promote regional cooperation in harmonizing social policies; to advocate an integrated approach for follow-up to global conferences; to raise awareness in a number of areas, including gender issues and the social impact of urbanization; and to disseminate data and information on population, women, social development and human settlements.

45. Within the context of poverty alleviation, and in the wake of the activities undertaken in the previous biennium, a study was carried out on the "Role of microcredit in poverty alleviation: profile of the

microcredit sector in Lebanon". The study, which was published in *Eradicating Poverty Studies Series* (No. 12), reviewed the microfinance sector in Lebanon with regard to the relative strengths and weaknesses of the major players in attracting capital.

46. The Division organized the Round Table Discussion on Capacity-building of NGOs to Follow-up the Implementation of the Recommendations of Global Conferences (Cairo, 19-21 September 2000). In addition to assessing the performance of Arab NGOs, the discussion focused on ways of increasing their effective participation with Governments.

47. ESCWA submits an annual report to the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) with regard to the disadvantaged people of the Occupied Territories and pursuant to ECOSOC resolution 1997/67 of 25 July 1997. The report entitled "Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan" provided an overview and analysis of the economic, social and political developments that had occurred since the previous report.

48. Gender issues were given a special emphasis in line with the policy of the United Nations Secretariat to mainstream gender issues into the work programme. Poverty alleviation from a gender perspective was raised in a study on "Female-headed households in selected conflict-stricken ESCWA areas: an exploratory survey for formulating poverty alleviation policies". The cross-cultural study, which examined the situation in Lebanon, Palestine and Yemen, was based on the collection of quantitative and qualitative information on matriarchal households and provided a forum for the voices of a select number of poverty-stricken female heads of households.

49. In addition, a study was completed on "Gender and citizenship and the role of non-governmental organizations in conflict-stricken countries: the case of Lebanon" (in Arabic). The case study provided an interesting profile of the development of NGOs before, during and after the civil strife in Lebanon and was published in the *Series of Studies on Arab Women and Development*. A separate volume on *Citizenship and Gender: A Theoretical Study* (in Arabic) was published.

50. With a view to promoting public awareness on gender issues and in the spirit of the global conferences on the quality of life, ESCWA collaborated with the National Broadcasting Network of Lebanon (NBN) to produce a series of 15 episodes, broadcast over the period March – June 2001, which covered 12 critical areas of concern to women, including poverty, education, health, and human rights.

51. The Flagship Project, a mechanism for the integrated regional follow-up by the Arab States to United Nations global conferences, was completed in 2001. The Project conducted a number of meetings and workshops. Foremost among them were the following two:

(a) The Regional Meeting of the National Coordination Committees on Comprehensive Follow-up to United Nations Global Conferences (Amman, 3-5 September 2001), which was held in coordination with UNDP;

(b) The Expert Group Meeting on Governance, Socio-Economic Development and Poverty Alleviation (Cairo, 11-13 November 2001), which was held in collaboration with the Institute of National Planning (INP), the Konrad Adenauer Foundation, the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) and UNDP.

52. ESCWA released two issues of the *Follow-up Newsletter* for the Integrated Regional Follow-up by the Arab States to United Nations Global Conferences Project (Flagship Project) and posted the related material on its web site. Additionally, the Division developed training material to assist in the evaluation and methodology with regard to the follow-up to global conferences. This included technical notes and guidelines for preparing national reports. Moreover, a training workshop was organized to assist Qatar and

the United Arab Emirates in the preparation of their respective national reports on follow-up to global conferences (Abu Dhabi, 7-11 October 2000).

53. In its efforts to encourage a strategy for sustainable human development in the region, the Division maintained and further developed a project on local community development, which had been initiated in Egypt and the Syrian Arab Republic in 1996 and in Lebanon in 2000. The project aims, *inter alia*, to mobilize local capabilities and resources and promote self-reliance. Several workshops were organized in the second phase of the project, notably in Jordan (Amman, 15-26 July 2000), the Syrian Arab Republic (Damascus, 29 July – 9 August 2000) and in Lebanon (Beirut, 11-21 September 2000). The workshops were held in cooperation with UNDP, AGFUND, CARDNE, Mercy Corps International and local government authorities.

54. The effects of globalization on the labour markets were examined in the study entitled “Globalization and labour markets in the ESCWA region”. The study analysed the challenges of globalization to the region and presented case studies of a number of ESCWA countries.

55. In a bid to step up collaboration in the area of civil society, ESCWA convened a consultative meeting with the civil society institutions in Lebanon (Beirut, 23 April 2001).

56. Advisory services were provided at the request of the Governments of Iraq and Jordan to assist them in the preparation and launching of their national human development reports.

57. Within the context of sustainable human development, another important area of activity relates to issues of the family, youth and children. During the biennium, ESCWA organized the following meetings:

(a) The Regional Seminar on the Child (Beirut, 24-27 April 2001), which was organized in cooperation with LAS and UNICEF and had a twofold objective: to pave the way for the Arab high-level conference (Cairo, 3-5 July 2001); and to follow-up on the United Nations General Assembly World Summit for Children (WSC);

(b) The Regional Expert Meeting on Empowerment of the Arab Family to Enhance its Role in Development and Social Cohesion (Beirut, 5-6 November 2001), which discussed a project proposal aimed at enhancing the educational, social and economic roles of the family within Arab society. The project will be executed by ESCWA in cooperation with the Arab Family Organization, a number of councils for family affairs and the relevant United Nations agencies;

(c) The Arab Youth Forum of the United Nations System (Beirut, 26-27 Jun 2001) was convened in collaboration with the Youth Unit of the United Nations Department of Social Affairs and in preparation for the fourth session of the World Youth Forum of the United Nations System (Dakar, 5-12 August 2001). The meeting in Beirut assessed the implementation of the World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond and the Braga Youth Action Plan, and produced the Declaration of the Arab Youth Forum of the United Nations System that was subsequently presented at the Forum in Dakar.

58. As a follow-up to the Arab Youth Forum, ESCWA formulated the project Youth NGOs Directory-Network in the Arab Region. This project was initiated in response to the urgent need to exchange information between NGOs in the region that deal with youth issues and was undertaken in partnership with other United Nations agencies.⁵ A pamphlet entitled *ESCWA: Empowering Arab Youth* that describes the objectives and declaration of the Forum was published.

⁵ UNDP, UNESCO, UNFPA, the International Labour Organization (ILO), the United Nations Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention (ODCCP), the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugee in the Near East (UNRWA) and the World Health Organization (WHO).

59. Moreover, several studies were generated in the same theme. Foremost among them were the following:

(a) The research study “Towards partnership in the Arab family: gender roles, values and identity” (in Arabic) was based on field surveys in three ESCWA countries, namely, Iraq, Lebanon and Yemen, and was presented in three parts: an introductory theoretical framework that focused on the feminist movement in the region; the findings of the field surveys in the selected countries; and an overview of the analysis of the findings;

(b) The “Review of the youth situation in the ESCWA region from the perspective of human resources development”, which was presented to the Arab Youth Forum, examined a number of issues relating to youth, including population, migration, literacy, education, employment and health. The study concluded with policy guidelines and recommendations.

60. In addition, ESCWA issued the *Annotated Bibliography of the Arab Family* (in Arabic and in English) in two, complementary parts. The publication includes essays on the Arab family that were published between 1975 and 1999. Since literature on the Arab family is scarce, the bibliography comprises material from various sources, including books, papers and articles in academic journals. Entries were sorted according to publication type, and arranged alphabetically by author and by publication date with a view to facilitating research.

