

AN INTEGRATED APPROACH TO MANPOWER DEVELOPMENT IN THE ARAB WORLD

M. Naji *

It is clearly misleading to think of the Arab world as a homogeneous entity. The Arabs share a common language, history and traditions, and have similar institutions. Nevertheless, the Arab states are not at the same stage of development, nor do they all possess the same amount of social, economic and educational requirements for such development.

Some are rich in human capital, others are rich in monetary terms; some possess natural resources, others are relatively poor in such resources; some are relatively advanced in terms of educational opportunities, others lag behind. Some have started on the road toward the application of science and technology; others haven't yet been able to begin. Some have serious population problems; others have a dire need for labor and human resources.

The Arab world, as a whole, possesses impressive capabilities for growth and development that are perhaps unparalleled today. Nevertheless, if we take the Arab states individually, the diversity appears quite clearly, and the imbalance that exists between their potential for growth becomes striking. Regardless of these wide differences, many, if not all Arab states have started, in recent years, a massive effort toward development in the economic, social, and educational spheres.

The ultimate goal of manpower planning is not only to effectively utilize all aspects of human resources for development, but, more important, to attempt to reduce those fantastic barriers to employment that keep people in an expanding economy from sharing the benefits of that economy. If development does not produce more jobs and a fuller role in a society for the working man and woman, it can disrupt the world as we know it instead of building a new one.

From this introduction, we proceed to highlight significant issues of an integrated approach to manpower development in the Arab world.

* Professor of Sociology at Kuwait University.

1. The Nature of Manpower Planning

A. Perspectives on Manpower Planning.

Due to the interdisciplinary nature of manpower planning, the term actually means different things to different people. A manpower "policy" is used here to denote those governmental measurements that are designed to improve the operation of labor market mechanisms. This definition has the distinguishing characteristic of focusing attention on the labor market as the primary arena within which such policies are tested and implemented.

The term "labor market" is not totally inadequate in the context of the diverse economic and political philosophy of Arab governments. As far as most Arab societies still experience sizable surpluses and/or shortages in certain occupational and professional skills, as well as different forms of unemployment, some features of a market mechanism exist.

Therefore, it seems appropriate to distinguish between : 1) manpower policies designed to cope with problems present in the current transitional stage, 2) manpower policies geared to hasten the coming of the stage where market mechanisms will be operating, and 3) long term policies realizable only when social and economic planning achieve their goals. However, these should be seen not as alternatives, but as complimentary aspects of an integrated manpower policy. Purely manpower issues related to the labor market are significantly influenced by trends of a long range nature especially demographic, technological, economic, and educational.

What must be asserted is the need for a three dimensional strategy in manpower policy; the first is of a preventive nature to prevent further deterioration of the characteristics of human resources as these relate to their employment and employability, the second is of a curative nature directed toward devising policies to improve their utilization, and the third is a true challenge not only to the immediate concern with the labor market, but also to the ability to plan and effectively chart national goals in the area of population growth, transference of science and technology, as well as reorganization of the educational system.

In order to consider the different meanings of the **integrated** approach to manpower development, special emphasis will be given to the ones that serve as perspectives to this paper's discussion. The first

is to forget about the boundaries of the Arab states, and to perceive the Arab world as one unit of analysis. This clearly demonstrates the complimentary aspects of the Arab states in terms of human as well as other resources.

Several factors substantiate this assessment : 1) The oversupply of labor and certain skills in some Arab states and the shortages that exist in others. 2) The leadership role certain states occupy in providing educational and training experience and facilities. 3) The liberalization of mobility and legislation of citizenship and entry requirements. 4) The existing wage differentials, and more important, 5) The very sizable activity in construction, development projects, and investment that is currently being undertaken by oil producing Arab countries.

A second perspective pulls together in an integrated form significant variables affecting manpower. Greater emphasis is given to the multidisciplinary nature of the problem. A final perspective to manpower development takes as its point of departure neither the unit of analysis nor the variables as such, but focuses primarily on the level of analysis, i.e., the institution, the organization and/or the individual.

B. Manpower Institutions

Past experience in other countries indicates clearly that manpower programs have not achieved all their objectives.(1)

One of the basic problems lies in the organization of manpower programs. Most administrators are usually aware of the close relationship between policy development and operational realities; though putting the two together is the challenge they face.

A well coordinated, comprehensive program must be more than a glued-together collection of separate pieces. Each piece must be integrated with the other, so that the individual has available in an orderly sequence whatever he needs to move from unemployment and unemployability to a good job at a decent wage. It must provide a well-defined relationship to other social and economic development programs.

In many Arab states there are several ministries and agencies operating in the area of human development. The basic problem is to get them to work together. This is a major issue that must be resolved if there is to be effective implementation of manpower policy. In most cases the failure to tie manpower programs together is due not only to the usual bureau-

cratic secrecy and squabbling or to the lack of will to cooperate between departments, but is also due to the real complexities involved in carrying out a grand scale integration of several kinds of manpower programs. Therefore, inter-ministerial and interdepartmental review teams should be established with sufficient authority to command the range of resources necessary to translate approved plans into efficient operations, to balance needs with available resources, to determine priorities for allocation of resources, and to see that local efforts are coordinated to deal with the priority requirements. In brief, there should be an end to the competing and most often conflicting bureaucratic interests at every level of government, and to the haphazard layers of one planning and/or delivery system on top of another.

Manpower policy must be broad enough to allow tailoring to the needs of individuals and flexible enough to be geared to the specific problems of a community, region and/or state. While there is no feasible alternative to central directions and control of manpower planning, by the same token, there is no feasible alternative to decentralized development and execution of manpower plans.(2)

Manpower planning involves the use of existing institutions or the development of new ones to produce the people with the skills and knowledge necessary for the nation's goals and of the general strategy by which those goals are to be achieved.

