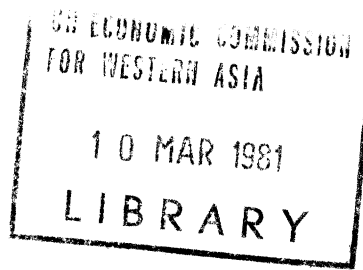




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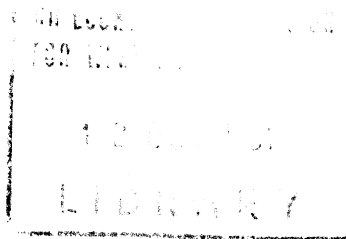
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PROGRESS REPORT
ON THE
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE WORK PROGRAMME

81-3739



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Progress Report on the Implementation of
the Work Programme

Corrigendum

After para. 79 add:

ECWA follow-up actions to the United Conference on Science and
Technology for Development (UNCSTD)

79(a) Since the last ECWA session and following the establishment of the Interim Fund for Science and Technology for Development, two meetings were held between the representatives of this Fund and ECWA in May 1980 to discuss project concepts and ideas which lend themselves to financial assistance. Two major project proposals were subsequently formulated by ECWA and submitted to the Fund. These projects are: (i) Training Workshop on Strategic Policy problems in imported technology and industrial investment; and (ii) Regional Training Programme for the Development of technological capabilities in Western Asia. In addition to the formulation of project proposals, ECWA staff visited two selected ECWA countries to explore the possibility of holding the training workshop in one of the member States. Contacts were also made with regional Arab organizations including ALECSO, IDCAS and the Federation of Arab Scientific Research Councils to ascertain their interest in this activity.

The Interim Fund is now studying these two project proposals and two ECWA staff members have visited New York to provide the Interim Fund with further clarification on these projects.

Follow-up actions to UNCSTD also included the preparation of contributions by ECWA in response to requests received from the United Nations Centre for Science and Technology for Development. These requests relate to:

- (i) inputs of ECWA to the study of the "System-Wide Efficiency of the United Nations System in Science and Technology".
- (ii) ECWA proposals and suggestions for the preparation of the "Operational Plan for the Implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action on Science and Technology for Development".

In addition, an ECWA staff member was sent to New York for a period of 3 weeks to participate in the drafting of the Operational Plan.

A regional adviser in science and technology was also appointed on 15 January 1981. His main work involves advising and assisting member governments in the implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action on Science and Technology for Development.

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I. FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

Subprogramme: Integrated regional planning

Programme element: Monitoring and appraisal of agricultural developments, policies and plans

1. The 1980 (third) issue of the annual bulletin "Agriculture and Development" was published in both English and Arabic. The standard review component of the bulletin remained unchanged and includes sections concerned with trends in agricultural production and trade, food security and regional co-operation. The variable component, which normally reviews major current policy issues, was in this issue used to examine the practical dimensions of accelerating agricultural development in the region. Accordingly, a review of economic, social and technical issues involved in the design, planning and selection of appropriate technology for irrigated agriculture in the semi-arid countries of the Near East and the Mediterranean was included.
2. The significant increases in responses received from various sources is evidence of the growing interest in the publication both as a source of topical information and as a means of focusing attention on adjustments required in development policies and priorities. The responses received emphasize also the need to examine welfare issues associated with regional agricultural development, and particularly questions of income distribution and rural poverty. The need to identify priority areas for agricultural investment during the 1980s was also stressed. These comments are to be considered in the course of the preparation of future issues.
3. The programmed study on the harmonization of agricultural plans was identified as an ineffective activity and terminated (see E/ECWA/120/Add.1).

Programme element: Regional agricultural planning and adjustment studies

4. Within the context of the programmed research on agricultural adjustment policies, a study was completed on the adjustment of agricultural outputs to prevailing prices in the agricultural sector. The programmed output relating to special sector studies of Gulf countries was identified as ineffective and terminated (see E/ECWA/120/Add.1).

Subprogramme: Regional agricultural co-operation

Programme element: Country and food security arrangements

5. In the follow-up to studies previously undertaken on food security in Western Asian countries, and at the request of the Governments of Democratic Yemen and Yemen, a joint ECWA/FAO mission was undertaken to these two countries in October 1980 for the purpose of identifying technical assistance projects aimed at the strengthening of their food security position. In addition, and also at the request of the two Governments, a study was undertaken of the status of food, diets and bread in Democratic Yemen and Yemen. The mission's reports and the study are expected to be submitted to a project review meeting to be organized by the two Governments concerned during mid-1981. It is envisaged that potential donors will be invited to attend this meeting. It is hoped that this project will lead to a number of technical assistance projects in the two countries.

6. The above activities are being supported by a financial contribution from the Government of the Netherlands. The Commission may wish to give consideration to special measures in support of these activities within the context of the Comprehensive New Programme of Action in Favour of the Least-Developed Countries.

Programme element: Management, conservation and development of agricultural resources

7. The main programmed output under this programme element, namely an expert meeting on the management, conservation and development of agricultural resources in the ECWA region, is at an advanced stage of preparation. This meeting which is scheduled to take place in Damascus, Syrian Arab Republic, from 9 to 15 May 1981, will be sponsored by the Arab Centre for the Study of Arid Areas and Drylands (ACSAD) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). The Government of the Federal Republic of Germany has expressed its interest in contributing to the costs of the meeting, while the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic as host to the meeting, will provide the necessary conference facilities. During the review period, a number of studies have already been completed, while others are in progress. The preparatory activities for this important meeting - which is organized within the context of the Plan of Action to Combat Desertification in the ECWA region adopted by the Commission in its resolution 71 (VI) - include also a survey and evaluation

mission to five member States, as well as the preparation of national country papers on the subject. A main objective of the meeting is to identify key areas for action-oriented projects in research, training, management, institution building and (inter) regional co-operation. The secretariat wishes to underline the importance of this meeting and the Commission may call upon member States to participate actively in the preparatory activities.

Subprogramme: Agricultural and rural institutions

Programme element: Farm organization, farm planning and related factors

8. Field work pertaining to crop-sharing and land tenancy practices in Yemen undertaken at request of the Government and carried out on behalf of the World Bank in 1979 was finalized and a study entitled "Crop-sharing and land-tenancy practices in the Yemen Arab Republic" was submitted to the competent authorities for clearance. The study includes a review and a classification of the prevailing systems of land-use and tenancy practices and contains recommendations regarding alternative systems providing incentives to tenants for utilizing yield-increasing methods and inputs within existing land ownership and land-use structures. The Government of Yemen had made financial resources available for the undertaking of this study.

9. Other activities under this programme element included the formulation of proposals for agricultural development in Lebanon, at request of the Government.

