

Government of the Syrian Arab Republic

Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour
&

United Nations Development Programme

Project title:

**Establishment of a Database for a Comprehensive Labour and
Employment Policy in Syria
SYR/07/011**

Brief Description

The project aims at supporting the ongoing efforts to reform the Employment Policy in Syria and developing human resources in order to achieve MDG's by combating poverty. More importantly, this project helps implementing the Five-Year Plan, in which great emphasis is put on creating more work opportunities, decreasing the rate of unemployment and adopting new policies and programmes that promote the social safety nets.

Numerous problems facing the Syrian government in the national development process; such as high unemployment, high underemployment and low labour productivity and wage levels. However, the Syrian government as well as the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour (MOSAL) are aware of the importance of having a rational and comprehensive labour and employment policy that could deal effectively with the stated problems.

Hence, the project aims at developing a sufficiently extensive and robust database, within MOSAL, that permits the formulation of a rational and comprehensive labour force policy to reduce unemployment and increase labour productivity. This database will be based on three surveys:

- 1- the household-based labour force sample survey, which will give a picture of employment and underemployment situation in the country and update the information outlined in the 1993 labour force survey.
- 2- the national institution-based survey of the labour force, which will give information on the demand side of the labour market.
- 3- the study of the prospective output of the educational and training system in the country, which will give information on the supply side of the labour market.

The labour policy that will be based on this database will eventually deal with the following:

1. the causes of frictional unemployment, particularly through improving the efficiency of the employment market,
2. the causes of technical unemployment, particularly through improved matching of the educational output with the demand of the labour market,
3. the causes of low productivity and the need for improved training and re-training of the workforce and
4. Means for the creation of work opportunities to reduce unemployment and underemployment, in both the formal and informal sectors, through encouragement of, and assistance to, infinitely small, small and medium size businesses, and through improving the labour content of investments in general.

COVER PAGE

Country: **Syrian Arab Republic**

UNDAF Outcome(s)/Indicator(s):

#1: A socio-economic environment that enables sustainable growth, employment equity and protection of vulnerable groups in place.

Expected Outcome(s)/Indicator (s):

A.3 Improving employment environment and opportunities for skill-enhancement for the under- and unemployed, especially women and youth.

Expected Output(s)/Indicator(s):

A.3.2 Skills enhanced and labour productivity upgraded, through a Comprehensive labour and Employment Policy in Syria.

Implementing partner:

Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour

Responsible Parties:

UNDP

Programme Period: 2007-2011
Programme Component: Poverty Eradication
Project Title: Establishment of a Database for a Comprehensive Labour and Employment Policy in Syria
Project ID: SYR/07/011
Project Duration: 2 years
Management Arrangement: NEX

Budget:	<u>\$ 263,926</u>
GMS:	<u>\$ 9,524</u>
Total Budget:	<u>\$ 273,450</u>
Allocated resources:	
• Government	<u>\$ 200,000</u>
• UNDP (TRAC)	<u>\$70,000*1</u>
• UNDP (DSS)	<u>\$3,450 *2</u>

Agreed by: H.E. Dr. Tayssir Al-Raddawi

Head of State Planning Commission
On behalf of the Syrian Government

Date: _____

Agreed by: H.E. Dr. Diala Haj Aref

Minister of Social Affairs and Labour
On behalf of the Implementing Partner

Date: _____

Agreed by: Ms. Fumiko Fukuoka

UNDP Resident Representative, a.i.

Date: _____

1 A payment of USD 10,280 was paid to the Senior International Consultant against drafting the Project Document in 2006.
2 A payment of USD 3,450 was paid to the Senior International Consultant against drafting the Project Document in 2006.

Schedule of Payment

First installment:

USD 100,000

June 2007

The payment will be made by the State Planning Commission to UNDP Account.

Second installment:

USD 100,000

February 2008

The payment will be made by the State Planning Commission to UNDP Account.

Total Amount: USD 200,000

F&A: 9,524

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3- TOR for National Experts

4- TOR Steering Committee

Establishment of a Database for a Comprehensive Labour and Employment Policy in Syria

PART I: Situation Analysis

I. Situation analysis

A number of problems face the Syrian Government in general, and the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour in particular, in the area of labour and employment, most important among which, for the present project at least, are: 1. High unemployment, 2. High underemployment and, 3. low labour productivity and wage levels.