61. Another area of focus covered by the Division includes disadvantaged groups, namely, the disabled. A Braille centre was inaugurated in October 2001 in Bourj-el-Barajneh, Lebanon; and technical assistance was provided for generating activities for the blind in Palestine. In addition, two workshops were organized under the umbrella of community-based rehabilitation and which were carried out in cooperation with the Voluntary Fund on Disability. These were the following: How to Start Small-scale Businesses (Beirut, 10-28 July 2000); and Self-Reliance and Advocacy for People with Disabilities (Beirut, 25-29 September 2000). Further activities included improving facilities for the disabled in South Lebanon in line with the follow-up to the interregional seminar and regional workshop on environmental accessibility that was held in 1999.

62. Population issues were addressed by the Expert Group Meeting on Appropriate Technologies for Accessing Population Information in the ESCWA Region (Beirut, 25-26 October 2000). The Meeting focused on PPIS, discussed the draft questionnaire for PPIS data collection and examined ways to sort and translate the PPIS database in a country context.

63. The annual *Population Bulletin* highlighted an improvement in analysing demographic changes as a result of a more accurate collection of fertility and death rates in Iraq and Kuwait in 2000. In addition, the publication provided a comparative analysis of population indicators based on the results of six surveys conducted in the GCC countries in 2001.

64. The report on “Migration and population policies in the Arab Region” (in Arabic) was a combination of three working papers on, respectively, the economic, social and political aspects of international migration. These had been generated by the Expert Group Meeting on Migration and Population Policies in the ESCWA Member Countries (Beirut, 23-24 November 1999).

65. Population data were provided in the following three outputs: “Demographic and related socio-economic data sheets”, which highlighted population statistics in the region as assessed in 2000; a comprehensive wall chart with regard to population, gender and development indicators of the ESCWA region in 2000; and in February 2002, the Division launched the web site on POPIN for the Arab States.

66. In the area of human settlements, ESCWA organized the High-Level Arab Meeting for Follow-up on the Implementation of the Habitat Agenda (Istanbul+5) (Manama, 16-18 October 2000). The Meeting, which was organized in cooperation with UNCHS and the Ministry of Housing, Municipalities and Environment in Bahrain, had the following aims: to assess the urban development trends in the Arab countries since the

Istanbul Conference of 1996; to examine the local and national urban development strategies; and to provide a forum for municipalities, institutions of civil society and NGOs to share experiences and common problems. A noteworthy outcome of the Meeting was the adoption of the main rules and procedures for implementing the Habitat Agenda in the Arab region and the Manama Declaration on Cities and Human Settlements in the New Millennium.

67. The connection between migration, poverty and urbanization were examined in the Expert Group Meeting on the Dynamics of Sustainable Social Development: Interlinkages with Migration, Poverty and Urbanization (Beirut, 15-17 November 2000). The Meeting aimed at providing tools for planning and monitoring urban development, designing integrated local development strategies and disseminating best practices with regard to sustainable urban development.

68. The report entitled "Decentralization and the emerging role of municipalities in the ESCWA region" built on the research that had been undertaken during the previous biennium. The report addressed the issue of decentralization at two levels, namely, the national or macro level and the urban or micro level. Case studies of decentralization initiatives were examined in Amman and Irbid in Jordan, and in Aleppo and Jableh in the Syrian Arab Republic.

69. In an effort to analyse urbanization and migration as a function of social exclusion in cities, the Division issued *The Arab City and Social Exclusion*. Published in Arabic, the work raises the issues of the social repercussions of migration, voluntary or forced exclusion, and the factors that affect adaptation and integration in the new urban environment.

70. In a similar vein, the study on "Sustainable urban development: a regional perspective on good urban governance" provided a comprehensive analysis of the experiences of selected countries with regard to the implementation of the Habitat Agenda for sustainable urban development. The study identified regional trends in urban development policies; presented a regional overview of the initiatives undertaken with the aim of translating the Habitat Agenda into plans of action at national and local levels; and highlighted the resources deployed to implement and sustain these plans.

71. The theme of sustainable development is a recurring one in many ESCWA publications. The Division issued the *Sustainable Urban Environment with Special Emphasis on Housing, Land and Security of Tenure: A Regional Perspective* (in Arabic) with the principal objective of analysing the urban and environmental developments in the Arab region through the national experiences of selected States.

72. Additionally, the *News Bulletin on Human Settlements in the Arab World* (Nos. 11 and 12), which were issued in cooperation with UNCHS and the Council of Arab Ministers for Housing and Reconstruction (CAMHR), examined the demographic trends in the region and included data sheets on human settlements and urbanization in Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic.

73. ESCWA co-organized the Training Workshop on Urban Observatories and Indicators (Amman, 29 October – 2 November 2000) in cooperation with UNCHS, the Arab Institute for the Development of Cities and the Housing and Urban Development Cooperation in Jordan. Moreover, technical assistance was provided to Lebanon with regard to urban observatories.

74. An additional activity, which was organized by ESCWA in cooperation with the Beirut Arab University and the Hariri Foundation, was the conference on South Lebanon: Urban Challenge in the Era of Liberation (Beirut, 3-6 April 2001).

Subprogramme 3. Economic development and global changes

75. This subprogramme, which is implemented by the Economic Development Issues and Policies Division, aims to monitor and survey economic and social development trends in the region and to analyse

macroeconomic issues with a view to enhancing the capacity of member States to meet the challenges of globalization.

76. In the area of trade, including WTO agreements and their impact on the countries of the region, the Division organized the Second Session of the Technical Committee on Liberalization of Foreign Trade and Economic Globalization in the Countries of the ESCWA Region (Manama, 7-8 April 2001). The Meeting discussed the following issues: membership to WTO, including trade in services, intellectual property rights, and the forthcoming negotiations on trade in the services and agriculture sectors; and the economic measures that need to be implemented by the member States in keeping with the Greater Arab Free Trade Area Agreement (GAFTA) and with regard to the fourth WTO Ministerial Conference.

77. Sharp fluctuation in oil prices and the resulting impact on the revenues and economies of the oil-exporting countries motivated ESCWA to undertake a number of activities in that field. The salient outputs were as follows:

(a) A conference was held in cooperation with the Arab Society for Economic Research (ASER) on the Future Role of Oil in the Economies of the ESCWA Member States (Beirut, 3-4 October 2000);

(b) Given the importance of the subject, the proceedings of the above-mentioned seminar were published in a book entitled *The Role of Oil in the Arab Economies in Light of Global Changes* (in Arabic);

(c) A further meeting on the subject, which was co-sponsored by the Arab Planning Institute (API), was held to discuss Economic Diversification in the Arab World (Beirut, 25-27 September 2001). The meeting generated a substantive report.

78. With the aim of assisting oil producing countries in their diversification efforts, a study was undertaken on "Economic diversification in the oil-producing countries: the case of the Gulf Cooperation Council economies". The study assessed the various efforts and policies with regard to economic diversification; reviewed diversification policies in the GCC countries over the past 30 years; and attempted to quantify the success of these efforts.

79. Additionally, a study on the "Impact of the world oil market on the economies of Gulf Cooperation Council States: quantitative assessment and forecast" investigated the impact of policy choices on the development of GCC economies. Two basic scenarios were drawn: the first, an oil pattern of growth referred to as the "reference scenario"; and the second, a structural diversification scenario referred to as the "alternative scenario". Within each scenario, different alternatives were tested to assess the most judicious model.

80. During the biennium, two issues of the *Survey of Economic and Social Developments in the ESCWA Region* were published. The Survey is a major publication of a multidisciplinary nature to which most of the substantive divisions of ESCWA contribute. The summaries of the Surveys were submitted to the Economic and Social Council in 2000 and 2001 respectively and the salient points are as follows:

(a) The 1999-2000 edition focused on overall economic conditions during that period and highlighted developments in a number of issues, including gender and science and technology (S&T). The second part of the Survey was dedicated to the role of the State in a global economy. The two detailed case studies were Egypt and Jordan;

(b) The subsequent issue covered various social variables in addition to economic developments for the period 2000-2001. The second part of the Survey provided a comparative analysis of the role of the private sector before and after the implementation of economic reform programmes. The two detailed case studies were Egypt and Saudi Arabia. The study concluded that the role of the State, while changed, would continue to be important.