Therefore, it requires careful and continuous projection of manpower resources and requirements into the future — based upon an economy that is envisaged but not actually in being. An integrated approach to manpower must be a ~~phased~~ operation, gradually moving from where a nation is to where it wants to be.

The systematic taking of timely action to balance manpower needs and resources requires not only a penetrating understanding of the relationships between human skills and national progress but the systematic application of technical tools that are developed in this field.

The experience of economic planning in many Arab countries has created more awareness of the significance of manpower factors to the attainment of national goals. Nevertheless, the Arab governments have to show a clear and irrevocable commitment to a greater investment in human resource development.

In summary, manpower planning requires : 1) An adequate appreciation at the top levels of government of the manpower problems created by rapid economic development and a sense of urgency in doing something about them. 2) An organizational structure within the government capable of dealing effectively with these problems on a continuing basis. 3) A comprehensive, integrated manpower program geared to both the short and long-term needs of national development. 4) Top policy level understanding and support for the program. 5) Vigorous effectuation with periodic review, evaluation, extension, and examination of the program.

The elements of a manpower program may be roughly divided into three categories — development of manpower information required for administrative decision and action, execution of manpower projects on which sufficient data and policy guidance exists to permit immediate action, and further study of manpower projects on which additional data or guidance are required.(3)

C. Manpower Data

The necessity for reliable and complete manpower statistics has made itself felt in the developing countries,(4) the Arab states are no exception, where difficulties have been experienced in the formulation of development programs in the absence of such statistics. It is unfortunate that this aspect of manpower programs (data collection, classification, and publication) has not received the proper attention it deserves. With a few exceptions, there is a complete absence of systematic data on which any sound planning should be based.(5) Where few sources of data exist, because of their relative scarcity and short history, such figures require careful scrutinization before they can be usefully subjected to any meaningful analysis.

The usefulness of manpower data for analytical purposes may be affected by factors such as concepts,(6) definitions, design, type of classifications, the amount of detail, and the specific factors of research or probing interest.

An issue of great urgency is the establishment of a data base for the Arab states, and the development of a permanent system for data collection. This task can proceed by: 1) surveying present data, 2) identifying agencies collecting such data, 3) describing data collection procedures, 4) delineating the conceptual framework appropriate for data

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Past experience in other countries indicates clearly that manpower programs have not achieved all their objectives.(1)

One of the basic problems lies in the organization of manpower programs. Most administrators are usually aware of the close relationship between policy development and operational realities; though putting the two together is the challenge they face.

A well coordinated, comprehensive program must be more than a glued-together collection of separate pieces. Each piece must be integrated with the other, so that the individual has available in an orderly sequence whatever he needs to move from unemployment and unemployability to a good job at a decent wage. It must provide a well-defined relationship to other social and economic development programs.

In many Arab states there are several ministries and agencies operating in the area of human development. The basic problem is to get them to work together. This is a major issue that must be resolved if there is to be effective implementation of manpower policy. In most cases the failure to tie manpower programs together is due not only to the usual bureau-

cratic secrecy and squabbling or to the lack of will to cooperate between departments, but is also due to the real complexities involved in carrying out a grand scale integration of several kinds of manpower programs. Therefore, inter-ministerial and interdepartmental review teams should be established with sufficient authority to command the range of resources necessary to translate approved plans into efficient operations, to balance needs with available resources, to determine priorities for allocation of resources, and to see that local efforts are coordinated to deal with the priority requirements. In brief, there should be an end to the competing and most often conflicting bureaucratic interests at every level of government, and to the haphazard layers of one planning and/or delivery system on top of another.

Manpower policy must be broad enough to allow tailoring to the needs of individuals and flexible enough to be geared to the specific problems of a community, region and/or state. While there is no feasible alternative to central directions and control of manpower planning, by the same token, there is no feasible alternative to decentralized development and execution of manpower plans.(2)

Manpower planning involves the use of existing institutions or the development of new ones to produce the people with the skills and knowledge necessary for the nation's goals and of the general strategy by which those goals are to be achieved.

Therefore, it requires careful and continuous projection of manpower resources and requirements into the future — based upon an economy that is envisaged but not actually in being. An integrated approach to manpower must be a **phased** operation, gradually moving from where a nation is to where it wants to be.

The systematic taking of timely action to balance manpower needs and resources requires not only a penetrating understanding of the relationships between human skills and national progress but the systematic application of technical tools that are developed in this field.

The experience of economic planning in many Arab countries has created more awareness of the significance of manpower factors to the attainment of national goals. Nevertheless, the Arab governments have to show a clear and irrevocable commitment to a greater investment in human resource development.

In summary, manpower planning requires : 1) An adequate appreciation at the top levels of government of the manpower problems created by rapid economic development and a sense of urgency in doing something about them. 2) An organizational structure within the government capable of dealing effectively with these problems on a continuing basis. 3) A comprehensive, integrated manpower program geared to both the short and long-term needs of national development. 4) Top policy level understanding and support for the program. 5) Vigorous effectuation with periodic review, evaluation, extension, and examination of the program.

The elements of a manpower program may be roughly divided into three categories — development of manpower information required for administrative decision and action, execution of manpower projects on which sufficient data and policy guidance exists to permit immediate action, and further study of manpower projects on which additional data or guidance are required.(3)

C. Manpower Data

The necessity for reliable and complete manpower statistics has made itself felt in the developing countries,(4) the Arab states are no exception, where difficulties have been experienced in the formulation of development programs in the absence of such statistics. It is unfortunate that this aspect of manpower programs (data collection, classification, and publication) has not received the proper attention it deserves. With a few exceptions, there is a complete absence of systematic data on which any sound planning should be based.(5) Where few sources of data exist, because of their relative scarcity and short history, such figures require careful scrutinization before they can be usefully subjected to any meaningful analysis.