1. Unemployment. According to the survey undertaken by the Agency for Combating Unemployment (ACU) in 2003², the level of unemployment at that time, according to the international definition³, was 11.6 per cent. In some Mohafazats (Daraa, Soueida, Hassake and Kuneitra), it exceeded 20 per cent. This is in line with later findings (2005) by the Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS).⁴ and is used in the Plan for the year 2004.⁵ A number of characteristics of unemployment make the tackling of the problem even more urgent. For example, ACU survey found that the unemployment rate among women (22 per cent) is almost three times as high as among men (8.2 per cent)⁶. Furthermore, youth who are first entrants into the labour force have much higher unemployment rate than the rest. Indicative of this, is the fact that unemployment rate among persons 20-25 years of age reached close to 24 per cent⁷, that is, more than double the overall figure. Among persons with low levels of education (illiterate, primary and intermediate), unemployment reached the unprecedented level of 72 per cent⁸ which, according to the Plan, shows the close relationship between poverty and unemployment⁹. Finally, the average period for looking for employment is very long. It was found to exceed 17 months on average; 70

² Agency for Combating Unemployment (ACU), Project for the Study of the Unemployment Map of Syria: Preliminary Results, 30 August 2003.

³ Defining as employed anyone in the labour force who worked at least one hour during the week preceding the survey.

⁴ Syria, CBS, Results of the Survey of the Labour Market for the year 1995. Thus, the 1995 survey undertaken by the CBS, using a somewhat different definition than ACU, gave an unemployment rate of 8 per cent. However, persons who did not look for a job during the reference period (one month before the survey) because of frustration (having looked intensely during the preceding period) were considered outside the labour force in the CBS survey while they are considered part of the unemployed according to the international definition. Making the necessary adjustment in this regard raises the unemployment rate in 2005 to 10.9 per cent. Furthermore, the CBS definition included in the employed, students who are working but did not include students who are not working, looking for work and available for work within the reference period (i.e. fulfilling the three conditions for the unemployed in the international definition). Adding those and making other similar adjustments will probably raise the level of unemployment found in the CBS survey to a level consistent with that found in the ACU survey of 2003.

⁵ Plan p. 182

⁶ ACU, p. 12

⁷ Ibid p. 33

⁸ Ibid p. 45

⁹ Plan p. 184

per cent of job seekers had been looking for employment for more than 12 months at the time of the survey¹⁰.

2. Underemployment was also found to be quite high. The Plan, taking for proxy of underemployment the proportion of the labour force working in the informal sector, found that underemployment affected 23 per cent of the labour force in 1987 and 37.5 per cent in 2003¹¹. A closer look at underemployment may be obtained from the results of the ACU survey of 2003. According to this survey, the per cent of the labour force that worked 3 days or less during the reference period reached 22.6 per cent. This means that in addition to the 11.6 per cent unemployed (that is, those who worked less than one hour during the week preceding the survey), there is an additional 11 per cent of the labour force that worked half the normal working days or less, that is, underemployed¹². A still another way to look at underemployment is by considering those who work seasonally and/or in an occasional manner. According to such a definition, it is found that the underemployed form some 15.3 per cent of the total labour force. Whatever definition is used, it is clear that an unacceptable proportion of the labour force may be considered as underemployed which makes the need for a comprehensive labour and employment policy, called for in the Plan, a still more urgent undertaking.
3. Labour productivity, according to the Plan, is not only still below the desired levels, it seems to be declining. It is estimated that the contribution of workers to the growth of national income was, in 1997-2003, only some 15 per cent of the contribution of capital to national income growth, having fallen from 37 per cent in the period 1990-1996. This is apparently due to the low average educational and skill levels of the labour force that result in low productivity, in addition to macro economic factors¹³. The low productivity of workers leads to low wages, thus establishing the close connection between unemployment, underemployment, and low productivity, on one hand, and poverty and low income, on the other.

The immediate reasons for the relatively high unemployment, high underemployment and low productivity are to be found in the imbalance between a very high rate of growth in the labour force and a relatively low growth in the economy and employment opportunities. The high rate of growth in the labour force is due to three main factors: First, a still relatively high rate of population growth which, although it has fallen significantly in recent years, is still around 2.5 per cent per annum. Second, a more than proportionate increase in the population of working age, due to the high rates of growth of the recent past, making the rate of growth of the population of working age, that is, aged 15-64 years, 3.4 per cent (1994-2003), that is, one-third faster than the rate of population growth. Third, an increase in the participation rates of women as indicated by the rise in the proportion of the labour force that is composed of women. This proportion rose from 12.8 per cent to 16.3 per cent in the short period of six years, between 1994 and 2000. As a result of the latter two factors,

¹⁰ ACU, p.36

¹¹ Plan, p.18.