Programme element: Appraisal of marketing systems and policies

10. Work on this programme element has not been initiated during the review period. Programmed research work on the marketing of agricultural produce, and on the institutional design and operation of marketing organizations and systems was identified as obsolete, so as to avoid duplication with activities carried out by FAO (see E/ECWA/120/Add.1).

II. DEVELOPMENT ISSUES AND POLICIES

Subprogramme: Review and assessment of trends, and short-term economic forecasts

Programme element: Economic survey of the ECWA region

11. Pending the establishment of an economic survey unit within the secretariat - for which staff members are under recruitment - a limited version of the Economic Survey of the ECWA Region was prepared. This version has been published under the title "Survey of Economic and Social Developments in the ECWA region, 1980" and has been distributed to Governments in the region and to institutions. Additional copies are available from the secretariat on request. The survey, covering the period 1978-1979, provides an over-all picture of the economic situation in the area within the global context. It also deals with sectoral and functional areas. The report highlights a number of trends, namely: (a) the region's economy was progressing at an accelerated pace; (b) the region played an expanded role in the world economy as a major supplier of oil and petro-money and as a significant and growing market; (c) the region made important strides through joint ventures and institutions towards increased co-operation, not only within the region but also with other developing regions; (d) the region was preoccupied with food security issues, because the rising food demand resulted in an ever-increasing deficit in the agricultural trade balance; (e) the region's foreign trade was characterized by concentration on the export of a few primary commodities, in particular, and by dependence on imports for most needs; (f) the labour situation in the region was marked by high geographical mobility and by the presence of increased numbers of expatriate workers; (g) progress in social, environmental, scientific and technological development was lagging considerably behind material progress.

Subprogramme: Perspective planning

Programme element: Medium-term and long-term planning exercises

12. The long-term macro-econometric model of the Syrian Arab Republic's economy was finalized during the review period and presented to the Government in June 1980. The study is to be published in the 1980 edition of "Studies on Development Problems in Countries of Western Asia".
13. During the period, a draft model for Yemen was also completed and consultations were held with government officials. Information regarding the needs of the planning authorities in Yemen and other useful information will be incorporated in the final version of this model.
14. Recently, work has been initiated on an econometric model for Jordan, which will be completed towards the end of 1981.
15. Throughout the year, close contacts were maintained with other organizations of the United Nations system and various United Nations meetings were attended for the purpose of harmonizing modelling work undertaken at the regional and global levels.
16. Until the end of 1980, the secretariat's activities in the field of modelling were supported by the United Nations Trust Fund for Development Planning and Policies (FUNDPAP). This support provided for temporary assistance for additional expertise, costs of computer use and travel funds. The discontinuation of this assistance, due to financial considerations, will seriously curtail and slow down the secretariat's activities in this field in the future. This development comes at a time when the secretariat requires additional resources to provide member States with technical assistance for the application of models and the training of personnel, if required. Hence, the Commission is invited to review the present capability of the secretariat in this area and to recommend suitable solutions.

Subprogramme: Plan harmonization and regional co-operation

Programme element: Plan harmonization and regional co-operation in development planning

17. A report on the development problems and prospects of the ECWA region in the 1980s has been prepared at the request of the Committee on Development Planning. The report, which is based on the Regional development strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade, examines a limited number of key sectors, issues and problems that are of particular relevance to the ECWA region. The report concentrates on an examination of major sectoral preoccupations including such critical issues as technology and manpower as well as institutional and managerial capabilities for development at the national and regional levels. It identifies the priority issues and problems and suggests specific ways in which the international community could assist in overcoming these problems and in implementing regional and subregional development priorities. The secretariat's activities and proposals regarding the Third United Nations Development Decade are contained in document E/ECWA/122, to be considered under item 11 of the provisional agenda.

18. The programmed output under this programme element related to work on plan harmonization was identified as of low priority in relation to available resources and was therefore terminated (see ECWA/120/Add.1).

19. Other activities

Regional contribution to the preparations for the United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries

The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, in its resolution 122(V), called for the formulation of a Comprehensive New Programme of Action in favour of the Least-Developed Countries in the 1980s. The programme, specifying immediate and long-term goals, will be undertaken mainly within the framework of the International Development Strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade. The General Assembly subsequently decided, in its resolution 34/203, to convene a United Nations Conference on the Least-Developed Countries in order to finalize, adopt and support a comprehensive New Programme of Action in favour of these countries in the

1980s. Both resolutions urge the regional commissions to extend their fullest co-operation, support and contribution to the formulation of the Comprehensive New Programme of Action and to the preparatory process for the United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries. In anticipation of the Commission's increasing involvement in the formulation of the Programme of Action and in the preparations for the conference at both the country and the regional level the secretariat has made the necessary arrangements to extend substantive support to the efforts exerted at the national and regional levels with respect to the formulation and implementation of the Programme of Action. In this connexion, the secretariat's activities in the preparations for the Conference carried out during 1980, in close co-operation with UNCTAD, were the following:

(a) Assistance to the Least Developed member countries in the preparation of their individual country presentation

The country presentations constitute the basic substantive preparations for the Conference. It is envisaged that each of the least developed countries will draw up its own programme of its needs during the 1980s, stressing the requirements for the first half of the decade, indicating specific projects and programmes and their size, its priorities, and the estimated timing for the implementation of such projects and programmes. For the second half of the decade, only general indications of the anticipated levels of requirements will need to be given. The country presentation will be the subject of a review meeting between the individual country concerned and its aid partners prior to the consideration of the presentation by the Conference. For this task, the secretariat, in agreement with UNCTAD, provided advisory services in development planning to the Government of Yemen and in external sector planning and policies to the Government of Democratic Yemen.

(b) Participation in preparatory meetings and consultations

The secretariat participated in the Seminar for Senior Planning concerning individual country preparations for the United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries (Geneva, 6-8 October 1980). The purpose of the Seminar was

to consider the problems being encountered in the preparation of individual country presentations and to review the most effective arrangements for individual country meetings with aid partners. The secretariat participated also in the interagency consultations on the Comprehensive New Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries (Geneva, 20 and 21 October 1980). The purpose of these consultations was to discuss the inputs of the organizations of the United Nations system to the preparations for the United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries and to the Comprehensive New Programme of Action for the 1980s. In addition, the secretariat contributed to the documentation for other preparatory meetings. Its views on the substantive content of the Comprehensive New Programme and the required institutional arrangements were reflected in a note which was presented to the third session of the Intergovernmental Group on the Least Developed Countries and the interagency consultations on the subject (Geneva, 4-15 February 1980). A report on the activities in favour of the least developed member countries was prepared as a contribution to the second session of the Preparatory Committee for the United Nations Conference on the Least-Developed Countries.