81. A related study, but from a different perspective, was on "Good governance: enhancing macroeconomic management in the ESCWA region". The study used selected political, economic and administrative indicators to analyse governance issues. In addition, it explored the relationship between governance, economic growth and sustainable development.
82. Two issues of the *Preliminary Overview of Economic Developments in the ESCWA Region* were published in 2000 and 2001. The second issue was made available on the ESCWA web site. This output, produced before the close of the year, provides the business community and policy makers with both a preliminary assessment of the economic performance of the region and an outlook for the year ahead. Since 1998, an annex has been included on an issue of topical importance to the region. In the 2000 edition, the annex was on "Trade in telecommunication services in the ESCWA region"; in the 2001 edition, it was on the "Principal economic and social consequences of the United Nations sanctions on Iraq".
83. The Expert Group Meeting on Trade Facilitation and Electronic Commerce (e-commerce) in the ESCWA Region (Beirut, 8-10 November 2000) aimed at the following: assessing the e-commerce environment in the region; discussing the constraints faced by firms, particularly small and medium-size enterprises (SMEs), in the use of e-commerce; the role of Governments in regulating and promoting e-commerce; and the formulation of appropriate policies and measures that would enhance its use. The Meeting was co-sponsored by IDRC, FES, the General Union of Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture for Arab Countries (GUCCIAAC), the Association for the Development of Informatics and Law in Lebanon and the Crédit Libanais bank in Lebanon. The Meeting generated a substantive report.
84. Additionally, the Division completed a study on e-commerce entitled "Trade facilitation and e-commerce in the ESCWA region, promoting effective participation in electronic commerce: the cases of Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon and the United Arab Emirates". The study examined the factors behind successful online ventures and focused on the status of e-commerce in the four selected countries.
85. One of the objectives of this subprogramme is to follow up on the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the 1990s. In this context, the Division reviewed and appraised the progress made by Yemen with regard to the implementation of the New Programme of Action. In addition to presenting the economic performance of Yemen, including structural change and official development assistance (ODA), the review highlighted the main economic challenges of the State. Foremost among these were the following issues: high rates of unemployment and poverty; water shortages; high rates of illiteracy across several age brackets; insufficient skilled labour; and a high population growth rate.
86. While for certain member States, the problem of measuring progress towards sustainable development is due to a paucity of data, in most cases the problem arises because of an inadequate framework with which to organize and synthesize the data. The study "Application of sustainable development indicators in the ESCWA member countries: analysis of results" provided comparative tables on four indicators, namely, economic, social, environmental and institutional.
87. The euro, the single European currency, was introduced in the European Union (EU) in 1999 and became the official currency in a number of European States in 2002. The study entitled "Implications of the euro currency for the economies of the ESCWA region" provided a comprehensive analysis of the impact of the euro on the region.
88. In the area of WTO and globalization issues, ESCWA continued to assist member countries in increasing their understanding of WTO issues and to provide them with critical technical assistance in this domain. The salient outputs of this assistance were as follows:
- (a) ESCWA hosted the Arab Ministerial Meeting in Preparation for the Fourth World Ministerial Meeting (Beirut, 29-30 October 2001). The Meeting, which was co-organized with UNCTAD and LAS and in cooperation with WTO, was convened to provide a regional forum for Government representatives at ministerial level to discuss and analyse WTO issues;

(b) A number of studies were undertaken to disseminate the information with regard to WTO issues. A study, in Arabic, on trade in services in selected ESCWA countries was released in two volumes. The first, entitled "Trade in services: telecommunications – case studies of Egypt, Jordan and Lebanon", concentrated on the following points: economic and commercial aspects of telecommunication services; developments in the telecommunications sector and their socio-economic impacts; the role of telecommunications in trade in services; and details of the telecommunications sector in the three selected countries. The second, entitled "Trade in financial services", prepared in cooperation with the Union of Arab Banks, elaborated on the following issues: the financial services in WTO; the proposals presented by some WTO members to the ongoing negotiations on trade in services; and the means for organizing the financial services sector in the Arab countries. Selected case studies covered four States, namely, Bahrain, Egypt, Lebanon and Tunisia;

(c) The study entitled "The impact of environmental regulations on production and exports in the food processing, garment and pharmaceutical industries in selected ESCWA member countries" identified the challenges and concerns of exporting firms in the region in light of more stringent environmental regulations and consumer preferences. In addition, the study highlighted environment, health and safety standards. Three subsectors were examined, namely, canned and packaged food, garments, and pharmaceuticals in four States: Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic;

(d) A further study was undertaken on "WTO issues for acceding countries: the cases of Lebanon and Saudi Arabia". In addition to assessing the extent to which the foreign trade of Lebanon and Saudi Arabia conformed to WTO requirements, the study examined the reforms needed to adjust the legal and institutional frameworks in line with WTO, particularly in the areas of trade in goods, trade in intellectual property rights and trade in services.

89. In light of increasing globalization, there is a growing consensus that laws and policies on competition are needed to maintain free and fair markets. Policies on competition seek both to promote healthy rivalries between companies and to reduce, or even eliminate, those Government measures that obstruct free trade and competition. With the dual aim of increasing awareness and of gathering data on this topic, ESCWA undertook a study on "Competition laws and policies in the ESCWA region". The study was complemented by the Expert Group Meeting on Competition Laws and Policies: Identification of Common Grounds in ESCWA Member Countries (Abu Dhabi, 28-30 January 2002). The Meeting, which had been scheduled for 13 September 2001, was postponed to that later date for security reasons in the aftermath of the attacks on the United States of America on 11 September 2001.

90. Additionally, ESCWA organized, in collaboration with the Union of Arab Banks, the Workshop on Liberalization of Services in the Arab World (Beirut, 31 October – 1 November 2001).

91. The study entitled "Free trade areas in the Arab region, where do we go from here?" focused on Arab efforts with regard to regional integration and their impact on future prospects. In addition to analysing the extent of regional integration, the study highlighted two bilateral agreements, namely, between Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic, and between Lebanon and Egypt.

92. In the area of taxation, the "Comparative study on corporate tax: prospect for harmonization in the ESCWA region" examined a number of issues, including the following: recent developments in the revenue structure of member countries; corporate tax as a relatively important source of tax revenue; factors that determine taxable profits; and tax payments with a particular emphasis on rate structures, depreciation and the jurisdiction of tax corporations. Moreover, the study reviewed the harmonization of corporate tax as covered under the economic agreements and treaties of the GCC and the Council of Arab Economic Unity (CAEU).

93. The availability of funds, whether from internal or external resources, is a prerequisite for development. This *sine qua non* cannot be overemphasized. The Workshop on Financing for Development (Beirut, 11-13 September 2001) was convened in preparation for the International World Conference on Financing for Development (Monterrey, Mexico, 18-22 March 2002). Preparatory work that was conducted

by ESCWA focused on three interrelated topics: the environment that is the most conducive to the mobilization of resources; the relationship between investment flows and foreign debt; and the impact on development following trade and financial liberalizations.

94. The "Comparative study of national strategies and policies with regard to foreign direct investment in the ESCWA region" reviewed the policies adopted to attract FDI inflows in three selected member countries, namely, Bahrain, Jordan and Lebanon. The study surveyed a sample of FDI enterprises in these three States and, wherever relevant, compared the findings to the case studies of three other States, namely, Egypt, Morocco and Tunisia. It was complemented by the Regional Seminar on FDI National Strategies and Policies in the ESCWA Region (Beirut, 12-13 June 2001). Furthermore, the Division initiated a database on FDI to make up for the paucity of data on transnational corporations (TNCs) in the region, which otherwise hinders any serious analysis.

95. The study on "External debts and financial flows of ESCWA countries" examined and assessed the developments of the external debt of various countries in the region. In addition, it described the structure of the external debt together with case studies of four States, namely, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon and Yemen.