¹² ACU, pp.27-29

¹³ Plan, p.18.

while the rate of growth of the population is around 2.5 per cent, the rate of growth of the labour force is hovering close to 4 per cent, that is, some 60 percent more than that of population growth.¹⁴ The economy, on the other hand, is not only generating insufficient job opportunities, it is, according to the Plan, generating progressively less job opportunities (an estimated 200,000 per year in the period 1990-1995 as compared with an estimated 160,000 per year on average in the period 1999-2003)¹⁵.

II. The Need for strengthening the labour force database

The Government of Syria in general, and the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour in particular, are fully aware of the need for a robust and detailed labour force database for the formulation of a rational and comprehensive labour and employment policy that could deal effectively with the above problems and other related manpower and development issues of high priority.

A number of relevant and important surveys are, or have been recently, undertaken by the CBS that, together, give a general picture of the labour force and its characteristics, as well as shed light on some of the major problems facing it. Examples of these, are the survey of persons with special needs, survey of school dropouts, survey of old age persons, survey of disguised unemployment, survey of illiteracy, survey of the brain drain, and others. Furthermore, a statistical volume relating to the labour force is published by CBS based on the results of the Population Census undertaken by it every ten years (the latest in 2004).

However, two surveys undertaken by CBS are considered the most important for the present purpose: The household-based "Survey of the Labour Market," that is undertaken on annual basis¹⁶ and the so far ad-hoc institution-based "Survey of Labour Force Demand."¹⁷

The household-based "Survey of the Labour Market" gives a good framework for understanding the labour force situation in the country. A good number of characteristics of the employed labour force and a more restricted number of characteristics of the unemployed labour force are given. While these are intended, and are useful, for the formulation of general development policies, they are neither intended nor sufficient for the formulation of a comprehensive labour force policy, especially one that aims primarily at reducing unemployment and underemployment. It is for this purpose that the Agency for Combating Unemployment and the Central Bureau of Statistics collaborated, in 2003, to undertake a specialized survey in this regard entitled "The Survey of the Unemployment Map of Syria." The main additional contributions of this latter survey related to the definition of the unemployed¹⁸, the additional details about their characteristics (their skills, duration of unemployment, etc.) and about the underemployment among the employed labour force, and other such information. One of the aims of the present project is to update and expand the results of the ACU/CBS survey to make them more adequate for the

¹⁴ ACU pp. 9-10 and Plan p.182.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ At the time of writing (November 2006), the latest results available were those of the 2005 survey: Central Bureau of Statistics, Results of the Survey of the Labour Market for the year 2005.

¹⁷ Results not published yet.

¹⁸ See footnote 7 above.

formulation of a comprehensive labour force policy, at least at the level of the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour.

The institution-based “Survey of Labour Force Demand,” on the other hand, was still in process of completion at the time of writing (November 2006). Judging from the questionnaire, however, the results of the survey should give good detail about the institutions surveyed and about the characteristics of the employed persons in them and would, therefore, be useful for the formulation of general economic policy. It does not, however, serve fully or sufficiently the purpose of this project since it does not give, in any detail, the prospective need of institutions for labour of different skills and occupations (other than level of education) for, say, the coming five years. This is perhaps the most crucial information required for the purpose of this project, namely, the creation of a robust and wide labour force database for the formulation of a comprehensive labour policy by the MOSAL. The suggested activities in this project document relating to the demand side will, nevertheless, remain preliminary until more information is received on the results of the labour demand survey.

PART 2: Strategy

III. National Strategy:

The government of Syria, in its tenth 5-year development plan (2006-2010), declared its intention to continue the transition, begun with the previous 5-year plan, from a centrally-planned economy to a “social market economy.” Its planning will be “indicative” in nature, in that it will guide investments and market activities without controlling them or owning them, but making sure that the actors in the free market undertake their activities with the required degree of social responsibility¹⁹. The government’s approach to development falls within the philosophy of what the plan called “human development first,” that aims at maximizing the human development indicators and the United Nations Millennium Development Goals, as elaborated in the latest Syria MDG report²⁰. The goal of development efforts, therefore, is not to simply maximize the growth of income, irrespective of the social cost involved, but to achieve a balanced development through comprehensive policies that take into account the social dimensions of development, as well as the impact of policies on all groups in society, particularly the marginalized ones²¹.

It is not surprising, therefore, that one of the first priorities of the government’s development policy is the development of human resources. In this respect, one of the Plan’s principle objectives is to “achieve an increase in work opportunities, reduce the size of unemployment to a maximum degree, achieve a more equitable distribution of income and wealth, and pay particular attention to the small and medium institutions, as well as to the informal sector for the purpose of organizing and modernizing it and financing its expansion efforts”²². At the same time, the State will work towards the formulation of policies and national programs for promoting the social safety nets,

¹⁹ Syria, Agency for National Planning, Tenth Development Plan, 2006-2010, p.3. Quotations from the Plan are unofficial translations.