(c) Briefing of UNCTAD experts assigned to the least developed countries in the region

In view of the intimate knowledge of the secretariat of the conditions prevailing in the least developed member countries of the region, efforts have been made by the secretariats of both ECWA and UNCTAD to ensure the briefing and ~~de-briefing~~ of experts engaged by UNCTAD to work in the region's least developed member countries. The Commission will continue to assist the two least developed member States beyond 1980 in the preparation of country presentations. It is also expected to play an important part in servicing the meetings with donor countries involving the least-developed countries of the region, as well as to participate effectively in the Conference itself and in other preparatory and follow-up activities, as and when required.

20. It should be noted that the secretariat has made available its services from existing resources. No resources available for the preparations of this particular global conference were decentralized to the Commission.

III. HUMAN SETTLEMENTS

Subprogramme: Human settlements planning

Programme element: Institutional arrangements in human settlements development

21. Work under this programme element has not commenced, since the Arab Urban Development Institute (AUDI) in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia has not yet become operational. Further reference is made regarding this Institute in paragraph 44 of document E/ECWA/120/Add.2).

Programme element: Settlement policies and strategies

22. Within the context of research on alternative policies and models for programmes to meet housing demands, an assessment of the role and contribution of the construction industry in human settlements programmes and national economic and social development was completed. The assessment consists of a survey of the structure of the construction industry and its position in the economies of the countries of the region. At the request of the Government of Lebanon, an evaluation of the housing sector was also undertaken .

Programme element: Environmental indicators for human settlement planning

23. Work under this element, which deals with the development of environmental parameters, has commenced with a study and review of building rules and regulations in ECWA countries, as well as a general survey of the housing situation in selected ECWA countries (Jordan, Lebanon, Kuwait, Qatar and Bahrain). The two reports were submitted for expert review by a meeting on Building Codes and Regulations in Developing Countries organized by . The recommendations which emerged from this meeting will be utilized for the further development of the work initiated during the review period.

Programme element: Appraisal of rural settlement planning and housing schemes

24. In preparation for a programmed seminar on rural development planning in the ECWA region, to be held in 1981, research was undertaken on rural settlement aspects of nomadic populations and the development of rural settlements and their growth in the ECWA region. Reports on these topics have been presented for review to various international expert and policy-making meetings.

Programme element: Assessment of standards for appropriate technology in the building sector and basic infrastructure

25. Research under this programme element relating to the adoption of new technologies and techniques in the building and infrastructure services sector was commenced, with (a) a survey of the current energy situation in relation to human settlements planning; (b) an analysis of alternative plans for the use of energy and (c) the implications for the planning of human settlements. This topic has also been of concern to the United Nations Commission on Human Settlements and a report on energy conservation in human settlements in the ECWA region was submitted at its third session.

Programme element: Evaluation and assessment of subregional research and demonstration centres in human settlements technology

26. Work under this programme element did not commence, since the project linking the subregional research and demonstration centres in a technical assistance project which was to be funded by UNEP, did not become operational. Hence, the programme element was identified as obsolete and terminated (see E/ECWA/120/Add.1).

27. The above elements listed were programmed on the expectations of the availability of resources from . However, these only became available towards the end of 1980. Progress on these elements has therefore to be considered within that context.

IV. INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

Subprogramme: Regional co-ordination in the industrial field

Programme element: Co-ordination of industrialization policies, plans and programmes

28. During the review period, two studies on the content and development of national plans for regional co-operation in the industrial field were completed. In the study "Industrialization Policies in the ECWA region: An Appraisal", the various measures and instruments of industrial policy adopted in the countries in the region to stimulate and guide manufacturing activities are reviewed. The effectiveness of these measures in protecting and encouraging domestic industry, in promoting new industrial lines and in expanding or increasing the efficiency of existing lines, are appraised. New responsibilities in industrial policy compatible with the needs for a re-orientation and a restructuring of industrial development in the region are also defined in the study.

29. In "Industrial Co-operation - An Alternative Long-Term Partial Industrialization Strategy", the various economic co-operation arrangements among Arab States during the last three decades are surveyed and assessed. An alternative strategy based on a partial approach to co-operation is outlined. It advocates the development of new industries identified as "packages" leading to balanced benefit for member States participating in such arrangements. Such industries would include the manufacture of capital goods, heavy engineering and basic metal industries.

The two studies are in preparation for an expert-group meeting on regional co-ordination and industry to be convened in 1981.

Programme element: Identification of regional projects

30. In preparation for an "Expert-Group Meeting on Identification of projects for Regional Co-operation in Capital Goods and Heavy Engineering Industries" (to be held in the second quarter of 1981), a number of prefeasibility studies have been prepared.

These include the following studies:

- (a) "The feasibility of establishing a regional telecommunication industry in the ECWA region". This study consists of the following three parts:
- (i) Basic economic and technological considerations;
 - (ii) Prefeasibility study on telephone exchange; and
 - (iii) Prefeasibility study on telephone instruments. While highlighting the main characteristics of the telecommunication industry, the study advances criteria for selecting (on a priority basis) products for manufacture in the region and identifies the broad features of the regional industry envisaged. The study attempts further to assess the feasibility of manufacturing telephone exchanges and telephone instruments, with special emphasis on the technological and economic implications of such a venture.
- (b) "The feasibility of establishing a regional electric power equipment industry in the ECWA region". This study consists also of three parts:
- (i) Basic economic and technological consideration;
 - (ii) Prefeasibility study on turbines and generators; and
 - (iii) Prefeasibility study on transformers. It is structured similarly to the one on the regional telecommunications industry.
- (c) "Establishment of a Telephone cables industry in the ECWA region: A techno-economic study". It reviews the development of telephone networks in the region and analyses the region's current and projected demand for telephone cables up to the year 2000. A development strategy is advanced based on a number of alternatives depending on plant-size and locations and other relevant techno-economic considerations.
- (d) "Establishment of a Power cables manufacturing industry in the ECWA region: a techno-economic study" reviews existing power cable manufacturing capacities in the region and, on the basis of projections of demand for power generation and demand for underground power cables (heavy and medium voltage), the feasibility of expanding existing industries to include the manufacture of HV and MV cables utilizing the latest technological methods.

- (e) A preliminary draft of a techno-economic study on the establishment of manufacturing capacities for fabricated static equipment for the chemical and petrochemical industries in the ECWA region.
- (f) A preliminary study on the feasibility of manufacturing construction equipment in the ECWA region.

31. The activities of the secretariat in the field of the identification of projects have been supported by contributions of the Financial Contributions Account and by a financial contribution from the Government of the Netherlands. The nature of these activities - requiring in depth surveys both within and outside the region - will require increased resources for developing this essential work further.

Subprogramme: Development of selected industrial branches

Programme element: Development of engineering industries

32. Work on this programme element has recently been initiated with the collection of information on consumer durable goods industries in the region. The data required relate to the consumption, import and export of selected consumer durables (T.V. sets, radios, recorders, record players, refrigerators, sewing machines, etc).