*Subprogramme 4. Coordination of policies and harmonization of norms
and regulations for sectoral development*

96. This subprogramme, which is implemented by the Sectoral Issues and Policies Division, has the following principal objectives: to promote those policies which increase competitiveness and productivity in the areas of agriculture, industry, technology and transport; and to harmonize standards as a means of promoting regional cooperation in these areas.

97. The Committee on Transport, established pursuant to ESCWA resolution 213 (XIX) of 7 May 1997, held its second session (Beirut, 6-7 February 2000). The salient item on the agenda was the discussion of the draft agreement on international roads in the Arab Mashreq. A complementary study was published to describe the background and methodology with regard to the preparation of that draft agreement and to delineate the regional network for an integrated transport system for the Arab Mashreq.

98. During the biennium, the Division organized a number of expert group meetings to coordinate sectoral policies with a view to increasing productivity and competitiveness. These were the following:

(a) The Expert Group Meeting on Coordination of Technology Policies to Increase Productivity and Competitiveness within the Global Context: Capacity-building Initiatives for the Twenty-first Century (Beirut, 1-3 November 2000) constituted a platform for discussing ESCWA initiatives aimed at promoting capacity-building schemes, including technology parks, technology incubators and high-technology clusters in member countries;

(b) The Expert Group Meeting on Review of Industrial Policies Aimed at Increased Productivity and Competitiveness within the Global Context (Amman, 14-17 January 2001) reviewed and assessed a number of issues. Foremost among these were the following: the new global environment and its impact on the manufacturing sector; the progress of the Arab Free Trade Agreement (AFTA) and its effect on the industrial sector of the region; and the appropriate policies that would enhance the operation of SMEs. The Meeting was co-sponsored by FES, the Economic Research Forum for Arab Countries, Iran and Turkey (ERF), and the Union of Arab Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture. The presentations and debates of that Meeting were later synthesized in the report entitled "Review of industrial strategies and policies: preparing for the twenty-first century";

(c) The Coordination of Transport Policies to Facilitate Transboundary Flows within the Global Context (Beirut, 26-28 September 2000) discussed the following issues: the measures to facilitate transport in the region; the impact of regional and international developments with regard to the transport sector; and the development of an integrated transport system.

99. Additionally, the Division undertook a number of related studies. The “Methodological framework for the Integrated Transport System in the Arab Mashreq (ITSAM-FRAMEWORK)” was presented in the following two parts: part one (in Arabic) highlighted the main issues regarding transport in the region; and part two (in English) used a policy-sensitive model to predict flows of international freight.

100. A related output was the “Facilitation of transport of international goods in the ESCWA region” (in Arabic). This study provided a description of the international transport of goods in five States, namely, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic and the United Arab Emirates. The last part of this study included a summary and recommendations.

101. The “Assessment of transport flows and infrastructure in the Gulf Cooperation Council countries” (in Arabic) examined the infrastructure and facilities of road, maritime and air transport in the Gulf States. In addition, the study highlighted the impacts of national, regional and international developments on transport.

102. Reporting on the negotiations concerning GATS, the Division raised the salient issues facing the countries of the region with respect to this Agreement through the study entitled “Implications of General Agreement on Trade in Services on transport” (in Arabic).

103. The main objectives of the Seminar on Capacity-building in the Development of Pavement Management Systems (Beirut, 17-19 October 2001) were to review the existing pavement maintenance management systems (PMMS) in the region and to assist ESCWA countries in implementing the appropriate PMMS based on international experience. The Seminar provided participants with the basic capabilities and applications of the highway development and management model (HDM).

104. The Second Meeting of the Directors Responsible for Transport in the Five United Nations Regional Commissions (Beirut, 23-24 January 2001) resulted in an action plan for establishing interregional transport linkages and on the modality of its implementation. A total of 29 interregional land and land-sea transport linkages were provisionally identified. The DESA, which is financing this project, has endorsed the project proposal.

105. In the area of port operations, technical assistance was provided to the Emirate of Abu Dhabi for the development of Port Zayed. Additionally, technical assistance was provided to the Ports Corporation in Aqaba, Jordan for the application of information technology (IT) and electronic data interchange (EDI). Such assistance is available to other countries upon request.

106. Another main objective of this subprogramme is to harmonize norms and standards with the dual purpose of improving regional cooperation and increasing the saleability of regional products. In the area of agriculture, the study “Harmonization of norms, standards and legal instruments for selected agricultural inputs” (in Arabic) incorporated inputs from local, regional and international institutes and organizations in the agricultural sector. The study included an assessment of the regional and national institutions for norms and standards and their role both in setting and in implementing those standards.

107. Within this context, the Expert Group Meeting on Harmonization of Transport Norms, Regulations and Legal Instruments for Regional Cooperation (Beirut, 15-16 October 2001) discussed the following: recommendations for international transport facilitation by forming national committees for this purpose; and improving the regional transport information system by applying ICTs.

108. Similarly, in the area of industrial norms, the Expert Group Meeting on Harmonization of Industrial Norms, Regulations and Legal Instruments for Regional Cooperation: Accelerating the Development of Arab Regional Accreditation Schemes (Beirut, 9-11 May 2001) discussed the various issues relating to the harmonization of industrial standards in the region. The Meeting was co-financed by AIDMO and UNDP with contributions from the International Organization for Standardization (ISO), UNIDO, the Arab Federation for Food Industries (AFFI) and the Industrial Research Institute (IRI). This was followed by the third regional session on accreditation schemes (Tunis, 20-21 October 2001).

109. Another aspect of harmonization was emphasized in the study entitled "Impact of the application of ISO 9000 and ISO 14000 on selected industrial sectors: case studies". The study aimed to encourage manufacturing companies in the region to certify their goods according to the ISO standards. This would provide compatibility with international requirements and enhance the saleability of products and services in the region.

110. In the area of poverty alleviation, the study "Microcredit and microfinance schemes to alleviate rural poverty in ESCWA member countries" (in Arabic) covered the following issues: gender criteria in microcredit projects; problems and risks of microlending and methods to overcome them by successful microcredit institutions; and self-sustainability of microfinance schemes, with case studies of success stories.

111. A related study was on "Information systems for modernizing the operations of rural financial institutions in ESCWA member countries". The study evaluated the management information system (MIS) in microfinance institutions in the ESCWA region and, for the purpose of comparison, in Indonesia. In addition, it highlighted the importance of MIS for decision makers at different levels.

112. Within the context of the WTO negotiations in the area of agriculture, an issue that has significant implications for the region, ESCWA and the World Bank cooperated to host the Workshop on National Capacity-building in the Agricultural Sector and the New Trade Agenda: Reaping the Benefits for the Middle East (Beirut, 2-5 July 2001). The Workshop demonstrated the use of analytical tools with regard to agricultural policy analysis and the evaluation of specific options and strategies for agricultural trade negotiations. Another fruit of this cooperation was the study "Agricultural trade and the new trade agenda: options and strategies to capture the benefits for the Middle East". This study, which was issued in three parts, provided a description of agricultural trade in three countries, namely, Egypt, the Syrian Arab Republic and Tunisia.

113. In the study entitled "Assessment of past experiences in using the policy analysis matrix (PAM) approach in selected ESCWA member countries", the approach to policy evaluation revolved around the policy analysis matrix (PAM). This matrix measures the effects of policy on the economy and private sector. The study assessed the data that had been collected in the course of previous studies and offered a comparative analysis of the agricultural sector for five ESCWA members, namely, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine and the Syrian Arab Republic.

114. With the increasing importance of efficient use of water in agriculture, the Division undertook the study entitled "Economic and technical assessment of on-farm water use efficiency: three case studies from water-scarce countries". The study focused on a methodology for assessing the efficient use of water in the agricultural sector within the framework of multicrop production. A number of models were tested, including fixed input, variable input and satisfying input. The results were generated from farm surveys that had been collected from four sites, namely, two in Egypt and two in Jordan. Preliminary results showed that water could be conserved through efficient use.