The usefulness of manpower data for analytical purposes may be affected by factors such as concepts,(6) definitions, design, type of classifications, the amount of detail, and the specific factors of research or probing interest.

An issue of great urgency is the establishment of a data base for the Arab states, and the development of a permanent system for data collection. This task can proceed by: 1) surveying present data, 2) identifying agencies collecting such data, 3) describing data collection procedures, 4) delineating the conceptual framework appropriate for data

gathering, and 5) explaining the functional purpose of the information which presumably follows a certain philosophy and serve specific purposes; i.e., mapping, surveying, measurement, planning, monitoring, etc. Unfortunately, many of the Arab states collect most of their information on an ad hoc basis which limits its usefulness.

The methodology of manpower projection is still in the experimental stages in advanced industrial countries(7) and should be adapted for use with caution in the conditions prevailing in most Arab states. Any forecast is just as good as the assumptions built into it. Therefore, the importance of making valid and realistic assumptions is more than vital. Manpower policies with regard to expansion of employment opportunities, production and absorption of qualified manpower, surpluses and shortages of certain skills, etc., cannot be formulated or exaggerated assumptions or defective methodology.

Inflated social goals, and abrupt changes, alternations and/or cancellation of programs, which are characteristics of Arab planners, seem to be also responsible for many of the shortcomings in manpower forecasting.

II. Manpower Development : The Wider Circle

In countries experiencing rapid social and economic changes, the forces that affect human resources development are many. Some are direct such as those influencing education, training, and employment. Others are indirect, such as those governing the growth of population, the development of science, the choice of technology, etc.

In most Arab countries exclusive manpower programs that address the dynamics of the labor market are limited. More often they constitute ingredients in the schemes or related policies; economic and otherwise. The wider circle of human resources development is where policies on population, industrialization, science and technology, and capital investment interact. The net result of their complex form of interaction on human resource development may be more vital than exclusive programs that address the labor market structure. However, by the same token, an efficient labor market will greatly enhance the potential realization of the objectives of these policies.

A. Population policies

Unfortunately, the scope and objectives of population policies have been misunderstood in several Arab countries as designed exclusively to

limit population size and growth rate.(8) The concept of population policy is neither limited to birth regulation nor constitutes a distinct entity apart from national plans. The need for an effective population policy for certain Arab states is clear.(9) Others who overlook that need at the present time are urged to do so as early as possible since most demographic trends require long range solutions, and as experience has shown, it is more prudent to anticipate and plan for than to react to them in a crisis fashion.

Rapid and unplanned population growth can affect many spheres of man's life(10) More relevant to this discussion is their impact on the education and employment status of a society.

Although there is a growing interest in and enthusiasm for education in all countries of the region, and although much progress has been made, there is still a very high percentage of illiteracy among adults and an increasing number among the younger population. In all countries of the region, the demand for education absorbs an increasingly large portion of the national budget.(11) The problem is how to cope with this enormous and growing group, using the limited funds and/or facilities available.

Population growth is contributing to a rapid increase in the labor supply. The rapid growth of population coupled with the massive migration to urban areas, contribute to the difficulties of creating and expanding urban employment opportunities. The demographic situation in Egypt especially gives cause for concern that national efforts to achieve economic and social development are being seriously impeded by the rapid changes in the size, composition and distribution, and rate of growth of the population.(12)

The short-term manpower implications which emerge from the changing demographic situation are dominated by five major factors. 1) Recent and prospective increases in the number of younger workers indicate that attempts must be made to respond to the needs of young adult workers seeking a satisfactory economic future. 2) The continuing rise in the labor force participation rates of young women means that closer attention must be paid to devising adequate job training and childcare services. 3) Continued efforts must be made to better the condition of disadvantaged workers and at the same time increased stress

must be placed on utilizing more fully the capabilities of college-educated labor force entrants, whose numbers will be increasing rapidly during this decade. 4) An attempt must be made to bridge the information and placement gaps which prevent an optimal matching of available manpower with available jobs.

Urbanization problems, largely from excessive rural to urban migration, can't be dealt with in the absence of coordinated development that takes into account not only economic investment, but also, manpower resources and allocation. The advantages of creating jobs in agricultural and less developed regions of the states where there is underemployment needs are obvious. However, the limits which economic reality may impose on such projects can be clearly seen.(13) Although many Arab countries are confronted with the same urbanization problems, none have developed a sufficient system of information that allow sensible policy decisions.(14)

Our knowledge of the determinants of inter and intra Arab countries labor mobility is sketchy, especially when we consider the mobility of different levels of skill and training. Of the process of adjustment of rural manpower to industrial work and urban areas, very little is actually known. Systematic research reports have been few.(15) Furthermore, whatever programs organized to help manpower to adjust to industrial work tend to take place at the receiving end of the workers' journey. In order to insure better selection for industrial employment, imaginative steps should be taken to : 1) create reception centers in both rural and urban areas, 2) provide guidance in vocational training and placement, and 3) assist the transferees in the transitional period.(16)

B. Policies on Research and Development

UNESCO defines science policy as "The sum of legislative and executive measures taken to increase, organize, and use the national scientific and technological potential with the object of achieving the country's overall development aims and enhancing its position in the world."(17)

Specific recommendations for an effective science policy abound. However, each nation ought to develop its own policy according to its national goals and unique set of priorities. Whichever route may be chosen, "the policy-maker must make every decision in anxious aware-

ness that to have a well-developed twentieth century policy in the twenty-first century will be to have an underdeveloped policy."