²⁰ Second National Report for the Millennium Development Goals in the Syrian Arab Republic, September, 2005.

²¹ Plan, p.6.

²² *Ibid*, p.5.

particularly through the expansion of the coverage of the social security law to include marginal workers and to provide social protection to needy families²³.

According to the Plan, a number of challenges face the decision-makers in achieving these goals, chief among which is the need to combine labour market flexibility sought in the Plan, with the necessity of organizing the labour market, revising relevant legislation accordingly and insuring working conditions that promote productivity. An underlying challenge emphasized in the Plan is the lack of a national policy that ties employment to investment, in terms of the labour intensity of investment, the appropriate use of technology and the better correspondence between the skill output of education and the needs of the labour market. A still another challenge facing national development, according to the Plan, is the shortage of programs to rehabilitate public and private institutions, to promote their human resources through re-training of workers and to increase the job opportunities available within them. The Plan indicates that facing these challenges requires coordination between the various concerned ministries which, so far, has not been forthcoming in an effective manner. Such coordination would be essential for the formulation of a comprehensive national human resources development policy and of a comprehensive approach to the alleviation of poverty²⁴.

IV. The strategy of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs:

The Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour (MOSAL), by its given mandate, is the ministry most concerned with these questions. Its interest and concern in this field lie in practically all of its major areas through the main responsibility given to it in the field of combating unemployment and raising labour productivity. The ministry tries to fulfil these responsibilities in a number of ways and through various institutional arrangements, most important among which are:

1. Reducing frictional unemployment (i.e., where both work opportunities and unemployed persons qualified for filling them exist, but the period of search for a job is too long because of inefficiencies in the employment market). The Ministry oversees the existing employment offices (all public) that assist unemployed persons in locating job opportunities. The efficiency of these offices, which were established in 2001, has been problematic and major effort is now being expended on improving it. For example, the electronic connection between offices has been established and this will help greatly in eliminating duplications. Revising relevant legislation has been done and is now in process of formal adoption by government. Personnel working in these offices are being re-trained with assistance from ILO. These offices, however, still lack the capability of advising job seekers on the type of training or re-training required. Their method of operation is being looked into, particularly the practice of dealing with applications in terms of the date of submission, irrespective of qualifications of applicants. On the other hand, the legal background and other steps are being prepared to permit private employment offices to operate in the near future. Other means of reducing frictional unemployment have also been introduced, most

²³Ibid.

²⁴Ibid. p.186.

notably job fairs that are being expanded geographically and in terms of intensity. As will be seen, all these activities will be greatly assisted by the present project.

2. Reducing technical unemployment (i.e., where job opportunities and unemployed persons exist but the latter are not qualified for filling the positions offered in the market). The reduction of technical unemployment starts with an understanding of the present and future demand for particular skills in the labour market in conjunction with the output of the educational and training system in the country. The latter side of this equation, i.e. the supply side, depends on policies undertaken by the **Ministry of Education** and the educational and training system itself. The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs' role in this regard, though crucial, is only partial, mainly through the limited program of retraining it undertakes, which helps in raising the productivity of workers and their employing institutions, and the advice it may give to the major players in the formal and vocational educational system. The ministry's major contribution in this area is represented by the data collection and analysis activities and studies relating to the labour force characteristics (employed and unemployed) as well as the demand side of manpower generated by government and the private sector. As will be seen, the present project is an essential tool in this regard since it will give the most reliable and detailed information on both the demand and supply of manpower in the country.
3. Creating work opportunities. While reducing frictional and technical unemployment is a necessary undertaking in combating unemployment, the major step in this regard remains the creation of work opportunities. And the major way of creating work opportunities is through promoting various types of investment in the economy. While responsibility of promoting investment goes beyond those of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, it is clear that the Ministry has a role to play in this regard: First, it is expected to play the role of the Ombudsman, so to speak, for the integration of the social dimension in economic investments, including the need to take into account considerations relating to the intensity of employment in these investments, the social and labour implications of the geographic distribution of investments and their long term sustainability. Second, the MOSAL has been given direct responsibility for assisting and encouraging infinitely small (micro), small and medium size businesses, particularly through the work program of its Agency for Combating Unemployment (ACU). The Agency, which was created in December of 2001, for a limited period of 5 years, and placed at that time under the jurisdiction of the Office of the Prime Minister (law no.71 of 8/12/2001), was charged with the responsibility of creating employment opportunities through the direct dispensation of small loans to infinitely small, small and medium size businesses, and by facilitating the making of loans to these types of businesses by banks. Having finished its five-year span fairly successfully, its functions have now been transferred to the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour. Streamlining of its functions and procedures are now being undertaken accordingly and a new law organizing this is now in process of approval.

