

National Statistics and Development in Lebanon

Narrative Report

**Beirut
October 2002**

The Lebanese Center for Policy Studies (LCPS) organized, in cooperation with the Konrad Adenauer Foundation (KAF), a national workshop on “National Statistics and Development in Lebanon”.

The workshop was prepared by documentation, background research, planning meetings, and extensive consultations conducted by LCPS. LCPS did a general mapping of the various sectors to identify key actors in the research community, in the public sector, in the private sector and in various international and local organizations.

The **first part** of the workshop focused on a brief assessment of and reflection on the state of statistics in Lebanon, in terms of their multiple sources, of their reliability and consistency, of their level of disaggregation, of their usefulness for analysis and user friendliness, and finally of their dissemination and adjustment to international standards.

The first presentations discussed a general overview of the current status of the statistics field in Lebanon as well as the problematic and needs for development.

Dr. Maral Tutelian, General Director of the Central Administration of Statistics (CAS), presented the historical background of the CAS, its mandate and functions. She highlighted the relation between the CAS and the other public administrations. Dr. Tutelian covered in her presentation the past and current activities of the CAS and listed the studies and researches undertaken by them. She ended her presentation by setting the priorities and the next steps for the CAS, as well as underlining the challenges facing CAS on the administrative and financial level and in the shortage of qualified human resources.

Dr. Marwan Hourri based his intervention on a number of comments and recommendations for the user of Lebanese statistics suggesting to unify the formats, make samples available for field workers, organize regular meetings between users and producers of statistics, create a statistical databank, and allow the users of statistics to obtain the needed detailed information.

Dr. Ibrahim Maroun tackled the crisis of the statistics in Lebanon from an academic point of view while Dr. Abdo Kahi presented the point of view of the private sector and its needs, as well as a general reflection on statistics and indicators.

In the **second and third parts** of the workshop, experts reviewed and discussed the state of social, educational, judicial, health, monetary, industrial, and employment statistics as well as the National Accounts. They assessed the different sectoral statistics in light of Lebanon's needs for development, and rational economic and social policies.

In the **fourth part**, the workshop included a round table discussion of the future of Lebanese statistics in the era of globalization.

The workshop included around 95 participants, mainly officials and key actors, leaders and analysts from various sectors covering the Central Administration of Statistics, the Court of Audit, the Central Bank of Lebanon, the National Office of Employment, various interested ministries (Ministries of Environment, Finance, Economy and Trade, Administrative Reform, Education, Justice, Industry, and Social Affairs), the Council of Development and Reconstruction, the Educational Center for Research and Development, various business organisms such as the Lebanese Association of Banks, the Lebanese Industrialists Association, various members of the civil society and NGOs, researchers and professors from various universities (the Lebanese University, AUB, USEK, LAU, USJ, Balamand, NDU, and Haigazian), the media, the international organizations (such as UNDP, ESCWA, UNESCO), as well as a number of participants from the private sector including the banking sector and polling institutions.

The workshop contributed to an informed public debate that explored the main challenges to sound statistics in Lebanon and discussed the recent initiative to improve the current state of statistics and what should be done to better serve Lebanon's integration to the global economy and its comparative advantage in the expanding world of knowledge economy and information technology.

LCPS is preparing a publication that will be edited and printed in 2003. This publication will include papers on the various sectors presented during the workshop as well as additional papers on a number of topics such as the sectors of environment, trade, culture, finance and a regional perspective on the Lebanese statistics to be prepared by Dr. Ahmed Hussein from ESCWA