Fundamental obstacles to the development of science and technology in the LDC's include :

(1) The weakness of scientific institutions, (2) The "weight" and orientation of advanced-country science and technology and its impact on the LDC's (3) The problems of access to world science and technology, and (4) The obstacles to the application of new technologies arising from underdevelopment itself.(8)

Institutions dealing with science and technology are relatively new to developing countries. These include : a) policy-making organizations, b) educational institutions, c) research and development organizations, and d) supporting scientific and technical service groups.(19)

The technological gap between developed and developing countries has been widening and will continue to move in this direction as long as the distribution of expenditures on research and development remain at the present level.(20) If we survey the situation in the Arab world, we see that in spite of their wealth, none of the Arab countries reached the minimum level set forth by the United Nations Committee on Science and Technology for Development which requires the allocation of 1 per cent of gross national products to research and development, and if the rate of present spending continues, it would probably never reach this level in the present century.

From the best available data on manpower engaged in research and development — classified as scientists, engineers, and technicians — even the most advanced Arab states show clearly the gap that exists between the Arab world and the advanced countries. This situation reflects in part the general shortage of scientists, engineers, and technicians. It also reflects the fact that many of these manpower groups are employed in teaching positions in universities or simply as bureaucrats in government agencies. One of the great obstacles in accepting and transferring science and technology to the Arab world is the present confusion that is apparent in the thinking prevailing today which gives more concern about achieving the end product of science and technology rather than encourage the development of the know-how.(21)

Investment in research and development requires a long gestation period until the results are commercially exploited. What this means is a

greater commitment and arrangement of the scientific resource, spirits, and reflex.

Such commitments can be transferred to specific policy steps along the following lines of action : 1) to establish quantitative targets for each Arab state in terms of science and technology development and for the Arab world as a whole, 2) to increase the expenditures on research and development, 3) to make fuller use of H. L. M. available for research and development, 4) to emphasize the importance of mutual operations between Arab states by establishing central institutes that oversee all science and technology applied to meet national needs 5) to stop and in due time to reverse the external brain drain of highly qualified manpower.(22) 6) to encourage closer contact between academic centers, research centers, professional associations, trade unions, and scientific societies within the Arab states, as well as with others outside the region, 7) to freely borrow from East and West and to adopt whatever is deemed suitable to the specific needs and priorities, 8) to make more use of the experience and assistance provided by international and national organizations, not only in the industrial, but also in the agricultural, medical, and other scientific areas.

The above steps constitute a possible program of action that can be undertaken by the Arab states in order to identify projects and programs which could produce applicable results that are likely to attract the interest and resources of responsible scientific and professional groups.

C. Industrialization Policy

Labor problems of industrialization in the Arab countries are many and result from a number of factors. Four interrelated but analytically distinguishable sets of problems can be outlined : 1) the industrial worker, 2) the human organization of industry, 3) the labor market, and 4) the level of technology.

The Arab world is a latecomer to industry, and industrial workers therefore retain many of the attributes of nonindustrial society. While it is extremely difficult to describe the extent of labor commitment in a society where everything seems to be undergoing rapid change,(23) it is nonetheless possible to outline the direction of the change. The lack of industrial tradition and industrial experience, and the little attention which managers give to the importance of labor commitment have had economic costs as well as long-run implications for industrialization

measures. In most Arab states, the shortage of skills hidden behind the labor surplus was sharply disclosed in recent years when the need arose for skilled labor and technicians in large numbers. This shortage derived not only from poor commitment to industrial work, but also from problems of motivation and incentive. For several reasons, financial incentives in the form of higher wages are not operating freely in some industries. The oversupply of labor tends to keep wage increases at a moderate rate. Second, wages paid to unskilled workers are characterized by such a wide range that an unskilled worker's wage in one industry may be higher than that of a semi-skilled worker in another.(24)

Still another reason why financial incentives have not operated successfully is that government intervention to grant minimum wages and put a ceiling on wage increases restrained managers in their use of higher pay to attract skilled workers.(25)

The shortage of skilled manpower or the surplus of persons whose skills do not correspond to the needs of the economy are not only due to technical factors such as expansion in the economy in some Arab countries, or insufficient rate of development in others, but mainly due to insufficient resources devoted to education and training.

In most of the Arab countries the social structure in its broader sense, as represented by the over-all institutional values and attitudes characterizing a society, is not sufficiently adapted to what might be called the "industrial order," and at best development is confused with construction in the Arab mind. In other words, the social structure seen either as an entity or in certain of its important groups, is not yet fully committed to a modern development.

Bureaucratization of the labor force, a characteristic of all industrialized societies, provides transitional problems in developing areas.(26) The difficulties of this transition in the Arab countries are not peculiar to the uneducated factory recruit who lacks the industrial tradition. Family and class favoritism, personal rather than organizational loyalties, and haphazard management practices interfere with an efficient administrative process.

The inadequacy of human organization in industry stems from the fact that Management is relatively isolated from the lower echelons of the salaried workers and laborers. Management's primary concern is with technical rather than organizational or human problems.(27) Their

interest lies in developing an obedient rather than efficient working force. They tend to increase the productivity of machines but not of workers.

The principal factor affecting the unskilled or, even the semi-skilled industrial worker, is the nature of the labor market. It is not so large and well differentiated as it is in established industrial countries.

Government intervention into the labor market has a number of objectives. Labor legislation concerning hiring, firing, training and insurance schemes, aims largely at improving qualitative aspects of manpower and labor force and at giving some structure to the market. Most of the efforts in this respect benefit an elite of industrial and urban workers.

Given the objective of improving the standard of living of the population, there are two distinct employment needs in developing countries. The first is to ensure an available labor force with the skill and characteristics needed to contribute to a rapid and substantial increase in national output. The other is to ensure, through full employment, an acceptable distribution of this increased output in the form of earned income. These needs are not necessarily incompatible but quite often they are conflicting, especially in developing countries which suffer from population pressure. The conflict stems from the fact that ensuring skilled labor may result in an efficient, well-organized, well-paid, but relatively small work force in the highly capitalized modern sector of the economy, while in the traditional sector of the economy, low earnings and a large volume of unemployment and underemployment continue. On the other hand, efforts to speed up the distribution of income through rapid employment could result in a break down in industrialization and efficiency, thereby reducing the rate of output.