4. Improving the productivity of labour. The Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour contributes through its various programs to the improvement of labour productivity. Labour training and re-training in the context of reducing technical unemployment and improving skills of employed persons, serves to increase the productivity of those receiving the training. Assistance to micro, small and medium size industries and businesses, improves the efficiency of these organizations and hence the productivity of their workers. The Ministry's efforts towards the adoption of job descriptions in recruitment and of the level of performance in promotions are also steps in the same direction and so is its effort to make incentives tied to the acquiring of new knowledge and skills that are relevant to the work being performed.

V. The Goals and Strategy of the Project

The general goal of this project is to develop, within the jurisdiction of the MOSAL, a sufficiently wide and robust database that permits the formulation of a rational and comprehensive labour force policy aimed at reducing unemployment and increasing labour productivity. Such a policy would tackle

1. the causes of frictional unemployment, particularly through improving the efficiency of the employment market,
2. the causes of technical unemployment, particularly through improved matching of the educational output with the demand of the labour market,
3. the causes of low productivity and the need for improved training and re-training of the workforce and
4. Means for the creation of work opportunities to reduce unemployment and underemployment, in both the formal and informal sectors, through encouragement of, and assistance to, infinitely small, small and medium size businesses, and through improving the labour content of investments in general.

In order to formulate such a policy, the following statistical activities need to be undertaken so as to permit the anchoring of this policy on solid factual grounds that would insure its rationality and effectiveness. These activities, therefore, constitute the major steps and outputs of the project:

First, *a national household-based labour force survey* will be carried out similar to the one undertaken by the Agency for Combating Unemployment in 2003, but with the necessary adjustments to take into account the special needs of this project. The purpose of this activity is to assess the situation regarding both the employed (fully employed and underemployed) as well as the major characteristics of the unemployed (skills, duration of unemployment, etc.). The sample will include between 20,000 and 30,000 households which will lead to the identification of some 10,000 to 15,000 unemployed persons, and an equal number of underemployed persons, judging from previous experience. Results would, in principle, be relevant at least down to the Mohafazat level. The survey will be followed by an analysis of the results showing the important findings for policy formulation.

Second, *a national institution-based survey of the labour force* working in these institutions will be undertaken simultaneously with the previous survey. A sample,

representative of existing institutions in the market will be drawn similar to the one drawn in relation to the above-mentioned "Survey of Labour Force Demand" being finalized by CBS at present. In addition, a representative sample of government offices will also be taken to cover the public sector demand, which constitutes an important part of total demand for labour. The questionnaire of this survey will concentrate more fully, and in much greater detail than the CBS survey, on the demand for various skills that is expected by both the private and public sectors in the near future (say, next 5 years). Here again, a policy-oriented analysis of the results will be undertaken that will show the most salient findings.

Third, a study to determine the skill and occupational output of the overall educational and vocational training system in the country will be undertaken, simultaneously with the above two surveys. This study will be based on a small survey of private vocational training institutions (usually very small in nature) and desk research, supplemented by selected interviews with concerned and knowledgeable persons or focus groups, to determine, in particular, the expected skill output of the public educational system in the near future (say the next 5 years).

Fourth, the reports of the three above activities will be synthesized in a *final report* giving the salient results of these activities, integrating the findings from the three activities in a way that is most directly relevant for the formulation of a comprehensive labour policy aimed at reducing unemployment and underemployment and increasing the productivity of the labour force. Such a policy, as was indicated at the outset, constitutes the ultimate goal of this project.

VI. Expected Outputs

The project will produce upon termination six outputs:

1. A set of tables resulting from the household-based labour force survey giving the levels and characteristics of employment, unemployment, underemployment and the labour force in general.
2. A policy-oriented analysis of the results of the household-based labour survey describing the above situation, highlighting its most important features and identifying some important policy implications insofar as the data permit.
3. A set of tables resulting from the institution-based survey of the employed labour force in the concerned institutions and the major areas of future needs of those institutions (5 years) in terms of skills and occupations.
4. A policy-oriented analysis of the results of the institution-based survey describing the above situation and indicating some preliminary policy implications within the limits of the data of the survey.
5. A study of the present and prospective (5 years) output of the educational and training system, private and public, in terms of skills and occupations with preliminary identification of policy implications.
6. A final report summarizing the findings of the project and presenting a labour policy framework, based on these findings and their analyses, offering an assessment of the present labour situation, and outlining the steps needed for the formulation of a comprehensive labour policy aimed at reducing unemployment and underemployment and improving labour productivity, particularly in the context of the functions of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs.