115. This was complemented by the Workshop on Capacity-building in On-farm Water-use Efficiency (Beirut, 13-23 November 2000). The Workshop, which was organized in cooperation with the International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas (ICARDA), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the Ministry of Agriculture in Lebanon, had the following objectives: to increase public awareness with regard to the critical situation of water in the region, especially its availability for agricultural use; to establish a vision with the aim of increasing the efficiency and productivity of water; and to train the participants on the methods for measuring the efficient use of water on the farm.

116. With a view to assisting enterprises in the area of information, ESCWA published the *Directory of Arab Sources of Industrial Information* in cooperation with AIDMO. The Directory provides information on various technical issues, including local and international markets, finance and investments, legal and administrative procedures. With the added aim of providing a user-friendly database, the publication was

ordered according to a number of related topics, namely, research and information, technological information, intellectual property and trademarks, training centres and statistical organizations.

117. Two other directories were published during the biennium. These were the following: the *Directory of Support Services for Small and Medium Enterprises in Lebanon*, which was published in cooperation with FES and ALI; and the second edition of the *Directory of Research and Development Institutes in the ESCWA Member Countries*, which listed 161 institutes, compared to the 128 institutes that were featured in the first edition in 1997.

118. To track and assess the crucial role played by finance in the development of SMEs, the Division undertook the study "Financial schemes for small and medium enterprises". The study analysed the various financial factors that impede the growth of manufacturing SMEs. Two case studies were comprehensively analysed, namely, Italy and Taiwan. Another related study was entitled "Potential of manufacturing small and medium enterprises (SMEs) for innovation in selected ESCWA countries". The study presented an analysis of the potentials of SMEs with regard to promoting and diffusing innovations and change. Two case studies were investigated, namely, Egypt and Lebanon.

119. Addressing the issue of free zones in the region, the "Assessment of free zones: industrial and transport aspects in the ESCWA region" (in Arabic) studied the free zones in four member States, namely, Egypt, Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic and the United Arab Emirates. The study described the aspect of free zones with regard to transport and provided a comprehensive analysis on a number of related issues, including logistics, infrastructure, facilities, incentives, privileges for investors and regulations that govern those special zones.

120. A further study entitled "Methodology for the assessment of competitiveness of selected existing industries" examined the performance of the industrial sector from two angles. The first part of the study adopted a theoretical approach to assess the performance and competitiveness of selected industries in industrialized countries. The second part, more empirical in its investigation, reviewed the attempts made by Jordan and Lebanon to use the cluster methodology to assess the performance of selected industrial branches.

121. In response to the substantive session of ECOSOC with regard to the role of IT in a knowledge-based economy, ESCWA convened the Expert Panel on Information Technology and Development Priorities: Competing in a Knowledge-based Economy (Beirut, 15-16 May 2000). The deliberations of the Panel revolved around the following themes: the status of IT and communication technology in selected ESCWA countries; and capacity-building in priority areas of ICTs.

122. Another study related to the development of technology was entitled "Technology capacity-building initiatives for the twenty-first century in the ESCWA member countries". In light of the rapid advances in the IT industry, the study provided international experiences in this domain and tackled issues pertaining to the establishment of new institutions, including technology parks, technology incubation schemes and high-technology industrial clusters. The creation of technology incubators and technology parks is part of an ongoing ESCWA initiative.

123. Innovations in technology were further raised in the study entitled "New technologies for enhancing competitiveness and productivity in selected sectors". The study reviewed ICTs, particularly in relation to growth and profitability in the IT sector, and considered specific ICT applications, including networking, Internet, mobile and software technologies. In addition, the study presented the results from surveys of enterprises that were based in four countries, namely, Egypt, Jordan, Saudi Arabia and the Syrian Arab Republic.

124. Within the context of development of technology, the study "Environmentally sound technologies in the metal finishing industry" addressed a number of mature technologies that offer ways of protecting the environment and conserving water. The study discussed the various adaptations to current practices with a view to reducing the industrial impact on the environment, particularly the elimination of highly toxic

effluents. In addition, it highlighted the role that private businesses and SMEs could play in promoting environmentally-sound technologies.

125. Special attention was paid to water desalination technologies that use renewable resources, particularly solar and wind energy. The study entitled "Water desalination technologies in the ESCWA member countries" concluded that desalination technologies provide as many challenges as opportunities for ESCWA members. The major end-benefits to using such technologies were deemed to be in the areas of socio-economic development and technological capacity-building. The study complemented two other outputs on water desalination that were covered in subprogramme 1 (see item 33).

126. The study on "The application of advanced information and communications technologies in the transport sector in the ESCWA region" discussed the current and evolving standards for business conducted over the Internet (e-business) and reviewed ICT applications with regard to optimising transport operations. Moreover, the study surveyed the current status of the telecommunication infrastructure and the use of the Internet in the transport sector in all ESCWA countries.

127. ESCWA published a variety of sectoral reviews with the principal aim of disseminating information on agriculture, industry, transport and technology. Foremost among these were the following: *Review of Science and Technology in ESCWA Member Countries* (No. 3); *Review of Industry in ESCWA Member Countries* (No. 3); *Review of Transport in ESCWA Member Countries* (No. 3), previously published as the *Transport Bulletin*; and *Review of Agriculture in ESCWA Member States: Agriculture and Development in Western Asia* (No. 22). In the second half of the biennium, this latter publication was renamed *Review of Agriculture in ESCWA Member Countries*.

128. The third issue of the *Review of Agriculture in ESCWA Member Countries* investigated the following issues: methods of integrating rural women in development activities; rural poverty and the ways to combat it; and activation of norms and standards in the agricultural sector. In addition, the publication reviewed a number of agricultural inputs in Lebanon and in the region. The fourth bulletin focused on the harmonization of standards regulations and legal instruments for selected agricultural inputs. Moreover, it presented a number of papers, including a case study, prepared by ICARDA, on the importance of quality control and standardization for chemical and organic fertilizers in Egypt and a paper on the post-harvest losses of fruits and vegetables in Lebanon.

129. The third bulletin of the *Review of Industry in ESCWA Member Countries* highlighted two topical issues, namely, the development of SMEs and the growing use of Internet in business and industry. The fourth issue included articles and research studies related to industrial development.

130. The *Review of Transport in ESCWA Member Countries* (No. 11 and No. 12) included reviews, research and news in the transport sector in addition to relevant statistics in the ESCWA region.

131. The *Review of Science and Technology in ESCWA Member Countries* (No. 4) addressed the following key issues: existing opportunities for adding value in the petrochemical sector through the use of new, scientifically-enhanced materials; predicted opportunities that would arise from such improvements; and key issues in the acquisition, implementation and dissemination of modern organic polymers, fibre-reinforced composites, polymer blends and polymeric membrane materials for water treatment. In addition, the Review highlighted examples of enterprises that were able to establish themselves as regional operators.

132. Upon the request from member States, ESCWA provided advisory services in the areas of S&T and in cooperation with various regional advisors on these issues. These included the preparation of a preliminary report on the establishment of the Kuwait Technology Incubator and of the IT national strategy of Saudi Arabia. Additionally, technical assistance was provided in the areas of transport planning and management and on SMEs.

*Subprogramme 5. Development, coordination and harmonization
of statistics and information*

133. This subprogramme, which is implemented by the Statistics Division, has the following principal objectives: to provide comparable statistics and indicators for assessing and monitoring economic, social and environmental developments in the region; and to implement the latest innovations in statistical concepts, standards and classifications.

134. The Fourth Session of the Statistical Committee (Beirut, 3-5 April 2001) reviewed the following: work undertaken by the Division, including technical assistance to members; reports concerning the implementation of the 1993 SNA; development of statistics in various fields, most notably with regard to gender statistics; and the use of IT in statistics.