33. A study on a strategy for the development of petrochemical industries has been undertaken. It analyses the world situation regarding the development of this industry, production and marketing trends in petrochemical products, financial and feedstock constraints facing future development, the effect of energy issues, the technological aspects, including integration and links with petroleum and gas resources and processes, the trading and co-operation programmes among different countries and regions etc. The study proposes potential guidelines for the consideration of policy-makers in the Arab countries.

34. Other activities included participation in field surveys in preparation for the Symposium on the Ideal Utilization of Natural Gas sponsored by OAPEC in Algeria (29 June - 1 July 1980), as well as participation in the Second International Symposium on Petrochemicals (Baghdad, March 1980).

Subprogramme: Review and appraisal of industrial development, potential, planning and implementation

Programme element: Review and appraisal of industrial development and potential

35. Within the context of the continuing review and appraisal of industrial development, an industrial survey of the West Bank and Gaza is under way. In connexion with this survey, time-series were prepared for a number of industrial parameters covering the period 1967 - 1978 and deflators for major industrial branches were constructed.

Programme element: Industrial planning and implementation

36. In preparation for the Planners' Meeting on Industrial Planning and Implementation to be held in 1981, a study on problems of sectoral planning in ECWA countries and the application of mathematical models for their solution has been initiated. The study relates to industrial location techniques and illustrates the case of the cement industry in the ECWA region. It tests six alternative models: one regional, two subregional, one with export-constraints, one using countries' transport costs, and finally one using regional average transport costs.

V. INTERNATIONAL TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT

Subprogramme: Trade expansion and diversification

Programme element: Review of external sector developments

37. A report reviewing developments in the external trade and payments situation of member countries and efforts to promote regional co-operation and integration has been completed. The annual report is intended to provide background material for policy-makers.

Programme element: Interregional trade and regional co-operation and integration

38. The main programmed output under this element, namely an expert-group meeting on feasible forms of economic co-operation and integration in Western Asia, is at an advanced stage of preparation. During the review period, research for two additional working documents for the meeting was commenced. Research on commodity trade and factor movement in Western Asia focuses on the trade in goods, labour and capital among the countries of Western Asia. The problems faced by these countries in this regard and their implications for closer economic co-operation will also be examined. Research on feasible forms of economic co-operation and integration in Western Asia was directed towards the experiences of countries in the region with different forms of co-operation and integration efforts, experiences in other regions and feasible and viable forms of co-operation in the region and the condition required for their realization. Studies pertaining to these two research efforts, together with documents already completed and published, during the review period, (e.g. "Evolution of economic co-operation and integration in Western Asia; "Main obstacles to and benefits from closer economic co-operation in Western Asia" and the "Compendium of intraregional trade statistics in Western Asia") will constitute the main background documentation for the meeting which is now scheduled to be held in November 1981. Consultations have been held with other international organizations (e.g. UNCTAD), regional commissions and regional organizations such as the League of Arab States and the Council of Arab Economic Unity regarding their participation in this important meeting. The secretariat's activities outlined above have been supported through the Financial Contributions Account.

Programme element: External sector policies and planning

39. The programmed research publication on trade regimes, exchange and payments policies was terminated because of the reallocation of resources within the programme as a whole (see E/ECWA/120/Add.1).

Programme element: Trade relations with other developing countries and with socialist countries

40. Work programmed under this element has not been initiated during the period under review.

41. Other activities under this programme included the participation in the Interregional Meeting of the Group of 77 on Economic Co-operation among Developing Countries (Geneva 17 March - 13 April 1980).

VI. LABOUR, MANAGEMENT AND EMPLOYMENT

Subprogramme: Employment promotion and manpower development

Programme element: Review and appraisal of developments in labour, manpower and employment in the ECWA region

42. Within the context of review and appraisal in this sector, two reports were completed. One report reviews the developments in the labour and employment situation during the period 1978 - 1979 and served as an input to the "Survey of Economic and Social Developments in the ECWA region, 1980". The other report, entitled "Employment, Interregional Labour Mobility and Manpower Planning", constituted an input to the report on "development problems and prospects of the ECWA region in the 1980s, prepared within the context of the International Development Strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade.

Programme element: Problems and prospects of labour movement in the ECWA region

43. A main programmed output under this element, the regional meeting on labour movements, was identified as an ineffective activity and terminated (see E/ECWA/120/Add.1). Remaining work to be initiated under this element will be implemented during 1981 within the context of the Conference on International Migration to be held in May 1981 (see para. 67 below).

Programme element: Brain drain problems and prospects in the ECWA region

44. Case studies on Jordan and the Syrian Arab Republic have been commenced during the review period. For additional activities of the secretariat in brain drain issues, reference is made to paragraph 79 below. These case studies have been made possible with assistance from the Financial Contributions Account.

VII. NATURAL RESOURCES

Subprogramme: Energy

Programme element: Availability and use of natural gas and prospects for its further economic utilization in the ECWA region

45. A first draft of the section on the economics of natural gas has been completed. Work has also been started on the section covering reserves and production of gas in the ECWA region. A questionnaire has been sent to all gas producing ECWA countries requesting information on reserves, production and consumption of both associated and non-associated natural gas. The first draft of the study is expected to be completed by October 1981. The report will include an analysis of the current production, consumption and export of gas from the ECWA region and a review of the advantages of different production profiles and different forms of utilization.

Programme element:

(a) Implications of the economics of oil refining for the future utilization of crude oil production in the ECWA region

46. A report on the subject was issued in April 1980 and sent to all ECWA member countries for comments. The main recommendations in this report were: (i) additional refinery capacity should be built to keep pace with the expected growth of the demand of the ECWA region for refined products; (ii) additional capacity should be considered on a regional basis; (iii) decisions on building export refineries should be based solely on considerations of the extra cost of transporting products rather than crude oil.

(b) Human settlements and behaviour in relation to energy conservation in the ECWA region

47. No work has been initiated by the secretariat during the review period.

Programme element: Non-conventional sources of energy in the ECWA region: research and development activities, ongoing programmes and future possibilities

48. For a review of the secretariat's activities under this element, reference is made to document E/ECWA/116/, to be discussed under item 7(c) of the provisional agenda.

Programme element: Energy conservation in the ECWA region, with special reference to be control of domestic consumption

49. No work has been initiated by the secretariat during the review period.

Programme element: Renewable energy for rural development: An assessment of low and nonwaste technologies and the feasibility of their transfer to ECWA countries

50. This element has been combined with the programme element on non-conventional sources of energy in the ECWA region.

51. Other activities undertaken by the secretariat during 1980

(a) Revision of the report entitled "Medium and long-term projections of the demand for and supply of energy in the ECWA region". The discussions at the First Arab Energy Conference (Abu Dhabi, March 1979) and the important events that took place in connexion with oil in 1979 indicated the need for a revision of the projections to cover the whole Arab world (21 countries) up to the year 2000. This revision constituting an extension of the work originally programmed was completed in May 1980 under the title "Arab energy: prospects to the year 2000". The study will be published by Pergamon Press in early 1981.

