



# Knowledge Society, the Society of Tomorrow



mation and Communication Technology in Qatar on 29-31 March 2008 at the Four Seasons Hotel, Doha, Qatar.

AlDafa asserted that knowledge has always played a role in the establishment and development of civilizations, therefore the “knowledge role in the rise of civilizations” is as old as the history of mankind, and is not a new concept that has been discovered in recent time. He added that developing countries need an engine for development, based on capacity building in science, technology and innovation, so they could catch up with the times. In this context, UN-ESCWA has taken several initiatives such as proposing to establish a Technology Centre for Development that seeks to assist member countries, as well as public and private organizations to attain technological parity with other nations and regions. It also seeks to implement the project on knowledge networks through Information and Communications Technology (ICT) access points for disadvantaged communities.

Participants in the meeting included almost 350 prominent personalities from international institutions and organizations, ministries of communication and education, ICT, development and educational companies, such as the Inter-

national Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the US Congress Library, the World Bank, and Microsoft. In convening the meeting, UNESCO sought to bring together all stakeholders involved in the establishment of knowledge parks in order to create favorable conditions for major regional partnerships. ■

UN-ESCWA Executive Secretary, Bader Omar AlDafa, pointed to the efforts the Commission is exerting to develop knowledge infrastructure in member countries, namely conflict-ridden ones, to catch up with technological development. AlDafa stressed the need for an ever-evolving infrastructure, known as the Science, Technology, and Innovation (STI) system, which constitutes a development engine and drives forth, towards the knowledge-based future. He defined the components of such an infrastructure, saying it consists of laboratories, libraries, communication facili-

ties, associations, organizations, educational and training institutions, financial services as intermediaries and related facilities that facilitate the acquisition, application and development of technology.

These points were included in the inaugural address AlDafa gave at the International Conference and Exhibition on “Knowledge Parks”, co-organized by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development and the Supreme Council of Infor-

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**UN-ESCWA suggested at the 35th Conference of the Arab Labor Organization held in Egypt in March 2008, the setting up of a fund to address Arab youth issues, such as encouraging scientific research in fields pertaining to raising productive qualifications, future job market needs and technical skills development.**

# Continuous Support for Iraq



## Human Resource Management

As part of its joint program with the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) – Iraq on Capacity Building and Institutional Strengthening of Ministry of Municipalities and Public Works (MMPW), UN-ESCWA organized a workshop on Human Resource Management (HRM) from 8 till 13 March 2008 in Amman, Jordan.

The objective of the workshop, which joined 21 human resource officers from the MMPW and from the National Center for Consultancy and Management Development (NCCMD), was to introduce public sector officials involved in human resource management to the new trends and best practices in the field.

The training revolved around several axes, the most prominent being: introducing new trends in HRM; shedding light on current HRM challenges faced by the public administration in Iraq; promoting participants' skills in HRM, with an emphasis on appointment, training, performance assessment, and salary, benefit and incentive system.

This training will contribute in assisting participants to lead induce change among their respective work environments through the utilization of modern techniques and tools.



## Decentralization of Service Delivery

On a parallel line, UN-ESCWA organized a training of trainers workshop on "Decentralization of Service Delivery" from 8 till 13 March 2008 in Amman, Jordan attended by 22 representatives of the MMPW and the NCCMD.

The training focused on the following axes: introduce senior-learning concepts as well as training methods, and development; build participants' capacity in training, and develop their ability to design and present training modules, with an emphasis on delivering municipal decentralized municipal service; give participants the adequate tools and techniques to assess training activities and draft reports on them. ■



## Gender Issues

In the context of the same program UN-ESCWA also organized a workshop on Techniques to effective leadership and gender mainstreaming in Municipal Service Delivery in Iraq from 15-19 March 2008 in Amman.

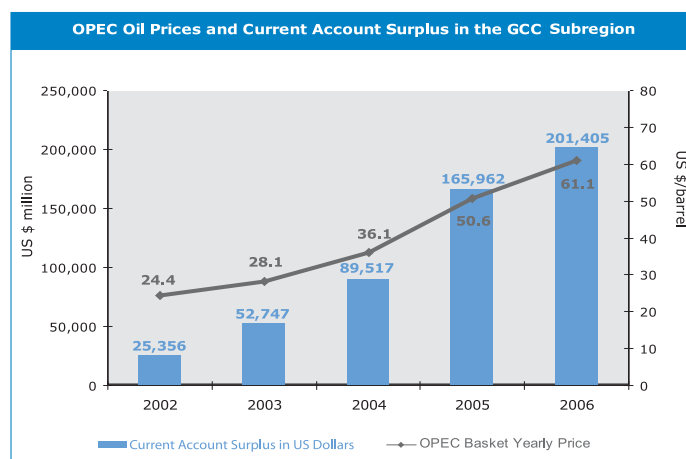
The workshop aimed at improving the awareness and concepts concerning this subject; in addition

to presenting its theoretical sides and applying them to the current situation in municipal service delivery in Iraq; and improving the participants' leadership skills.

Thirteen elected local council members from the different governorates were trained on: the concept of leadership, the role of the leader and his influence over the group; the team's dynamism and its relation to the style of leadership; leadership styles and the adequacy of leadership style with the circumstances; the role of networking and networking-establishment styles; gender concepts, equality, work distribution and mainstreaming in the municipal sector; gender integration; challenges, hurdles, goals, work basics, analyzing the 3R method "Representation, Resources, Realities"; educational, and analytical mainstreaming tools; and participation and discussion tools.

## Facts and Figures

As a result of booming oil revenues, GCC countries have been running significantly high fiscal and current account surpluses over the past few years. According to national data, the combined current account surplus of the six GCC countries increased from \$25.4 billion in 2002 (7.2 per cent of total GDP) to an estimated \$201.4 billion in 2006 (42.8 per cent of GDP). In 2008, growth in import spending is expected to outpace export revenue growth, thereby resulting in a further modest decline of the total current account surplus of the GCC subregion.



**Sources:** Estimates And Forecasts For GDP Growth In The ESCWA Region, UN-ESCWA, based on data by the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and national statistical sources.

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