The process of industrialization in Egypt for example, has failed, so far, to absorb all annual increments to the labor force, let alone to reduce the existing surplus in agriculture. Migration to towns and cities and expansions in other largely tertiary occupations is not necessarily a sign of change in the productive structure of the labor force, at least not to the extent that the data might suggest.(28) Modern technology and a planned economy might be able to build an industrial structure which in a relatively short period of time could be of a great asset to the country's economic growth, yet might fail completely to solve the unemployment problems.

Industrialization in itself is less likely to provide a solution to the problem of general employment. However, a rise in national income which might result from a successful expansion of industry could increase employment in secondary and tertiary activities, but there is no way to estimate such a potential rise in advance.

D. The Educational System and the Production of Highly Qualified Manpower

A nation's system of education can be managed according to two basic principles : 1) the manpower principle, the objective of which is to produce the right number of persons for various occupations and professions, and 2) the free choice principle, the objective of which is to supply education and response to the choices of students.(29) In general, the socialist countries and many of the developing countries stress the manpower principle. The United States and some European countries stress the free choice principle, and there are many who fall in between these two extremes.

The manpower principle of managing education certainly has some appeal to the Arab countries. Obviously a degree of balance in distribution of people among occupations and professions is desirable. Yet a lot of problems, in fact, some misconceptions as well, are associated with it. Among the most important of these are the following assumptions : 1) The economy requires a more or less fixed inventory of occupational skills at each stage in its evolution. 2) The character of the economy and its skill requirements can be predicted precisely for periods long enough to be pertinent to educational planning. 3) The basic purpose of education is to prepare for quite specific jobs, and it is somehow wrong or wasteful to provide an education that will not be used directly in a vocation.

The manpower approach quite clearly puts the burden of adjustment on the educational system. Academic institutions are considered agents of social change, however, these are conservative when it comes to accepting changes in their organizational curriculum and/or degree offerings.

A second issue of relevance to the role of the educational system in manpower development is the clearly recognized dichotomy between "education" and "training." The former is usually taken to describe the first formal round of learning and the latter, to describe the subsequent

experiences with learning usually proposed as more vocational in nature.

As far as I can ascertain, there is a new concern in most Arab countries with finding ways and means to make the educational system more responsive. This is certainly a proper concern, however, and the same attention should be given to considering ways and means to make the labor market equally responsive.

A few words concerning the steps as well as the difficulties usually encountered in such undertakings may be in order :

1. **The Educational Side** : the steps involved include the following :
 - a. Projections of occupational need.
 - b. Precise identification of the qualifications and training requirement of the projected occupations.
 - c. Means of transmitting these projections to institutes of education at all levels.
 - d. Adaptation of the educational system.

a.) Projections of Occupational Needs

A phenomenal interest appears among policy makers and labor economists as well in both the art and science of manpower projections.(30) But accompanying this interest, and indeed stimulated by it, is a growing dissatisfaction with projections. The prevailing view is that such endeavours should continue on the assumption that 1) gathering more and better data can improve the quality of projections and, 2) applying new and quite different techniques and approaches would yield more accurate results. The strong defense for projections is that they are better than sheer guesses.

Manpower projections are assumed to have a wide variety of purposes. They are supposed to assist in individual career choice and the development of educational and training programs. They also claim to aid in attaining the objectives of full employment and the elimination of labor bottlenecks. In actual situations, it is not always clear how projections are to serve these purposes. How should individuals, employers, educators, and manpower planners respond to the information contained in the projections ?

In most cases, and especially in the Arab countries, manpower projections or any other form of projections are tight secrets, mostly off

limits to any interested party. Part of this secrecy stems, I believe, from the fact that in most cases, the group responsible for the projections is not quite sure of their data and the methodology they use, and tend therefore to keep them out of wider circulation. In part, it may merely be due to the exercise of power that is normally associated with the acquisition of knowledge.

b.) Identification of Training Requirements

In industrialized countries, it is generally acknowledged that precise identification of needed occupations can be foreseen only up to about three to five years ahead; the interval between scientific and technical discoveries and their application.(31) In developing countries, the time horizon may be in principle somewhat extended because research and development activities are still in the formative stage.

More evident are the difficulties in identifying the training component for an occupational structure that is suitable for an economy that is envisioned over 10 or 15 years ahead.

Even in advanced countries, there are no easy ways of relating manpower needs to training requirements. In determining the criteria on which recruitment will be based, some employers lay down ideal standards which cannot be met, others settle for what they believe, rightly or wrongly, the market can supply.

In developing countries, the vacancies offered, whether or not they are filled, provide no useful guidance to the country's requirements in regards to qualified personnel.

In many cases, although substitution takes place, it is difficult to determine its influence. One problem involved in occupational classification is the reluctance to face up to the difficulties of a scientific "Job Analysis" (a list of duties involved in a job). Job analysis is the first step toward "job specifications" (a list of abilities required of the person who is to perform the job successfully), and "job evaluation.(32) (The process of determining the worth of a job in relation to another without regard to personalities).

Needless to say, the conversion of occupation into education can be only an inspired piece of guesswork without job analysis and job specifications, neither of which have been developed in this region.

c. Means of Transmitting Needs to the Educational System

There are three major ways in which the occupational requirements of the training needs of the economy might be communicated to the educational system : 1) administrative decisions; 2) student choices; and 3) indirect influences, such as scholarship programs.(33)

If government or educational decision-makers are concerned with manpower shortages, they may decide to expand or contract certain types of training by changing the number of places. The time from recognition of the need to the commencement of measures designed to meet the need may be a decade or more.