PART 3: Project Results and Resources Framework

Intended Outputs	Indicative Activities	Detailed Activities	Inputs
<p>OUTPUT 1: Establishment of a Database for Labour and Employment Within the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour</p>	<p>Activity 1. A national household-based labour force survey</p>	<p>1. A set of tables resulting from the household-based labour force survey 2. A policy-oriented analysis of the results of the household-based labour survey. 3. A report analysing the data 4. Workshop</p>	<p>- Senior International Consultant, Fees: USD 22,000 - Project Management: USD 45,600 - Equipments for the project: USD 11,000 - Workshop fees: USD 1,000</p>
	<p>Activity 2: A national institution-based survey of the labour force</p>	<p>1. a set of tables resulting from the institution-based survey of the employed labour force 2. a policy-oriented analysis of the results of the institution-based survey 3. Report analysing the data 4. Workshop</p>	<p>- Senior International Consultant, Fees: USD 22,000 - International Expert on Labour Demand: USD 31,000 - Travel Expenses: USD 8,000 - Workshop fees: USD 1,000</p>
	<p>Activity 3. 1. A study to determine the skill and occupational output of the overall educational and vocational training system in the country 2. a policy-oriented analysis 3. Report analysing the data 4. Workshop</p>	<p>1. A set of tables 2. a policy-oriented analysis 3. A report analysing the data 4. Workshop</p>	<p>- Senior International Consultant, Fees: USD 22,000 - International Expert on Skill Output of Education: USD 31,000 - Central Bureau of Statistics: USD 5,000 - National Experts: USD 36,000 - Workshop fees: USD 1,000</p>

OUTPUT 2: Drafting a Policy for Labour and Employment in Syria	Activity 1: A Final Report suggesting a comprehensive policy for Labour and Employment in Syria	1. Draft the Report 2. Workshop	- Senior International Consultant, Fees: USD 22,000 - Workshop fees: USD 1,000
			Total Budget: USD 260,000 F&A: USD 9,524

VII. Duration and Time Schedule of Project Activities.

The duration of the project depends in a major way on the degree of simultaneity of the two surveys and the study, that is outputs 1, 3 and 5. The degree of simultaneity, on the other hand, depends on the resources available on yearly basis: the greater the simultaneity in undertaken the activities, the shorter the period of execution and the larger is the yearly budget needed for implementation. In this proposal, the three activities are assumed to take place completely simultaneously so that the period of the project is reduced to a minimum of one year. The resulting schedule of activities would be as follows.

I- The Household-based labour force sample survey

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1- Preparation & Pilot survey												
2- Field Work												
3- Data Entry and tabulations												
4- Report												

II- Institution-based sample survey of the employed labour force

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1- Preparation & Pilot survey												
2- Field Work												
3- Data Entry and tabulations												
4- Report												

III- Study of the prospective output of the education and training system in the country

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1- Preparations												
2- Survey												
3- Study												

IV- Final report

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Final Report												

PART 4: Budget

IX. Estimated Budget:

Senior International Consultant	\$ 88,000.-
International Expert on Labour Demand and Skill Output of Education	\$ 62,000.-
Travel and transportation expenses	\$ 8,000.-
National Experts	\$ 36,000.-
Project Management	\$ 45,600.-
Equipments for the project	\$ 11,000.-
Central Bureau of Statistics	\$ 15,000.-
Workshops	\$ 4,000.-
Total Budget: \$ 269,600	

PART 5: Risk and Quality Logs:

- Risk:** Recruitment of the national project director might be delayed beyond the day of initiation of the project, particularly in view of the high level of statistical skill and experience required for this position. This will delay particularly the institution-based survey and the skill and occupational study, that is, second and third activities of this project. **Solution:** Intensive effort by the SIE and UNDP, as well as the MOSAL to locate qualified persons was initiated prior to the signature of the project and it is expected that one will be found and approved by the Minister and UNDP at the time of signature or shortly thereafter.
- Risk:** Recruitment of the short term international experts for assistance in the drafting of the analyses and policy implications of the second and third activities of the project, the reason being the fact that these experts have to be high level and available at specific times. **Solution:** The SIE will endeavour to inform UNDP regarding the time of need for these experts as much ahead of time as possible and will assist in locating qualified persons.