135. In the area of SNA, the Division undertook a number of activities. The Workshop on the Links between the Balance of Payments and the 1993 System of National Accounts (Beirut, 27-29 June 2000) reviewed the balance of payments directory and its links to the 1993 SNA. Additionally, the Workshop, which was organized in cooperation with the UNSD and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), sought to update information and exchange experiences in this field among the countries of the region. This was complemented by another workshop, which was undertaken in cooperation with UNSD, on the Implementation of the 1993 System of National Accounts (Beirut, 22-26 October 2001). Furthermore, the *Dictionary of National Accounts Terms* (in Arabic, English and French) was published in cooperation with the CAEU with the aim of providing equivalent terms in the three languages.

136. In another cooperative endeavour with UNSD, the Seminar on International Merchandise Trade Statistics (Beirut, 19-21 June 2001) generated the following recommendations: that the countries of the region needed to adopt and implement common United Nations definitions; and, furthermore, that they needed to adopt international criteria and standards in their preparations of statistical bulletins and publications with a view to facilitating regional and international comparability and comparisons.

137. In the area of industrial statistics, the Division cooperates with AIDMO to issue the biennial publication *Bulletin of Industrial Statistics for the Arab Countries*. The fifth issue, which covers the period 1992-2001, detailed and processed industrial statistics for each Arab country according to the International Standard Industrial Classification (ISIC). With the further aim of assisting member States in the field of capacity-building, ESCWA and AIDMO co-organized the Workshop on Industrial Statistics (Cairo, 4-8 November 2001).

138. Additionally, in the area of social statistics, the Division cooperated with the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the Cairo Demographic Centre with regard to the Workshop on Economically Active Population: Employment, Unemployment and Underemployment (Cairo, 17-21 September 2000). The Workshop had the following objectives: to update the specialists in this field on information regarding the economically active population in the region; to provide training in measuring techniques in line with international guidelines; and to facilitate comparative analyses between member States by using a minimum set of indicators on the labour force.

139. Similarly, two other outputs were designed to describe the statistical indicators that had been introduced in major conferences. The Regional Meeting on Social Indicators within the Framework of the Implementation and Follow-up to Major United Nations Conferences and Summits in the Arab Countries (Muscat, 29 October – 1 November 2000) assisted in the following ways: exposed the participants to ECOSOC guidelines in the area of statistics and indicators related to follow-up of conferences; presented the status of harmonization in the region with regard to basic indicators; and exchanged views on the ways and means of linking the Common Country Assessment (CCA) to other policies, including poverty alleviation and reduction of unemployment. The second output, the Workshop on Development Indicators (Beirut, 12-14 November 2001), aimed at the following: to inform participants of the progress made in identifying the indicators to follow-up to major conferences; to agree on a common list of indicators for the region; and to

strengthen national capacities in producing them. A manual on social indicators was prepared by ESCWA and discussed during the Workshop.

140. Several national workshops were held under the umbrella project "Development of national gender statistics programme in the Arab countries". These were the following: First National Workshop for Producers and Users of Gender Statistics in the Sultanate of Oman (Muscat, 27-29 February 2000); Second National Workshop on Gender Statistics in Algeria (Algiers, 29-30 March 2001); First National Workshop in Qatar (Doha, 14-16 May 2001); and Third National Workshop on Gender Statistics in Tunisia (Tunis, 23-24 November 2000). In addition, ESCWA convened the Third Regional Workshop on Gender Statistics in the Arab Countries (Tunis, 5-7 June 2001). Furthermore, pamphlets entitled *Women and Men, A Statistical Portrait* were issued in three States, namely, Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic and Tunisia.

141. In a similar vein, two wall charts offered, at a glance, statistical information on a number of issues, including population, gender, life expectancy, health, political participation, education and employment. These were the following: *Women and Men in the Arab Countries: Statistical Profile 2000*, and *Selected Social Indicators on the Quality of Life in the ESCWA Region*.

142. Within the context of the ongoing efforts by the secretariat to disseminate information on statistical issues, four recurrent publications in addition to the *Statistical Newsletter* were published during the biennium. The recurrent publications were the following:

(a) The *Statistical Abstract of the ESCWA Region* (Nos. 20 and 21), which was presented and classified according to topic rather than by country with a view to facilitating comparative studies;

(b) The *National Accounts Studies of the ESCWA Region* (Nos. 20 and 21), which comprised selected economic indicators that highlighted a number of aggregates of national accounts and their relative distribution, particularly gross domestic product (GDP) at current and constant prices, per capita GDP, private and government final consumption and gross fixed capital formation. In addition, the publications featured ESCWA estimates of GDP by expenditure and economic activity at 1995 prices in national currencies for the period 1992-2001;

(c) The *Bulletin on Vital Statistics in the ESCWA Region* (Nos. 3 and 4), which provided statistics with regard to registered births, deaths, marriages and divorces and compared them to the respective figures from the United Nations Population Division in New York. This data is considered essential for studies on population projections and estimates;

(d) The *External Trade Bulletin of the ESCWA Region* (No. 10), which provided tables on overall trade, trends and market shares of the region with respect to imports and exports, intraregional trade and the geographic distribution of trade for individual member countries for the period 1998-1999.

143. Additionally, the Division provided valuable advisory services on a number of issues, including gender statistics, national accounts and economic statistics, electronic data processing and household surveys.

C. REGIONAL ADVISORY SERVICES

144. ESCWA makes available to member countries, upon their request, the professional knowledge and expertise of a number of regional advisors to support them in their development efforts. Regional advisors recommend measures and policies to help member countries overcome specific problems; provide training and capacity-building; assist in the preparation and formulation of project proposals; and disseminate up-to-date knowledge and information in their specialization through lectures and papers. Currently, ESCWA provides regional advisory services in the areas of telecommunications and computer networking, data processing, energy, environment, food and agriculture, national accounts, social development, technology, water resources and WTO issues.

145. The following sections briefly review the advisory services provided to Governments and regional and national institutions during the biennium:

(a) *Telecommunications.* Within the context of promoting trade efficiency through ICTs, the following advisory services were provided: formulating policy and legislative procedures for the promotion of e-commerce; assessing the quality of technology and communications; reviewing and assessing a development plan with regard to ICTs; investigating both the procedures and the flow of information between employment bureaus and Government departments; proposing scenarios for a new accounting system related to international telephone services and in line with the International Telecommunication Union (ITU); formulating project proposals for the establishment of IT parks and incubators; assessing information with regard to technical barriers to trade and sanitary and phytosanitary measures (SPS) as raised by WTO; and reviewing the design of Internet sites and providing suggestions for their enhancement;

(b) *Data processing.* In this area, advisory services were provided on the following topics: establishing and organizing the structure of GIS; developing statistical and economical data; evaluating the household budget; reviewing multi-indicators of statistical cluster and quality of life; reviewing the project for a database on Palestinian camps in Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic and analysing a comprehensive demographic survey of Palestinians living in the latter country; and presenting a training workshop on sampling and databases;

(c) *Energy.* In this field, advisory services focused on the evaluation of project proposals on wind power; reviewed survey results of energy consumption in households and in the commercial and transport sectors; and evaluated a research on the uses of solar energy in the agriculture and water sectors;

(d) *Environment.* Advisory services in this area included the following: developing national environmental strategies; preparing guidelines for the implementation of these strategies; preparing by-laws with regard to recent environmental legislation; preparing environmental indicators applicable to local conditions; setting plans and policies for the protection of the quality of groundwater and the development of human resources to enforce laws related to water; assessing existing requirements for monitoring water quality and conservation; and preparing guidelines and terms of reference to assist the work of consultants with regard to national environment plans;

