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**PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN MANUFACTURING:
PATTERNS, DETERMINANTS AND FUTURE TRENDS
REGIONAL ANALYSIS, ESCWA REGION**

DU/INT/93/326

FINAL REPORT*

prepared by

Integration of Women in Industrial
Development Unit

* The expressed in this document are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect those of the UNIDO Secretariat. This document has not been edited.

PREFACE

This study is part of the UNIDO's efforts to establish a more systematic approach to data collection and analysis to provide a sound base for identifying and designing activities which will improve the integration of women in industrial development. The study, supported by UNDP, has been implemented by UNIDO's Integration of Women in Industrial Development Unit with the assistance and collaboration of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA). The work involved in the study was shared between an international consultant, Maisa El-Gamal, and UNIDO data processing team (Giorgia Dario-Paolucci and Stefan Bosnjakovic) and the ESCWA Industrial Division support team.

Over a two-day workshop organized by UNIDO and ESCWA in Amman, Jordan, on October 30-31, 1994, the study was discussed by a select group of experts from the region to identify specific strategies and recommend a course of action to enhance and develop women's participation in manufacturing employment in countries of the ESCWA region. The following report details the main findings of the study, covering the patterns and determinants of women's manufacturing participation in the ESCWA region, the challenges and constraints hindering such participation, and the strategies and recommendation for action to help enhance women's integration in manufacturing and industrial development.

* The opinions expressed in this document are those of the author, Dr. Maisa El-Gamal, and do not necessarily reflect those of the UNIDO Secretariat. This document has not been edited.

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INTRODUCTION

The present study focuses on the patterns, determinants and future trends in the participation of women in manufacturing in the member states of the ESCWA region. As part of a global effort to assess the situation of women in development, the following analysis attempts to delineate the socio-cultural, economic, political and institutional frameworks that affect women's existing and future role in societal development in general and their incorporation in the industrial sector in specific.

In all societies, gender relations are reflected through the particular structural and normative organization of society. Whether at the level of the family, social class or stratum, or at the macro level of policy and structural influences, gender relations are both expressed and substantiated. The integration of women in the modern sectors of the economy is a basic parameter of socio-economic development realized by women in specific and by society in general. Increasing evidence suggests that the improvement of women's economic status, as employees with regular access to income, impacts positively on their social and demographic conditions. The realization that women constitute an essential human resource basic to societies' development has prompted policy-makers and regional and international development organizations to address the structural and normative determinants working against women's full and equal integration in the modern productive labor force.

The pattern and determinants of women's economic participation in the Arab world reflect to varying degrees similarities with other developing countries with comparable economic levels of development. Nevertheless, the historical and cultural specificity of the region provide for a particular socio-cultural context which governs not only the pattern of women's integration in the modern sectors of the economy, but also reflects a specific developmental phase in the history of the region. Accordingly, the underlying theoretical premise of our analysis is one which simultaneously draws on a political economy approach together with a normative and cultural frame of reference (see Table 1).

It is important to note at the outset of this study that there is no "One" Arab women. The socio-economic and political diversities among countries in the ESCWA region render the term Arab women more of an identity rather than a reflection of uniform societal and developmental contexts. Whether within a particular country or between countries of the region, the socio-economic level and the sub-cultural niche in which women survive undoubtedly affect their role in and access to development. Nevertheless, as pointed by a number of Arab scholars (Seikaly:1994), "the many and sometimes glaring socioeconomic differences between these regions do not eliminate the common features of history, culture, ethnicity, religion, and religion's ethical and value structure that molds the processes of social change. The whole Arab region shares the same broad process, although each geographical area exhibits different

characteristics".¹

The cultural and historical specificity of the region should not, however, be categorically equated with religion. While religious values are reflected in cultural norms, the latter often depart from and even contradict some religious principles. A common mistake among many observers is to explain gender segregation or discrimination in the region primarily as a defacto outcome of Islam. While in some countries of the region, women are indeed subjected to seclusion norms which deny them complete and equal participation in the public economic domain, in other Islamic Arab countries, women's low status is a result of structural rather than purely cultural imperatives.