Decisions to re-allocate places and expenditure from one kind of training to another at the institutional level may take place more quickly, but it is usually difficult to justify these purely as some response to student choices. Institutional arrangements which effectively prohibit free student choice include among others, extensive prerequisites as well as specialized secondary education. In most Arab states, student choices are not necessarily related to national needs for trained manpower. Students are often not informed of what various careers offer and are more influenced by parents and peers.

Since most universities in the Arab region are state-owned and operated institutes, administrative decisions are the rule, student choice is in principle granted but greatly limited by the range of grades of the high school diploma. Scholarship programs are beginning to make some headway, especially in the form of missions abroad.

d.) Responsiveness of the Educational System

Educational institutions respond to a change in training needs by expanding training in shortage occupations and contracting training in surplus occupations, or by doing one or neither of these things. Speed of response will naturally be related to the degree of administrative support and pressure, as well as the degree of certainty attached to the future needs for occupations. Other factors that may also affect the degree of response include faculty resources, student interest, and above all, their ability for institutional changes.

In conclusion, within the general framework of manpower management of education, each Arab state must, of course, find its own solutions and equilibrium in relation to the stage of its development. Many of the

Arab states will be obliged to impose direct major controls, including quotas for subjects and contractual obligations of work in particular fields. It is needless to mention the dominant role of Egypt's educational institutions in providing high level manpower training and professional educators to other Arab countries. The complimentary aspects of capacities for manpower training and needs of specific Arab countries and the region as a whole needs careful examination.

2. The Labor Market

Historically, the labor market has not been a continuing source of concern for education. This has now changed, and the labor market is now a serious concern for education at all levels and will remain so(34)

For example, absorption of college graduates takes place in one of the following types of employment; 1) Replacement needs for persons retiring or otherwise withdrawing from the labor force. 2) Expansion of employment opportunities. 3) Educational upgrading of positions that have not normally utilized college-educated persons in the past.

Although it is impossible to assess the relative expansion in each of the above situations on a priori basis, a substantial proportion, especially among graduates of the social sciences and humanities, are absorbed in jobs that have not normally been utilized by college educated persons in the past.

Some specific adjustments in the labor market will be made if the absorption side is to adapt to the changing circumstances. These adjustments are expected to be as follows : 1) The government will realize the significance of dealing with the problem of highly qualified manpower, both in relation to the totality of highly-qualified manpower in all fields and in relation to technical supporting manpower. 2) Government, industry, and employment agencies will share vital responsibility to define more clearly than hitherto the nature (in relation to particular utilization) of each country's educational capacities. It was, and it will be unwise and unfair to present the problem as a criticism of the educational system or as its sole responsibility. The problem involves three-way contact between policy-makers, educationalists, and employers. 3) Even if there are limitations to statistical data, there is a serious need for projections that are closer to an objective and detailed occupational analysis which could be correlated with educational attainment and effectiveness in employment. 4) Basic concepts of employment policy need more

clarification. There are even such important issues as what constitutes or identifies a shortage, and how to classify categories of occupations objectively so as to avoid artificial shortages, and to take account of desirable amounts of substitutions between disciplines and levels of training. 5)

There will be a questioning of the educational prerequisites for various occupations in real-life situations. There is an enormous amount of work still to be done in giving this factor the parameters needed to make it a viable force in any kind of bridge between the educational system as producer and employment institutions as users at different levels of manpower. 6)

The matching and mobility dimension of an active manpower policy should include not only such mechanisms as having the right person in the right place at the right time for the right job, but also those activities which redesign and alter the job structure itself to fit the available supply of the different categories of manpower.(35) 7)

Employment policy must take into account training policy, but training targets usually are beyond the effective range of forecasts of manpower requirements conducted for the purposes of employment policy. Not only does this raise problems of inter-agency co-ordination, and cooperation, but perhaps to a quite even extent the question of available information. 8) There is a need for national and inter-state Arab machinery to oversee the utilization of highly qualified manpower. Providing them with career training and continuing education requires cooperation between professional organizations, higher education, and research centers and should be strengthened in view of the significance of this group for economic development.

3. The Role of Public Policy :

Public policy has had and will have a major impact on the labor market situation for graduates of all levels of educational and institutions as it is influenced by the conventional economic variables of investment, sectoral planning, and employment policy. The solution that is often resorted to by many Arab governments for the surpluses of college graduates in the humanities, the social sciences, arts, and religion is absorbing them in the work force by governmental decrees. Such practices need re-examination. Unplanned mass employment of college graduates, most often result in much of the miss-match between education and occupation, which in turn has adverse effects on productivity. The flow of funds in industrial development, in the support for research and development, as well as in education at all levels and in social services of all

kinds, hopefully will lead toward greater expansion in university level education and better utilization of the available stock of scientists and engineers. Constructive action on the part of policymakers can add up to a policy of selective but effective involvement in this period of social and economic development, rather than total public responsibility and control.(36) This can be done by: 1) Opening new and attractive channels into work and life than college attendance alone — vocational training, public service programs, etc., 2) Reviewing the hiring policies, employers (public and private) may genuinely benefit from the employment of college graduates; can benefit from training on the job, since they tend to be more flexible. 3) Engaging in job redesign to make work more interesting and less routine.4) Providing job “options” as in hours of work, in alternative retirement plans, sabbaticals, and in other ways. 5) Redesigning salary and pay schedules to encourage other forms of training for vocational and semi-professional jobs. 6) Considering not only certificates but also productivity and performance. 7) Opening mobility channels and engaging the preamiability of the rigid job structure by loosening its truncated stratum.

By coordinating efforts with other educational councils and with planning agencies, professional societies and associations can assist by :

1) collecting better labor market information related to their profession, 2) making careful labor market studies of their own, 3) giving more attention to labor market prospects in planning and in suggesting new specializations and major new endeavors, 4) developing more effective career ladder opportunities such as those needed in industry as well as in the health service professions, and 5) expanding their membership, educational and nontraditional training programs.