(e) *Food and agriculture.* Advisory services in the areas of food and agriculture included the following: evaluating the methodology of projects; proposing mechanisms that aim to encourage investments in agriculture and fisheries by the private sector; preparing a project proposal on vertical integration of agriculture, fisheries and industry; preparing a field study on food industry; and assessing the dairy industry;

(f) *National accounts.* In addition to reviewing the financial and non-financial sectors, advisory services in this area covered the following: evaluation of integrated accounts in the household sector; training on methods for compiling integrated accounts; reviewing the construction of the financial accounts according to the 1993 SNA and conducting training workshops in that field; preparing terms of reference for selected experts; providing advice on improving statistical survey forms; reviewing data with regard to the participation of women in the labour market; reviewing and developing price statistics and index numbers; and preparing guidelines for the establishment of a statistical database to serve in inter-industry studies and models of industrial integration;

(g) *Social development.* The focus of advisory services in this area were the following: reviewing the policies on applied social care; assessing vocational training and employment; assessing the education sector within the framework of a five year plan; appraising the progress with regard to the preparation of the human development report; developing strategies for NGOs involved in family affairs; assisting in the preparation of a strategy on social welfare and poverty; preparing development reports within the framework of a project on national human development network; organizing a training workshop on social statistics in women and family affairs; assisting in the preparation of a study related to the establishment of a centre for juvenile

delinquency; reviewing and evaluating patterns of social services related to juvenile delinquency; recommending enhancements with regard to monitoring supply and demand of labour; adding a regional dimension to the work programme of a social training centre; and enhancing the participation of women in commerce and small enterprises;

(h) *Science and technology*. Advisory services in this area focused on the following: preparing project documents with a view to establishing technology incubators and technology manpower planning; formulating national IT strategies in education and training; formulating ICT strategy within the framework of a five year development plan; training national civil service staff on IT topics; preparing a study to highlight the importance of Arabizing S&T given the trend towards knowledge-based economies; establishing a training centre to raise the issue of online government services (e-government); and reviewing a survey on the status of ICTs;

(i) *Water resources*. In the area of water, the following advisory services were provided: management of the treatment of wastewater; water harvesting; measures to conserve and protect water resources; combating pollution; protecting dams; groundwater exploration; evaluation of exploratory well drilling programmes; and estimation of municipal water demand.

(j) *WTO*. Advisory services included the following: highlighting the impact of Uruguay Round on the industrial sector and the impact of WTO agreements on agricultural policies; establishing a special unit on international trades within the Taif Chamber of Commerce and Industry; the accession of member States to WTO; providing advice with regard to various WTO issues, including WTO and Intellectual Property Rights and the impact of GATS; assisting in settling disputes regarding issues of WTO; preparing a project document on partnership agreements and on the establishment of free-trade zone; conducting a training workshop on the impact of WTO on the economies of developing countries; examining the impact of Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) and SPS agreements on food industry; preparing the Fourth WTO Ministerial Conference; and preparing, in cooperation with the Bahraini Consulting Engineering Association, a seminar on the impact of WTO agreements on engineering consultancy services.

D. QUALITATIVE EVALUATION OF PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE

146. Qualitative evaluation of programme performance is an important appraisal mechanism and is essential in developing and enhancing future activities. The evaluation exercise for the biennium 2000-2001 was wider in scope but otherwise similar to the previous evaluation for the biennium 1998-1999. The evaluation included appraisals of meetings, workshops, publications and selected regional advisory services by end-users. Moreover, it was complemented by a self-evaluation exercise covering both the regular programme of work and regional advisory services.

147. The results of the evaluation were practically identical to those of the previous biennium. This indicates that the same problems persist. In general, however, there was an overall improvement in the rating as judged by the end-users. The salient observations and recommendations were as follows: to improve the time taken to dispatch invitations, papers and publications; to produce and translate more publications into Arabic, which is the official language of ESCWA member States, with a view to widening the circle of end-users; to provide interpretation services to meetings and workshops; and to improve the publicity of ESCWA activities.

148. On substantive issues, the evaluation highlighted the need to shift from a theoretical descriptive approach to an empirical one that was both more practical and result-oriented. Furthermore, there was deemed to be room for improvement with regard to the implementation of recommendations and proposals that had been adopted either in the course of ESCWA meetings or recommended through its publications.

Annex**LIST OF PRINCIPAL PUBLICATIONS ISSUED BY ESCWA
IN 2000-2001**

Symbol	Title
E/ESCWA/ED/2000/1	Survey of Economic and Social Developments in the ESCWA Region, 1999-2000 Summary مسح للتطورات الاقتصادية والاجتماعية في منطقة الإسكوا، ١٩٩٩-٢٠٠٠، ملخص
E/ESCWA/ED/2000/2	Survey of Economic and Social Developments in the ESCWA Region, 1999-2000
E/ESCWA/ED/2000/2	مسح للتطورات الاقتصادية والاجتماعية في منطقة الإسكوا، ١٩٩٩-٢٠٠٠
E/ESCWA/ED/2000/2/Add.1	Survey of Economic and Social Developments in the ESCWA Region 1999-2000, Part II: The Role of the State in the Globalized Economy, With Egypt and Jordan as Case Studies
E/ESCWA/ED/2000/2/Add.1	مسح للتطورات الاقتصادية والاجتماعية في منطقة الإسكوا ١٩٩٩-٢٠٠٠، الجزء الثاني: دور الدولة في الاقتصاد المعولم: دراسة حالي مصر والأردن
E/ESCWA/ED/2000/3	Comparative Study on Corporate Tax: Prospect for Harmonization in the ESCWA Region
E/ESCWA/ED/2000/4	Application of Sustainable Development Indicators in the ESCWA Member Countries: Analysis of Results
E/ESCWA/ED/2000/4	تطبيق مؤشرات التنمية المستدامة في بلدان الإسكوا: تحليل النتائج
E/ESCWA/ED/2000/5	Preliminary Overview of Economic Developments in the ESCWA Region in 2000
E/ESCWA/ED/2000/5	نظرة أولية على التطورات الاقتصادية والاجتماعية في منطقة الإسكوا في عام ٢٠٠٠
E/ESCWA/ED/2000/6	التجارة في الخدمات: الاتصالات (دراسات حالة: مصر والأردن ولبنان)
E/ESCWA/ED/2000/7	Good Governance: Enhancing Macro-Management in the ESCWA Region
E/ESCWA/ED/2000/8	Implications of the Euro Currency for the Economies of the ESCWA Region
E/ESCWA/ED/2001/1	Economic Diversification in the Oil-Producing Countries: The Case of the Gulf Cooperation Council Economies
E/ESCWA/ED/2001/1	التنوع الاقتصادي في البلدان المنتجة للنفط، حالة اقتصادات بلدان مجلس التعاون لدول الخليج العربية (مجلس التعاون الخليجي)
E/ESCWA/ED/2001/2	Trade Facilitation and E-Commerce in the ESCWA Region
E/ESCWA/ED/2001/3	Report, Expert Group Meeting on Trade Facilitation and Electronic Commerce in the ESCWA Region Beirut, 8-10 November 2000