(b) Revision of the first draft of a study on an action programme for developing the energy economy of the least-developed countries of the ECWA region. This study is devoted to the development of the energy economy of Democratic Yemen and Yemen. It consists of a comprehensive analysis of the energy situation and prospects of the two countries and covers the organization and control of the energy economy of both countries.

(c) Participation in a number of meetings including the OAPEC Symposium on the Optimal Utilization of Natural Gas (Algiers, May 1980); The OPEC Workshop entitled "Energy and Development: Increasing Third-World Collective Self-Reliance" (Vienna, July 1980); the OAPEC/AFESD meeting of the Preparatory Committee on Energy Demand for the Second Arab Energy Conference (Kuwait, November 1980); and the OAPEC Meeting on Energy Demand Forecasting in the Arab Countries (Kuwait, December 1980).

Subprogramme: Mineral resources development

Programme element: Assessment of the feasibility of uranium extraction from phosphate rocks in the ECWA region

52. The programmed assessment of the technological and economic feasibility of uranium extraction was identified as being of marginal usefulness and was terminated (see E/ECWA/120/Add.1).

Programme element: Subregional economic studies of selected mineral prospects preparatory to prefeasibility and feasibility studies, with a view to their development

53. Work has not been initiated on this programme element during the review period.

Programme element: Expert report on the improvement of national mining codes and assessment of the situation with regard to full sovereignty of member countries over their mineral resources

54. A report on the improvement of national mining codes in the ECWA region has been completed. The report includes a comparative analysis of national mining codes in the region emphasizing the issue of the full sovereignty of member countries over their mineral resources. The report traces the history of mining legislation in the ECWA countries and provides a country-by-country assessment of mining legislation. It also covers the managerial and administrative aspects of mineral resources development and raises various aspects of regional and subregional co-operation.

Programme element: Survey and economic analysis of the actual and potential develop of industrial minerals deposits in the ECWA region

55. Research on this element has only recently been initiated.

56. Other activities in the area of minerals included the continuation of a study initiated in 1979 and, pertaining to the analysis of technical documentation, the collection and processing of mineral economic information with regard to present and future supply and demand.

Subprogramme: Water resources development and management

Programme element: Promotion of technical co-operation in the field of water resources development

57. Work on the programmed output under this element was only initiated towards the end of 1980.

Programme element: Dissemination and exchange of information on non-conventional water-related activities at the subregional and regional levels

58. The secretariat has commenced work under this element with requests for information from member States on non-conventional water-related activities through a questionnaire. A number of member States have already replied and it is hoped that all Governments will provide the information required, so that the subsequent analysis and further study can proceed.

Programme element: Development of guidelines for determining the economic use of water

59. Work on this element has not been initiated during the review period.

Programme element: Institutional arrangements for water planning and management at the subregional and regional levels

60. For details of progress on this element, reference is made to document E/ECWA/129 on the follow-up to the Commission's resolutions, including resolution 83 (VII) on the Regional Water Resources Council.

Programme element: Seminar on selected aspects of water resources development in the ECWA region

61. No work has been initiated during the review period.

Programme element: Other activities

Assessment of the water resources of the countries in the ECWA region

62. The above activity constitutes a programme element of the 1978-1979 workprogramme but could not be completed owing to a necessary rearrangement of priorities in the light of available resources. During the review period, this activity has now been completed and a study entitled "Assessment of the water resources situation in the ECWA region" has been issued as an ECWA document. The study includes a regional review and appraisal of the main aspects having relevance to the water

resources assessment process; a study of the regional outlook for water resources, and proposed action and recommendations at the national, subregional and regional levels. The prevailing hydrological and hydrogeological conditions in each country were also reviewed, with special reference to those aspects having subregional and/or regional dimensions.

The International Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Decade

63. In preparation for the launching by the General Assembly at its thirty-fifth session of the International Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Decade, the secretariat undertook a review of the region's present status, in the field of drinking water supply and sanitation, of national plans and programmes for the Decade; of financial and manpower requirements, of the need for the mobilization of internal and external resources, and of constraints that stand in the way of progress. The review pertaining to the ECWA region was included in the Secretary-General's report to the General Assembly on the topic. In its resolution 35/18, the General Assembly proclaimed the period 1981-1990 as the International Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Decade, calling upon inter alia the regional commissions to review periodically, on the basis of national reports, the progress being made by Governments in their respective regions in establishing national targets and carrying out programmes to attain those targets.

In this connexion reference is made to paragraph 35 of document E/ECWA/120/Add.2 outlining the support the Commission will provide to member States.

VIII. POPULATION

Subprogramme: Data collection and analysis

Programme element: National censuses, surveys, and registration

64. Work on this element consisted mainly of the provision of support for technical co-operation activities in the field of population. This support involved assistance to the regional advisor on population statistics in the substantive preparations prior and subsequent to his mission (see para. 14 of document E/ECWA/120/Add2

In order to assist member States with their planned national censuses during the 1980s, studies were prepared on census questionnaires and the tabulation of censuses. A census training workshop was held at Damascus (in this connexion reference is made to para. 23 of document E/ECWA/120/Add.2). Within the context of this element, the secretariat participated in a number of training workshops dealing with the strengthening of national capabilities in the population field.

Programme element: Regional surveys and survey on intraregional migration

65. During the year work has been initiated on the programmed output for "the census of the Palestinian people". This project is financed by UNFPA but executed by ECWA. Further details regarding the progress of the census are contained in document E/ECWA/129.

Programme element: Analysis of population data

66. The primary objective of this programme element is to produce reliable data on a large number of demographic and related socio-economic variables necessary for development planning and policy-making, and to update this information on a periodic basis. During the year, the third issue of the socio-economic data sheets has been prepared. Its publication was expected during 1980, but was delayed in order to permit the inclusion of information from national censuses already undertaken. Estimates and projections of population have been prepared and will be included in the forthcoming relevant publication of the United Nations. The first population country profiles (Bahrain, Jordan and Yemen) were published in November 1979, and

the profiles for the remaining ten countries were published (in English and Arabic) during 1980. The profiles provide information about the major demographic and related socio-economic characteristics and trends in each of the ECWA countries, review the population policies of each country, and provide an up-to-date list of references and of national statistical documents such as censuses, abstracts, and surveys. Information pertaining to the region was also submitted for inclusion in the World Population Situation Report including demographic estimates and description of government population policies and institutions dealing with population matters.