At this stage of substantial social and economic changes in the Arab world, young persons have the most at stake. When given the necessary information and reasonable options, at least those at the college level are adept at seeking out the better opportunities for themselves. They can assist effective adjustments by :

1) Deciding carefully whether they really wish to go to college or not and by looking at other alternative channels as well as at college. 2) Selecting occupational specializations carefully, including use of counseling services. 3) Developing realistic expectations about jobs. On the average, the jobs of college graduates do “pay off”. They also tend to be

more "satisfying," aside from income. But many college students must be reconciled to not getting the job of their first choice. 4) Parents can assist by not pressing their children to attend college against their will.

The future labor market situation for college graduates will have repercussions, some of which can be only dimly seen. Certainly there will be some that cannot now be seen at all. Some likely consequences, as they now appear, are the following : Many adjustments, as noted above, will need to be made by governments and many individuals and groups. Some will be both difficult and costly. Even after adjustments are made, some college graduates will be disappointed by jobs that fall below their expectations. Frustration may extend to other groups as well : to young persons without college experience who are pushed down by the pressure of college graduates in the labor market — even pushed into unemployment — and to older persons who are passed over by younger and more educated persons. These strains on society will be increased. Faced by many educated applicants, the labor market may require for certain jobs more artificial certification rather than less. Furthermore, jobs will be re-designed in the face of the pressures of the more highly educated labor force. Labor force participation rates will rise as the labor force is more highly educated; geographic and occupational mobility will increase. Equality of opportunity to secure the better jobs will increase for the children of lower-income families, and for women since higher education has been the most effective integrating channels for these socioeconomic groups.

In the face of the new labor market situation, Arab governments are more likely to favor heavy subsidies to higher education than it did when high-level manpower was scarce.

The potential consequences are many — some are negative and some are positive. On the negative side we see particularly more social tension as some college-educated persons fail to find jobs for which they are academically qualified, as pressures accumulate for the re-design of jobs and work environments and as wage and salary differentials increase and otherwise readjust. On the positive side we foresee the likelihood of greater productive capacity of the work force, as well as meeting the specific demand for certain training, as well as eliminating or reducing surpluses in others : also the development of more scientific attitudes among citizens and of greater human capacity to solve the many

problems of the new industrial order in the Arab world. It is my belief that the positive potentialities outweigh the negative, provided that the proper adjustments to the new situation are made.

III. Toward an Integrated Approach to Manpower Planning

It seems clear from the information available on Arab countries that their experiences differ considerably and are not always comparable. It is also clear, however, that the full range of manpower planning activities within the framework of economic planning is nowhere undertaken. This may be due to the fact that no model for manpower planning has yet been conceived in Arab countries. As understood here, a "model" means a body of concepts which should be agreed upon both in their definitions and in their inter-relations, and to which would correspond clearly-identified functions which would have to be performed in any institutional or economic set-up.

The process of manpower planning, already complex, is made even more difficult because of further distinctions which have to be made at all stages of such planning. First, manpower planning should cover both the short-term and the long-term, which call for different types of action. While it is essential to start planning for the long-run, especially in matters of advance education and training, immediate action has to be taken to improve a given situation. The second difficulty lies in the fact that manpower planning is concerned with two kinds of inter-related problems, employment creation and skill formation, which ask for two rather different kinds of policies. Finally, manpower planning inadvertently constitutes an important aspect of other policy matters such as those on population growth, the development of science and technology, and investment in industry, etc.

In these circumstances, it is no wonder that there is not yet a very coherent and integrated approach to manpower planning in most of the countries concerned.

A. Integration of Manpower Planning with Economic and Social Policy:

For the region as a whole, it may be said that while the importance of economic planning has increasingly been recognized and fairly detailed work has already been done, the human resources dimension of eco-

economic development policies and programmes is still receiving less attention than physical and financial aspects.

The first prerequisite would therefore appear to be the practical recognition by high level policymakers, government officials, and organized groups of the importance of human resources for economic and social development. Once this recognition has been obtained — reflected by effective decisions, e.g., in terms of earmarking the necessary funds, establishing funds, establishing adequate institutions, enlisting effective support and co-operation of all concerned — many of the obstacles to manpower planning would more easily be removed.

B. Economic Planning : Objectives and Targets

Nearly all economic plans propose an over-all target for job creation at least equal to projected labor force growth and envisaging in some instances also, a reduction of existing unemployment and underemployment.(37)

Manpower specialists are usually skeptical that these overall and sectoral target-setting operations are very satisfactory in the present circumstances. The difficulties result from : 1 The lack of reasonably accurate information on the manpower situation which limits the value of target-setting. 2) Employment targets are related to over-all and sectoral output forecasts which have not always been made very carefully. 3) They are very seldom based on considerations of alternative methods of production, i.e., labor intensive and capital intensive techniques. 4) They give no adequate indications as to levels of education and training required, and 5) They do not take into account existing and probable imbalances affecting the manpower pattern so established.

In almost all development plans quantitative employment targets are normally done in a general way, with setting qualitative targets, in terms of specific educational and training plans and programs, and this leaves much to be desired. Most of the plans for skill formation are not always conceived or integrated within the framework of coherent manpower and economic planning. In fact, many of them are concerned mainly with immediate or short-term requirements only.

A major difficulty with target setting in the educational field relates to the necessity of forecasting high-level requirements beyond the planning period. In most cases, the current plans or programs do not adequately

reflect in their objectives 'long-term educational requirements.

Target setting is a difficult operation which calls for a considerable amount of information as well as for an ability to reach clear and definite policy decisions binding upon a wide range of public authorities. This critical phase of manpower planning could be greatly improved in all countries of the region, though we should bear in mind that they are subject of constant revision.

Almost all Arab countries are intensively engaged in promoting actively their national development plans, therefore, their respective national and regional migration policies deserve attention.