Symbol	Title
E/ESCWA/ED/2001/4	Free Trade Areas in the Arab Region, Where Do We Go from Here?
E/ESCWA/ED/2001/5	Survey of Economic and Social Developments in the ESCWA Region 2000-2001, Summary
E/ESCWA/ED/2001/5	مسح التطورات الاقتصادية والاجتماعية في منطقة الإسكوا ٢٠٠٠-٢٠٠١ (ملخص)
E/ESCWA/ED/2001/6	Substantive Report, Expert Group Meeting on Trade Facilitation and Electronic Commerce in the ESCWA Region Beirut, 8-10 November 2000
E/ESCWA/ED/2001/7	Survey of Economic and Social Developments in the ESCWA Region 2000-2001
E/ESCWA/ED/2001/8	Report, Regional Seminar on Foreign Direct Investment, National Strategies and Policies in the ESCWA Region Beirut, 12 and 13 June 2001
E/ESCWA/ED/2001/9	تقرير اللجنة الفنية المعنية بتحرير التجارة الخارجية والعولمة الاقتصادية في بلدان منطقة الإسكوا، الدورة الثانية المنامة، ٧-٨ نيسان/إبريل ٢٠٠١
E/ESCWA/ED/2001/10	Competition Laws and Policies in the ESCWA Region
E/ESCWA/ED/2001/11	Impact of the World Oil Market of the Economies of Gulf Cooperation Council States: Quantitative Assessment and Forecast
E/ESCWA/ED/2001/12	Comparative Study of National Strategies and Policies with Regard to Foreign Direct Investment in the ESCWA Region
E/ESCWA/ED/2001/13	WTO Issues for Acceding Countries: The Cases of Lebanon and Saudi Arabia
E/ESCWA/ED/2001/14	The Impact of Environmental Regulations on Production and Exports in the Food Processing, Garment and Pharmaceutical Industries in Selected ESCWA Member Countries
E/ESCWA/ED/2001/15	Substantive Report, Expert Group Meeting on Economic Diversification in the Arab World Beirut, 25-27 September 2001
E/ESCWA/ED/2001/17	Review and Appraisal of Progress Made by Yemen in the Implementation of the New Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the 1990s
E/ESCWA/ED/2001/18	Preliminary Overview of Economic Developments in the ESCWA region in 2001
E/ESCWA/ED/2001/18	نظرة أولية على التطورات الاقتصادية في منطقة الإسكوا في عام ٢٠٠١
E/ESCWA/ENR/1997/1	Assessment of Privatization of the Electric Power Sector in Selected ESCWA Member Countries Volume I: Overview
E/ESCWA/ENR/1997/1/Add.1	Volume II: Case-Study of Egypt

Symbol	Title
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
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 (Part One): Conceptual, Theoretical and Operational Background
E/ESCWA/ENR/1997/5	دراسة عن إدماج البعد البيئي في الخطط الإنمائية، الجزء الأول: الخلفية المفاهيمية والنظرية والتنفيذية
E/ESCWA/ENR/1997/5/Add.1	Survey on Incorporating the Environmental Dimension into Development Plans (Part Two): Incorporation of Environmental Concerns into Development Planning in the ESCWA Member Countries
E/ESCWA/ENR/1997/5/Add.1	دراسة عن إدماج البعد البيئي في الخطط الإنمائية، الجزء الثاني: إدماج الأبعاد البيئية في التخطيط الإنمائي في البلدان الأعضاء في الإسكوا
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/Rev.1	Development of Non-Conventional Water Resources
E/ESCWA/ENR/1997/10	The Role of Non-Governmental Organizations in the Water Sector in the ESCWA Countries
E/ESCWA/ENR/1997/11	تقرير لجنة الطاقة عن دورتها الأولى عمّان، ٢٦-٢٧ تشرين الثاني/نوفمبر ١٩٩٧
E/ESCWA/ENR/1997/12	التقرير الختامي اجتماع فريق خبراء بشأن فرص إنشاء شبكة إقليمية وأقاليمية للطاقة الكهربائية عمّان، 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/ENR/2000/1	Report of the Expert Group Meeting on Legal Aspects of the Management of Shared Water Resources in the ESCWA Region Sharm El-Sheikh, 8-11 June 2000

Symbol	Title
E/ESCWA/ENR/2000/1	تقرير اجتماع فريق الخبراء بشأن الجوانب القانونية لإدارة الموارد المائية في منطقة الإسكوا شرم الشيخ، ٨-١١ حزيران/يونيو ٢٠٠٠
E/ESCWA/ENR/2000/2	تقرير لجنة الموارد المائية، الدورة الرابعة بيروت، ١٤-١٧ تشرين الثاني/نوفمبر ٢٠٠٠
E/ESCWA/ENR/2001/1	Report, Expert Group Meeting on Implications of Groundwater Rehabilitation for Water Resources Protection and Conservation Beirut, 14-17 November 2000
E/ESCWA/ENR/2001/2	Report, Expert Group Meeting on Disseminating Renewable Energy Technologies in ESCWA Member Countries Beirut, 2-5 October 2000
E/ESCWA/ENR/2001/3	Assessment of Legal Aspects of the Management of Shared Water Resources in the ESCWA Region
E/ESCWA/ENR/2001/4	Potential and Prospects for Renewable Energy Electricity Generation, Volume I, Overview of Wind and Biomass Systems
E/ESCWA/ENR/2001/4/Add.1	إمكانات وآفاق توليد الكهرباء من مصادر الطاقة المتجددة، الجزء الثاني، النظم الشمسية الحرارية
E/ESCWA/ENR/2001/4/Add.2	إمكانات وآفاق توليد الكهرباء من مصادر الطاقة المتجددة في دول الإسكوا، الجزء الثالث، النظم الشمسية الكهروضوئية
E/ESCWA/ENR/2001/5	Report, Expert Group Meeting on the Development of Harmonized Environmental Impact Assessment for ESCWA Member States Beirut, 11-12 April 2001
E/ESCWA/ENR/2001/6	Report, Thematic Round Table for the Western Asia Region in Preparation for the Rio +10 World Summit on Sustainable Development Beirut, 9-11 April 2001
E/ESCWA/ENR/2001/7	Development of Guidelines for Harmonized Environmental Impact Assessment Suitable for the ESCWA Region
E/ESCWA/ENR/2001/8	A study on the Evaluation of Environmental Impact Assessment in Selected ESCWA Countries
E/ESCWA/ENR/2001/9	Sustainable Development Planning in ESCWA Member States
E/ESCWA/ENR/2001/10(Part I)	Regional Approach for Disseminating Renewable Energy Technologies, Part I: The Regional Renewable Energy Profile
E/ESCWA/ENR/2001/10(Part II)	Regional Approach for Disseminating Renewable Energy Technologies, Part II: The Progress Achieved in Initiating and Activating the Renewable Energy Promotion Mechanism
E/ESCWA/ENR/2001/11	تعزيز الترتيبات المؤسسية لإنفاذ التشريعات المائية وتحسين القدرات المؤسسية في قطاع المياه في بلدان الإسكوا
E/ESCWA/ENR/2001/12	Implications of Groundwater Rehabilitation on Water Resources Protection and Conservation: Artificial Recharge and Water Quality Improvement in the ESCWA Region

Symbol	Title
E/ESCWA/ENR/2001/13	تقرير لجنة الطاقة عن دورتها الثالثة بيروت، ١١-١٢ تشرين الأول/أكتوبر ٢٠٠١
E/ESCWA/ENR/2001/14	Efficient Use of Energy in the Industrial Sector: An Analysis of Options for Selected ESCWA Member States
E/ESCWA/ENR/2001/15(Vol. I)	Options and Opportunities for Greenhouse Gas Abatement in the Energy Sector of ESCWA Region, Volume I: Transport Sector
E/ESCWA/ENR/2001/15(Vol. II)	Options and Opportunities for Greenhouse Gas Abatement in the Energy Sector of ESCWA Region, Volume II: The Power Sector
E/ESCWA/ENR/2001/16	تحسين كفاءة استخدام الطاقة في قطاع الأبنية، تحليل الخيارات في دول مختارة أعضاء في الإسكوا
E/ESCWA/ENR/2001/17	Energy Options for Water Desalination in Selected ESCWA Member Countries
E/ESCWA/ENR/2001/18	تقرير اجتماع فريق خبراء بشأن استخدام الطاقة لأغراض التنمية المستدامة في دول الإسكوا: استخدام الطاقة بكفاءة والحد من غاز الدفيئة بيروت، ٨-١١ تشرين الأول/أكتوبر ٢٠٠١
E/ESCWA/ENR/2001/19	The Role of Desalinated Water in Augmentation of the Water Supply in Selected ESCWA Member Countries