3. **Risk:** The Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS) will be in charge of executing the data collection and data entry of the field surveys. Scheduling might pose a problem in view of the prior obligations of CBS. **Solution:** CBS will be kept informed of the progress of work in the preparation of the data collection phase. It will be notified of the tentative and approximate dates at which it will be asked to undertake these activities as the project is initiated. It will then be given the final dates as early as possible before the completion of each of the three project activities. In addition, the project budget has provided for financial support for data collection which will permit the CBS to recruit additional resources for supplementing its own and undertake the data collection and entry in a timely fashion.
4. **Risk:** bureaucratic delays that may face the team working on the project. **Solution:** This risk is minimal given the official enthusiasm for this project which is the brain child of the Minister of Social Affairs and Labour itself. This was clearly demonstrated in the preparatory stage of the project where unusual facilitation took place in all respects.

Quality log:

1. **Choice of SIE:** the SIE who will be the key person in the success of this project has the academic qualifications (PhD in economics) and a long international experience in this field, having served in the United Nations for 27 years including many years as director of substantive divisions including population data collection and analysis. In addition, he was the SIE for the previous labour force survey conducted successfully in Syria in 2003.
2. **Choice of NPD:** The NPD will be chosen with extensive data collection and analysis experience. The leading candidate so far is one who has had long experience in this field not only locally but also in several Arab countries, some of it under the auspices of the United Nations.
3. **Technical considerations:** The statistical frames for all three surveys, a primordial condition for drawing valid random samples, are all fairly complete and recent. For the household-based survey, the frame of the population census undertaken in 2004 will be used. For the institution-based survey, an even more recent frame exists at the CBS. For the third activity, the skill output of the educational and training system, an up to date frame will be constructed as part of the project.
4. **Institutional support:** the team will be working within the MOSAL and supported fully by the infrastructure of the Ministry. In addition, the national staff assigned to the project is mostly from the Ministry and chosen by the Minister herself with the highest and most relevant qualifications. They have also been asked to spend their full time on this project so as not to be distracted by the routine work of the Ministry.

PART 6: Management Arrangement

This project will be implemented using the National Execution modality (NEX). Through NEX operational arrangement, the UNDP country office along with cooperating government ministry assumes responsibility, and accountability, for the management and implementation of the project.

The project will operate in accordance with UNDP regulations, including those of procurement and accounting.

- Steering Committee:

Steering Committee will function as an oversight body to ensure that activities are on track and results are achieved in accordance with the project work plan. The Steering Committee must approve annual work plans and quarterly plans and any variations that alter the project outputs or overall budget figure. Additionally the Steering Committee will make policy recommendations to improve project implementation and provide advice to project staff.

The Committee will be convened at the launch of the project and subsequently meet quarterly and will be composed of:

- A representative of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs
- A representative from the State Planning Commission
- A representative of UNDP

The Project Director will act as secretariat for the committee, being responsible for convening the meetings, preparing the agenda, overseeing preparation of materials for presentation to the meeting and for preparing and distributing minutes of the meetings.

Project Team:

The project Team will be responsible for managing inputs, delivering outputs and reporting on progress and results achieved.

The project Team will compose of at least the following full-time persons for the duration of the project:

- 1- National Project Director
- 2- One Project Assistant (Administrative and Finance)

The project will utilise various employment modalities such as SSA, SC as well as contracting with private sector and government agencies. The TORs for all staff should clearly identify the outputs, remuneration and evaluation process.

The NPD will be responsible for the overall management of the project. The NPD will prepare annual work plans for the project to be reviewed and approved by the Steering Committee

The organizational structure responsible for the execution of this project will be composed of the following, all activities and personnel being under the supervision and guidance of the Minister of Labour and Social Affairs (see TORs below):

1. A senior international expert (SIE) who will act as team leader (6 months).
2. Three teams working, simultaneously and respectively, under the direct supervision of the team leader, on:
- a) *the household-based labour force sample survey*. This sub-team (sub-team one) will be composed of four national officers (12 months each) who will insure, through the hands-on training they receive, the transfer of knowledge to the local level. The SIE will also act as a sub-team leader. One of the national experts will act as sub-team leader in the absence of the SIE.;
 - b) *the institution-based sample survey of the employed labour force* and
 - c) *the study of the prospective output of the educational and training system in the country*. These two sub-teams (sub-teams one and two) will be headed by a national expert (12 months) who will also be responsible for the statistical activities of the two surveys working with two national experts in each sub-team (12 months each). Two international consultants will assist for very short periods in the writing of the analyses of the two results of the two surveys and their policy implications.
 - d) A Steering Committee to advise on and facilitate the work of the technical teams above. This Committee will be headed by the Minister of Social Affairs and Labour and a number of officials and stakeholder as determined by the Minister herself. The SIE/team leader will be and ex-officio member of the Steering Committee and will act as its rapporteur.