Subprogramme: Population development and policy

Programme element: Determinants and consequences of population trends

67. The following programmed output has been completed during 1980. A study on the legal framework of migration policies in Arab countries. This study has been included in the last edition of the ECWA population bulletin.

Work has been initiated on the following programmed activities:

- (a) A seminar on international migration: this seminar was planned to be held in 1980 but had to be postponed because of delays in finalizing financial matters related to the budget for the seminar. It is now scheduled to take place at Beirut from 11 - 16 May 1981.
- (b) The socio-economic determinants of differential mortality: a working paper on this topic is under preparation.
- (c) Studies on fertility: in preparation for such studies, consultations were held with UNFPA regarding the results of the World Fertility Survey.

Programme element: Review and appraisal of policies and plans

68. Only limited activities have been undertaken by the secretariat during the review period. These consisted of the preparations of questionnaires pertaining to the population policy data bank, sent to institutions dealing with population policies.

Subprogramme: Population education and information

Programme element: Population bulletin

69. During 1980, Bulletins Nos. 15, 16 and 17 were published in Arabic and English and distributed to institutions throughout the region.

Programme element: Information, research and training

70. The "Source Book for Research on Population and Development in the ECWA region", issued in 1979, has been published in Arabic during the review period. The collection of material for future updated versions of the source book continued during the review period.

The population reference centre established in the secretariat continued to be expanded during the year and its role as a focal point for research and exchange of information on population matters became more pronounced. The clearing house functions of the centre have been expanded. Thus, books and monographs of direct interest to policy-makers and training institutions in the region have been distributed. In this context, a "Bibliography of Population Literature in the Arab World" (English and Arabic) and "Basic Data on Population, Economy and International Migration in Arab countries" have been published.

IX. DEVELOPMENT FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

Subprogramm: Mobilization and management of financial resources and improvement of administrative capabilities for development

Programme element: Review and analysis of development, trends and policies in development finance and administration

71. Within the context of its continuing review and analysis of developments in this important area, the secretariat's activities during the period under review included the preparation of:

- (a) An analytical report on trends and policies in development finance in the ECWA region. The report includes a review of developments and trends in the fiscal and monetary sectors in countries in the region during the period 1978-1979 and guidelines for policy action aimed at improving the management of the economy and strengthening co-operation among member countries in the region.
- (b) A report on the role of the public sector in promoting economic development in countries of Western Asia. In this report, the extent and nature of the contribution made by the public sector to promote agricultural production, enhance industrialization programmes, expand international trade, create greater employment opportunities and promote science and technology capabilities is examined. The report also reviews the contribution of the public sector to the development of social infrastructures, as well as the role of public enterprises as a policy and operational instrument. The report is intended to identify problems and assist in developing policy guidelines for government action. The work of the secretariat in this area is in response to General Assembly resolution 34/137.

72. Other activities: This element included participation in a number of meetings held during the year (i.e. the Fifth Meeting of Experts on the United Nations Programme in Public Administration, New York, January 1980; the Regional Conference on the Role of Arab Capital in the Economic Development of the Arab East, Beirut, April 1980; the Conference on New Frontiers of Finance, Beirut, June 1980; and the Seminar

on the Framework for International Financial Co-operation, New York, October 1980). The secretariat's activities regarding the follow-up to resolution 74 (VI) on assistance to member countries in development finance and administration are reported in document E/ECWA/129 /.

Programme element: Financial planning and government budgeting in selected countries of Western Asia

73. The programmed research pertaining to financial techniques and practices in countries of Western Asia has been completed during 1980, and a provisional report on various aspects of financial planning and management in selected ECWA countries was prepared. The report reviews conceptual dimensions of financial planning within the framework of over-all development planning; the prevailing systems and practices in selected ECWA countries and the scope and techniques used in plan formulation and implementation in these countries. During 1981, this study is to be finalized and will be discussed at an expert meeting on financial planning and management tentatively scheduled for early 1982. Work commenced also on developing standards for and a specific series of financial statistics of ECWA member States for eventual inclusion in the Statistical Abstract of the ECWA region.

Programme element: Tax structure change and economic development in selected countries of Western Asia

74. During the year, the secretariat's research activities on the above topic were initiated with a survey of the tax systems in selected countries of Western Asia.

X. SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Subprogramme: Regional co-operation in the transfer and development of science and technology

Programme element: Analysis of the role of regional co-operation

75. In pursuance of the implementation of this element, the secretariat's activities during the period under review included:

- (a) Visits to selected industrial firms and public institutions for the collection of data required for the programmed analysis; and
- (b) Preparations for a seminar on technology policies in the Arab States scheduled to be held from 25 to 29 May 1981. These preparations included the selection of seminar topics and the identification of speakers. Invitations to member States have already been sent. It is expected that between 20 and 25 science and technology topics will be presented by a number of experts both from the region and elsewhere. The activities of the secretariat in this area are financially supported by the Government of the Netherlands.

Programme element: Follow-up action on the recommendations of the regional meeting and the United Nations Conference on Science and Technology for Development

76. Work on this programme element has not commenced because the extrabudgetary resources allocated to it have not yet become available. However, it is anticipated that these resources will be forthcoming and that the programme element will be implemented during 1981. The services of a regional adviser in science and technology will be made available, from 1981 onwards to member States at their request.

Programme element: Technology decision-making within the investment process

77. Work on this research project, which aims at (a) identifying factors determining the choice of technology and (b) exploring alternative patterns for technological decision-making, was initiated during the review period. Contacts were established with international, regional and national institutions for determining

whether such institutions could co-sponsor the project including the holding of a workshop planned to be held in 1981.

Programmed element: The relation between processes for importing technology and the development of technological capabilities

78. Work on this programme element has not been commenced during the period under review.

Other activities

Reverse transfer of technology

79. During the period under review, the secretariat organized a seminar on the above topic at Beirut from 4 to 8 February 1980. The seminar was attended by 75 experts from the region and elsewhere. The discussion at the seminar particularly focussed on:

- (a) The causes of the Arab brain drain, particular those related to the cultural, social, economic, technological, educational and professional institutions in the Arab countries.
- (b) The social and psychological dimensions of the Arab brain drain;
- (c) The development impact of the Arab brain drain on labour-exporting and importing countries.

In addition, the experiences of countries outside the region (i.e. Pakistan, China, Japan) in coping with brain-drain problems were also discussed and reviewed. The proceedings of the seminar have been finalized and will be published during 1981 in both English and Arabic. These publications will constitute the first consolidated documents on the topic for the region. The seminar was financed with assistance of the Financial Contributions Account.