A number of studies focusing on the impediments to women's work in the Arab world adopt a rather simplistic approach to the cultural imperative, explaining women's low developmental status as a reflection of an Islamic culture inherently hostile to women. As pointed out in a recent review article in *The Journal of Development Studies* (Papps, 1992), "there is a widespread belief that the ideology of Islam is hostile to women's participation in the labour force. Some empirical studies, for example Moskoff (1982), have used simple statistical comparisons to argue that female labour force participation rates are lower in Muslim countries and, therefore "a strong case has been made for the position that a number of elements within the Islamic culture combine to produce a low female participation rate. However, it is not clear whether this relationship is a result of supply ... or demand factors or of some set of factors which are common to Muslim countries but unrelated to religious values".²

In summary, while the low rates of women participation in the labor force in the Arab world find explicit explanation in the low levels of societal development at large, and industrial development in specific, there are undoubtedly socio-cultural and demographic factors that effect such low rates of women's economic activity in the formal sectors of the economy. Such factors cannot always be quantified, and extensive qualitative empirical field work focusing on attitudes towards, and determinants of, women's work in the Arab world are basic to our understanding of the cultural and structural specificities affecting women's employment and shaping any effort to enhance and develop the status of women in the region. As argued over two decades ago, "our theoretical perspectives about the position of women in Middle Eastern society must be the common sense world of the actors themselves".³

¹Seikaly, May. "Women and Social Change in Bahrain", International Journal of Middle East Studies, Vol. 26, 1994. pp.415-426

²Papps, Ivy. "Women, Work and Well-Being in the Middle East", Journal of Development Studies, Vol. 28, No.4, July 1992, p.60

³Nelson, Cynthia. "Changing Roles of Men and Women: Illustrations from Egypt", Anthropological Quarterly, Vol.41, April 1968, pp.57-77

While women in the Arab region have realized considerable structural gains over the last two decades, particularly in the field of educational attainment, the gender disparities between women's social and economic status and that of men is still substantial. Women in the ESCWA region have increasingly attained high levels of education, often beyond the secondary level, and have moved rapidly into the services sector of the economy. Nonetheless, such a movement has neither been paralleled nor preceded by comparable rates of participation in the industrial sectors. Today, over half of the economically active women population in the Arab region are engaged in tertiary employment, a situation statistically comparable to that experienced by women in the developed world. However, such sectoral concentration of working women in the Arab world reflects a cultural rather than a developmental indicator. That is, while in the developed economies, the movement of women into manufacturing has been prompted by a growing demand for an industrial labor force during the initial phases of industrialization, the ensuing technological advancement and the shift towards capital-intensive industry have effected a decline in women's share of industrial employment and a simultaneous increase in their participation in the service sectors of the economy. Such employment patterns in the industrialized economies are reflective of specific developmental stages. It would thus be erroneous to attempt to equate the statistically comparable concentration of women in the tertiary sectors in the developed and the developing worlds as reflections of comparable developmental stages. In the latter, such concentration does not constitute an explicit measure of "industrialization", however, it does constitute an important indication of women's socio-economic improvement.

In the ESCWA region, women's low rates of participation in manufacturing are explained both at the structural level where most countries of the region have a relatively meager industrial base, and through cultural factors which render certain economic activities gender segregated or specific. Where women have moved into the industrial sectors, their participation has generally remained limited to low level or unskilled jobs, usually at the assembly line, pronouncing what has been labeled "the feminization of labour" or even the "feminization of poverty". Together with such horizontal patterns of segregation, women have also faced vertical segregation from entire industrial sectors. Their manufacturing activity has basically remained within the labor-intensive industries of textile, garment, leather, food, pharmaceutical and electronic industries, while their representation rate in capital-intensive industries which require advanced technical training, are at best negligible.

Conceptual Framework:

The underlying conceptual premise of this study is that women's economic participation is governed by a set of interrelated social, cultural, demographic, economic, political and legal factors that affect the participation pattern of women in the economy in general and in manufacturing in particular. The overriding hypothesis in this approach is that the participation of women in the modern sectors of the economy is conditioned by a set of supply and demand factors that cover an intricate set of relationships at both the micro and macro levels of socio-economic organization and policy orientations (see Figure 1). Such factors are examined through a number

METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

The methodological framework consists of three parts: a conceptual model, identification of variables and indicators, and statistical analysis. The framework is an adapted approach developed by UNIDO for the analysis of industrial systems and sectoral typologies.

A. Conceptual model of women's economic/industrial participation

The underlying premises for the analysis are as follows:

1. Women's economic participation is determined by inter-dependent relationships between a number of systems: economic, social, demographic, traditional culture/religion, political, and legal/institutional.
2. Each system may be represented by a number of variables. The interactions of these variables have a different impact on economic participation of men and women in different age groups, income groups, social groups and household units.
3. Variables within one system may strengthen/weaken/ neutralize the impact of variables in other systems.