Equally important is to investigate future labor market imbalances, and different kinds of pressures (demographic, economic, and other) which might lead to unwanted increased migratory movements. Thus it seems imperative to explore : 1) What complementarities the Arab countries offer to each other in terms of : capital, manpower, know-how, and technology, as well as natural resources and raw materials. 2) The different selectivity mechanisms operating in manpower movements between Arab states. 3) Governmental policies and institutional devices applied to planned migration vs. non-assisted, illegal migration between the different states in the region. 4) The ability to assess regional mobility, to forgo national migration policies, and to implement the necessary measures for the social welfare of newly transplanted workers.(38)

C. Developing Instruments of Manpower and Employment Policy

The precise identification of available policy instruments depends on sound diagnosis of the manpower situation. Their effectiveness depends on fixing realistic goals and targets for manpower utilization and development.

A distinction should be made between instruments designed to enhance the skill formation and the rather different types for general expansion of employment. Those needed for skill formation can be designed to increase the capacity — quantitative and qualitative — of facilities for general educational and vocational training, and utilize effectively those facilities and of the skilled manpower they provide.

Other groups of instruments needed are those that have a bearing on incentives, and the ones that have a bearing on the organization of the

labor market. The former may be distinguished again as incentives encouraging the use of training facilities (i.e., long-term problems) and incentives for people to move to occupations where they are most needed once they have acquired their skills (i.e., a short-term problem). While wage and salary structures are important incentives, social-economic and work environment that influence motivation to produce are equally important.

In the organization of the labor market, employment services play a major part in channelling various kinds of manpower toward the occupations and regions where they are needed; instruments of active manpower policy can also help to increase geographical and occupational labor mobility.

While a number of these instruments necessary for skill formation and manpower deployment are being used, they are seldom integrated within an overall framework of manpower planning. There are also instances where uncoordinated decisions concerning the use of these instruments have, in fact, aggravated and not solved manpower problems, for example, by making it possible for high level skilled workers to go to a particular industry and/or region, thereby creating shortages of these workers in key activities.

Strictly speaking, instruments influencing the expansion of employment are in the field of labor policy(39) (for example, fixing the wage level, particularly of unskilled labor, the promotion of shift work, and social legislations that may hamper or promote employment, depending on whether it makes recruitment of labor attractive and simple, or not). But the most important policy instruments here are in the area of overall economic policy — such as influencing income distribution, level of investment and its allocation among different industries, regions, and perhaps in some cases, a choice of technology, as well as the development of science.

In general, it would seem that no Arab country presents exceptions to what have been found major weaknesses of planning for economic and social development generally :

Planning officials have little authority to influence instruments of economic policy and administrative measures formulated elsewhere.

Plan format is divorced in practice, if not in theory from plan

implementation. Planners pay little attention in their plans to the choice of means to be employed to achieve plan targets. Most plans provide detailed information only about what is to be achieved, but not about how to go about and who should be responsible for carrying out the required tasks.

The organic link between the targets in a plan, and the policy and other measures required to obtain them is a concept which many planners and political authorities find difficult to grasp. Many planners consider that their job is finished when they have prepared a plan and that it is up to others to work out the detailed policies and measures needed to implement the plan. There is frequently a lack of understanding in developing countries that investment is not enough to ensure growth; that spending the money you have to the best effect is frequently more important than getting more money to spend.(40)

EPILOGUE

On a subject that is as vast and complex as an integrated approach to manpower development, obviously there is no claim for closure. First, I viewed manpower planning in a wider context, i.e., as an essential element in many related perspectives. In the present stage of social and economic expansion in the Arab states, planning for manpower development can proceed ahead faster when policymakers are able to spell out the manpower component of major planning dimensions. I discussed what is now described as a primary arena for manpower development, i.e., education, training, and employment.

I would conclude with a few observations of a general nature : 1) In the Arab states, planners need not apply Eastern or Western models blindly, but by the same token they need not be reluctant to borrow what they feel would work efficiently. 2) In human resource development, the individual constitutes the proper focal point and all activities should center around him. Unless the activities of service organizations filter down to reach the individual, experience had shown them to be a complete failure. Therefore, program planners should seek neither to build an elaborate structure nor allow organizations to outlive their utility and purpose.

Finally, science defines the quality of life with reference to man, and history judges nations by the way they order their priorities. It is high time for the Arab world to work toward the best of these two judgments.

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المدخل المتكامل لتنمية الطاقة البشرية بالعالم العربي

✽ د. مصطفى ناجي

يمتلك العالم العربي من مكونات التنمية والنمو التي تجعل من المنطقة محط انظار العالمين الغربي والشرقي وكذا دول العالم النامي ، الا انه نظرا للتباين الشديد بين دول المنطقة في امتلاك معطيات التنمية وكذا في قدراتها على الاستفادة مما هو موجود فقد برزت بوضوح اهمية التكامل بين بلدان المنطقة في المعطيات الطبيعية والبشرية والاقتصادية .

انطلاقا من أهمية العامل البشري في التنمية قام المؤلف بتحديد :

- (١) المفهوم الاجمالي لتنمية الموارد البشرية .
- (٢) السياسات المتحكمة في استراتيجية التنمية في هذا القطاع والمتعلقة بكل من :
 - (أ) النمو السكاني ، التنمية الصناعية واستعمالات العلم والتكنولوجيا (الدائرة الاوسع) .
 - (ب) نظام التعليم ، طبيعة سوق العمل والسياسة الاقتصادية (الدائرة المباشرة) .
- (٣) مكونات النموذج المتكامل لتخطيط الطاقة البشرية آخذا في الاعتبار أن تنمية رأس المال البشري يجب أن يحددها اطار متميز عنه ولكنه في نفس الوقت متمم للتخطيط الاقتصادي في ضوء التلازم النظري والعملية للتنمية بأبعادها المختلفة .