Fellowships

80. At the request of UNCTAD, the secretariat requested member States to nominate candidates for the UNCTAD in-house training programme on technology transfer issues. In response to the secretariat's invitation, twelve candidates were nominated by a total of seven member States. After evaluation, five nominated candidates were selected, one from Jordan, two from Egypt and two from Iraq. The training programme was held at UNCTAD headquarters from 25 February to 13 March 1980.

XI. SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Subprogramme: Monitoring and review of the social situation
in the ECWA region

Programme element: Social indicators of development

81. The 1980 programmed computations and analytical reviews of social development and indicators were completed and a report entitled "Survey of the social situation in the ECWA region" was issued.

The planned expert-group meeting on social indicators was, however, identified as an activity of marginal usefulness and was terminated. For further details regarding this output, reference is made to document E/ECWA/120/Add.1.

Programme element: Appraisal of social development policies and plans

82. During the period under review, the programmed output pertaining to the structure and operations of governmental organizations for social development was completed and included in a survey of existing social services in the countries of the region. Within the context of this element, a review of the development of human resources in the Arab world was submitted to the League of Arab States as a supporting document to the Strategy for Joint Arab Economic Action. The secretariat's activities in preparation for the International Year of Disabled Persons and in the follow-up to resolution 87(VII) are reported upon in document E/ECWA/119.

During the year, the secretariat initiated work in preparation for the World Assembly of the Elderly, 1982.

Subprogramme: Human resources development and social integration

Programme element: National community and rural development

83. During 1980, the following research papers on community and rural development were completed:

- (a) Social factors affecting the co-operative movement in selected countries of the ECWA region;
- (b) The concept of integrated rural development and basic requirements for the successful implementation of integrated rural development projects in the ECWA region;

- (c) The role of the social and extension worker in the development of rural communities;
- (d) The current situation and prospects in integrated rural development in five selected countries of the ECWA region; and
- (e) Identification of the immediate needs and projects in rural development for **southern Lebanon**.

It is expected that the above research papers will be submitted to an expert group to be convened during 1981.

The secretariat participated in a number of meetings dealing with areas falling within the purview of this programme element (i.e. Fifth World Congress for Rural Sociology, Mexico, 7-12 August 1980; the UNESCO Regional Training Course for Women Leaders responsible for **Women's Education in Rural Areas** in the Arab States, Beirut, 28 October-6 November 1980).

Programme element: Integration of women in development

84. During the period, the secretariat co-ordinated and provided substantive support to projects financed from the Voluntary Fund for the United Nations Decade for Women. Progress in the implementation of these projects is reported upon in paragraphs 24, 25 and 26 of document E/ECWA/120/Add.2.

Within the context of this element, the secretariat prepared a study on the social and economic conditions of Palestinian women inside and outside the occupied territories, which was submitted to the secretariat of the World Conference for the United Nations Decade for Women. The secretariat participated in this Conference, which was held at Copenhagen from 13 to 30 July 1980. Further reference to this Conference and its results are contained in document E/ECWA/126, to be considered under item 7(a) of the provisional agenda.

Programme element: Study on the potential and the socio-economic conditions of the Palestinian people

85. The progress in the implementation of this study is reported upon the context of follow-up to resolution 86(VII) and contained in document E/ECWA/129.

XII. STATISTICS

General

86. Also during 1980, the Secretariat's statistical activities continued to be carried out without the benefit of computer technology. Collected data for the Commission's statistical publications continued to be stored in files, updated manually from year to year. The absence of the computerization of data collection impedes not only the development of statistical series but also the setting up of data bank services required for all the research and service programmes of the Commission. It was inter alia to improve statistical activities that a request was included for setting up electronic data processing services in the proposed programme budget for 1982-1983 to be discussed under item 8 of the provisional agenda. In view of the United Nations zero-growth policy, the Commission's request for additional growth for 1982-1983 to extend its programmes and services including electronic data processing services, will not be transmitted to the legislative organs of the United Nations. The Commission is therefore invited to consider ways and means of establishing this badly needed capability in the secretariat.

Subprogramme: Development of statistical services

Programme element: Statistical series and indicators

87. The 1980 edition of the "Statistical Abstract of the Region of the Economic Commission for Western Asia" was published and 250 copies were distributed to member States, national statistical offices and other institutions. Additional copies are available from the secretariat on request. This edition, constituting the third issue in this series, covers the period 1968-1977 and presents data profiles of the countries of Western Asia in nine areas.

88. During the review period the secretariats of the League of Arab States and the Commission published jointly the 1980 issue of "Statistical Indicators of the Arab World for the period 1970-1978". This publication, which has been made available to all Arab countries, statistical offices in the Arab region and other institutions, represents the first joint publication of the two organizations. The secretariat hopes that this kind of co-operation between the Commission and the League of Arab States will be strengthened and extended to include other areas. The above statistical services provided by the secretariat have been supported by the Financial Contributions Account.

Programme element: Harmonization of national statistical systems

89. During the year, the secretariat completed the following case studies on data collection methods for foreign trade and industrial statistics:

- (a) Foreign trade and industrial statistics in the Syrian Arab Republic;
- (b) Foreign trade and industrial statistics in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan;
and
- (c) Foreign trade and industrial statistics in Lebanon,

Two additional case studies, on Yemen and Saudi Arabia, are being finalized. These case studies will be submitted to a working group on foreign trade and industrial statistics to be held at Beirut from 23 to 27 March 1981.

90. This programme element is implemented in close collaboration with the United Nations Statistical Office. Funds for undertaking the required field studies (as well as for the organization of the working group) were made available by the Government of the Netherlands. The Commission might wish to request donor agencies to continue to provide the necessary resources to enable the secretariat to pursue its activities in the improvement and harmonization of statistics.

Programme element: International trade and statistical series

91. Following the recruitment of a staff member in this area, the secretariat commenced its programmed activities under this element only late in 1980. No programmed outputs have therefore been completed during the review period. However, under the auspices of the international trade and development programme, intraregional trade statistics for the period 1972-1974 and the year 1976 have been compiled and published in the form of a compendium.

Programme element: Technical assistance in statistics

92. Under this programme element, the secretariat provided technical and substantive support for two projects for which the Commission is the executing agency, namely those concerning the Arab Institute for Training and Research in Statistics, Baghdad, and assistance in statistical development in the Yemen Arab Republic. The secretariat's activities relating to these two projects are reported in greater detail in document E/ECWA/120/Add.2 paragraphs 18 and 19.

Subprogramme: Development of national accounts, finance and price statistics

Programme element: National accounts and related prices and finance statistics

93. During the period under review, the secretariat issued the third bulletin in the series "National Accounts Studies" entitled "Gross domestic product: national disposable income and consolidated accounts statistics of the ECWA countries". This publication has been distributed to member States, national statistical offices and other institutions. Additional copies are available on request.

94. The secretariat completed its work for the publication of the second bulletin in the series "Price statistics in the ECWA region".