PART 7: Monitoring and Evaluation

The project will be subject to the standard UNDP review, monitoring and evaluation guidelines. Monitoring and evaluation will focus on outputs and their contribution (together with partnership efforts) toward the intended outcome. UNDP Syria will have overall responsibility for reviewing quarter project progress reports to be prepared by NPD.

The NPD will provide the Steering Committee with an Annual Project Report (APR) in accordance with the new APR format and quarterly progress reports to assess the progress against the Work Plan and outputs targets. Additional reports may be requested, if necessary, during the project. Information from monitoring and evaluation will provide the basis for making decisions and taking action.

Regular reporting and financial audit should be shared with all counterparts in order to be monitored, discussed and evaluated.

An independent (external) evaluation will be conducted at the end of the project.

PART 8 : Legal Context

This project document shall be the instrument referred to as such in Article 1 of the Standard Basic Assistance Agreement between the Government of the S.A.R. and the United Nations Development Programme, signed by the parties on 12 March 1981. The host-country implementing unit shall, for the purpose of the Standard Basic Assistance Agreement, refer to the government cooperating agency described in that document.

The following types of revision: may be made to this project document based on the progress requirement of the project with the signature of the UNDP Resident Representative only, provided he is assured that the other signatories of the project document have no objections to the proposed changes:

- a) Revisions in, or additions of, any of the annexes of the project document.
- b) Revisions which do not involve significant changes in immediate objectives, outputs or activities of the project, but are necessitated by rearrangement of inputs already agreed to, or by cost increases due to inflation; and
- c) Mandatory annual revisions, which re-phase the delivery of agreed project inputs or expert or other costs due to inflation or take into account expenditure flexibility.

Following are the terms of reference of the SIE/ team leader, the international experts and the national expert:

ANNEXES

1. Terms of Reference Senior International Expert and Team Leader

Under the supervision of the Minister of Labour and Social Affairs, the SIE/TL will perform the following functions in consultation with the Advisory Committee:

1. Supervise all activities relating to the project to insure the proper and effective implementation of its different parts.
2. Take final responsibility for the design of all the surveys in the project, in cooperation with the members of the team, including the questionnaire and sampling designs.
3. Review and revise the reports of the three teams on progress of work and the findings of their aspect of the project to insure their quality and usefulness.
4. Take final responsibility for the writing of the final report, in cooperation with other members of the team, and make the presentation to the Minister of Labour and Social Affairs and other concerned officials as needed.
5. Advise on further steps to be undertaken by the Ministry in its efforts at combating unemployment, within the substantive and time framework of the project, particularly with regard to future work on the formulation of a comprehensive policy by the Ministry to combat unemployment within its jurisdiction.

Duration of the assignment: 6 months (140 working days) spread over one year.

2- Terms of Reference

National Expert on Labour Demand and on Skill Output of Education and Training

Under the direct supervision of the SIE/TL, the expert will perform the following functions

1. Supervise the work of sub-teams one and two and take responsibility for the timely implementation of the activities and insure their superior quality.
2. Assist in the design of the surveys on labour demand and on the output of educational and training institutions, including the drafting of the questionnaire and the sampling process.
3. Take direct responsibility, in cooperation with members of sub-teams one and two for the preparation of the field training manuals and the training of the field workers and interviewers.
4. Assist in the supervision of data entry and the design and production of the final tables of both surveys.
5. Supervise and contribute to the preparation of the procedural reports and the final report of the sub-team.
6. Cooperate with the international consultants in the preparation of the study on the skill output of education and training with the help of the members of team two.
7. Contribute as required to the preparation of the final report of the project.
8. Undertake other substantive functions as requested by the Minister of Labour and Social Affairs and/or the team leader in relation to this project.

3- Terms of Reference National Experts

The national experts form the backbone of all three sub-teams. Under the general supervision of the SIE/TL and the direct supervision of the national project director, the National Experts will take a significant role in the preparation of the first drafts of reports and studies, assist in training of field workers and the preparation of interviewers' manuals, and with assisting in all functions performed by the particular sub-team to which they belong. They will also participate in the drafting and presentation of the final report.

4- Terms of Reference Steering Committee

The Advisory Committee (SC) will be headed by the Minister of Social Affairs and Labour. The Minister will act as chair person. The SC will be composed of a maximum of 6 members chosen by the Minister among officials and stakeholders concerned. The SIE will be ex-officio member. A representative of UNDP will act as vice-chairperson of the Committee. The SC will be called to meeting by the Chairperson as necessary in order to:

- 1 Advise on the design of the surveys and all other aspects of this project.
- 2 Review progress of work as it unfolds and offer advice to improve it when required.
- 3 Advise on further steps to be undertaken in the efforts to combat unemployment and improve the productivity of labour within the mandate of the MOSAL.