95. Work commenced on the programmed study on sectoral price deflator indexes of gross domestic product for national accounting at constant prices in the ECWA countries and preparatory work was initiated for the organization of the programmed working group on statistics of the distribution of income, consumption and accumulation in the ECWA countries, to be held during the last quarter of 1981. Since the Commission's regular budget does not include provision for this ad hoc expert group, extrabudgetary resources will need to be mobilized for this purpose.

Programme element: Comparative costs of living and the international real income comparisons of the ECWA countries

96. Reasonably accurate comparisons of intercountry differences in production, income and purchasing power of currencies are required for various purposes. Such comparisons are helpful in efforts to understand economic growth and development for policy formulation at the international, regional and national levels. The United Nations International Comparison Project (ICP) aims at facilitating policy

formulation at the international level by establishing a system of comparison of real product and purchasing power. The project, which has entered phase IV, covers about 70 countries, of which one (the Syrian Arab Republic) is from the ECWA region. The secretariat's activities under this programme element run parallel to the ICP and concern the development of regional comparisons as well as the study of the feasibility of introducing the ICP by modifying the methods used by the ICP and rendering these applicable to countries of the region. In this context, the secretariat issued a preliminary report on the ICP for the food and beverages categories for the Syrian Arab Republic, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Iraq, Yemen and Democratic Yemen covering the period 1973-1975. These activities are also directed towards the regionalisation of the ICP. In this connexion, the secretariat participated in a expert group on the ICP at Bangalore, India, 6-10 October 1980. The group recommended that the ICP needs to be decentralized to the regional commissions and that regional counterparts should be set up to assume gradually the responsibilities for the actual collection and compilation of expenditure and price data from participating countries. In this connexion, the Commission is invited to encourage countries in the ECWA region to participate in the ICP. The Bangalore expert group recommended also that an expert meeting be organized for the ECWA countries. Such a meeting would undoubtedly facilitate the recommended increased participation of member States in the ICP, as well as its regionalization. It should be noted that such regionalization is in line with General Assembly resolution 32/197. The Secretariat's activities under this programme element have been supported by technical assistance from the Government of France, making available during the year the services of an associate expert.

Programme element: Technical assistance in national accounts, price and finance statistics

97. Under this programme element, the secretariat assisted the Government of Democratic Yemen in estimating the national accounts for the period 1968-1978. A draft entitled "national accounts estimates of Democratic Yemen from 1969 to 1978" is awaiting the clearance of the government authorities.

XIII. TRANSPORT, COMMUNICATIONS AND TOURISM

Subprogramme: Development of integrated transport

Programme element: Integrated transport master plan

98. Progress in implementing this element is contained in document E/ECWA/121 to be considered under item 7(b) of the provisional agenda.

Programme element: Transport harmonization and standardization including application of international and regional conventions

99. Work on this element was initiated by the secretariat with the identification of international conventions most relevant to the region and to which the majority of the countries had not yet acceded to these conventions include the conventions on road signs and signals; on road traffic; on the international transport of goods under cover of TIR carnets and on the carriage of goods by sea and were communicated to member States under the cover of a note verbale and questionnaire seeking their views on various aspects of their application. Based on the replies to the questionnaires the secretariat will prepared study on the subject to be completed during 1981.

Programme element: Survey of the needs for training in specific fields of transport

100. No work has been initiated by the secretariat during the period under review.

Programme element:

(a) Assistance in the development of national merchant marines and promotion of multinational shipping enterprises

(b) Use of waterways, coastal shipping, short-sea services and the future of the dhow

101. The programmed work pertaining to this element was initiated by the secretariat with the circulation of a questionnaire on the activities and performance of national merchant marines, and multinational shipping enterprises, coastal shipping and short-sea services and inland waterways and the fleets operating on water ways in the region. Based on the replies to questionnaires, the secretariat will prepare a study on the topic which will be completed during 1981.

Programme element:

- (a) Feeder roads and rural transportation
- (b) Road transportation aspects of desert development in the context of efforts to combat desertification

102 Preparatory work was initiated by the secretariat with the circulation to member States of a questionnaire seeking information and their views on rural and desert road development. On the basis of the replies, the secretariat will prepare a study, to be completed towards the end of 1981.

Programme element: Development and integration of railway networks in the ECWA region

103. No work has been initiated by the secretariat during the review period.

Subprogramme: Development of tourism

Programme element: Master plan for tourism in the northern ECWA region

104. With the engagement of an expert on tourism, the work programmed under this element was commenced only late in 1980.

XIV. TRANSNATIONAL CORPORATIONS

Subprogramme: Transnational corporations in the ECWA region

Programme element: Comprehensive information system

105. Information on laws, regulations and policies pertaining to transnational corporations in the ECWA member countries was compiled for the Centre on Transnational Corporations global study on the subject, which was to be completed in December 1980. Furthermore, Saudi Arabia, Democratic Yemen and Yemen were visited in connexion with the building up of the comprehensive information system. The main objectives of these missions were to assess the availability of information on these corporations and their foreign affiliates, to assess the type of information needed by Governments in their dealings with the corporations, to examine the possibilities of improving national information systems and to develop working relationship with the governmental units concerned. Services of an advisory nature on laws, regulations and government policy pertaining to these corporations operations were also rendered during these missions.

Programme element: Transnational corporations in the financial sector

106. Work is in progress on the study on the operations of transnational banks in Lebanon and Bahrain. The study will cover issues such as national banking regulations, the size and dispersion of local Arab and foreign banks, the concentration ratio in the banking industry, the distribution of financial assets, competition and co-operation among banks and the impact of these factors on growth, technology, skills and labour. The data and information collection phase of the study has been completed.

107. Other activities included the completion of two studies which were initiated in the 1978-1979 biennium:

- (a) The report entitled "Transnational corporations and mineral development in the ECWA region" focuses on three non-oil minerals, viz., sulphur, phosphates and copper. The study deals with a number of issues such as the degree of vertical integration in the mining industries, concentration ratios, barriers to entry, the technology of mining and recovery and its effect on competitiveness the role of transnational corporations in the production of mining commodities, ECWA countries policies with respect to these corporations participation in mining, and the prospects for mineral development in the ECWA region.

- (b) The report entitled "The operations of transnational corporations in shipping in the ECWA region" provides a brief survey of maritime fleets in ECWA member countries. It deals with the development of liner fleets in ECWA member countries and their participation in liner conferences and the principles of the UNCTAD Code of Conduct for Liner Conferences. It also examines the nature of competition in liquid and dry bulk shipping and the control exercised by transnational corporations and further analyses those corporations' prospects in the region. The study provides a summary of its findings and recommends measures at the national, regional and international levels with a view to enhancing the bargaining power of the ECWA member countries vis-à-vis the transnational corporations.