B. Identification of variables and indicators

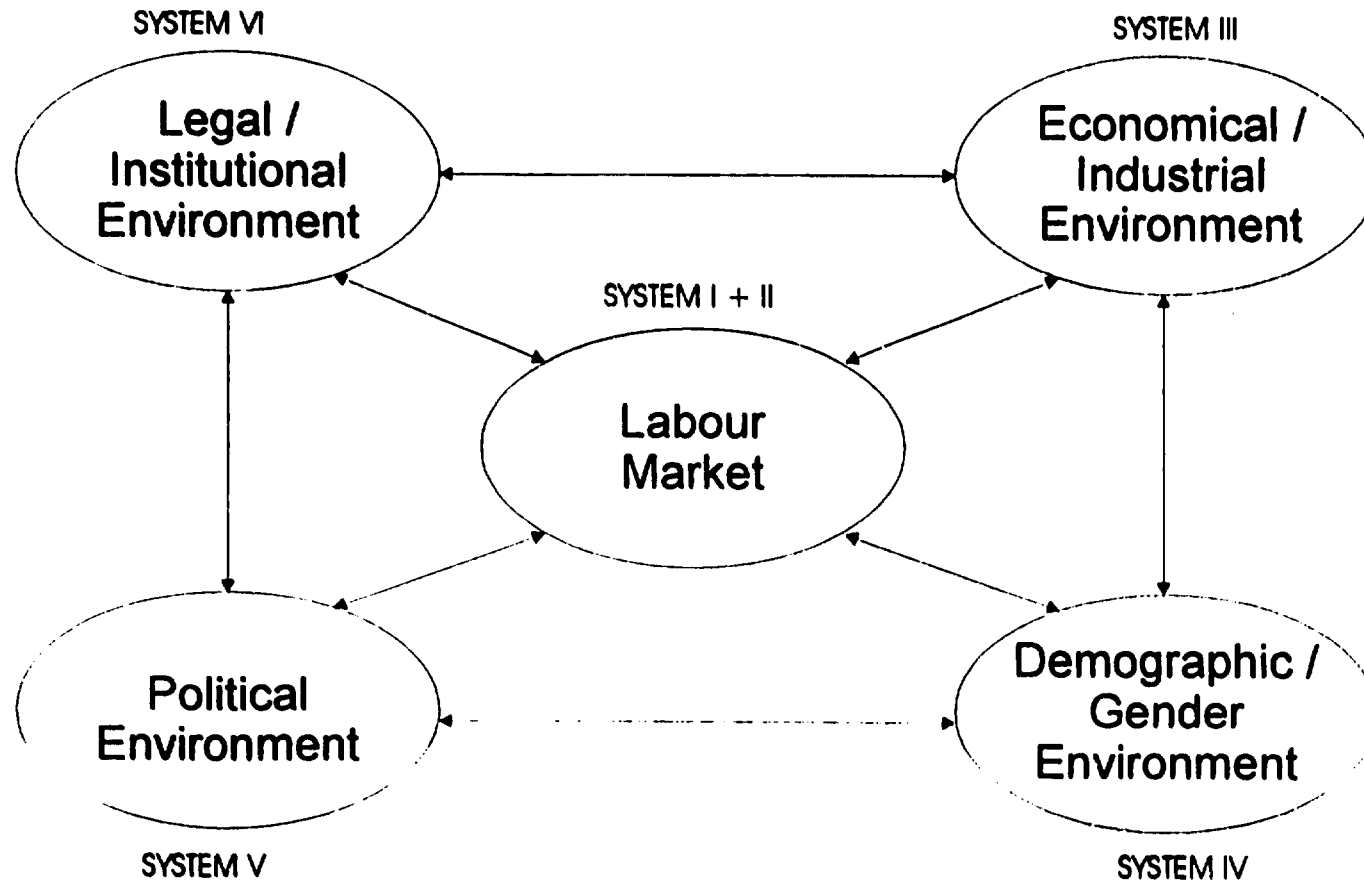
Empirical research, surveys and studies have identified issues relevant to the examination of women's role in economic/industrial development. These issues were expressed as variables and classified under the relevant systems. Statistical indicators were chosen to quantify and systematize information pertaining to the variables. Selection of these indicators relied heavily on conceptual work undertaken by the UN system with regard to gender sensitive statistics characterizing women's economic role. Table 1 shows the list of variables and indicators grouped under the relevant systems. An assessment of the indicators at a country and regional level helped to delineate different patterns of male and female labour force participation in a given time.

C. Statistical tools and analysis

Statistical tools facilitated cross-country comparative analysis of large sets of data which gave a more complete picture of factors affecting the economic role of women. Means, correlations and regressions were calculated to determine the strength/weakness of indicators as well as their relationships. Multivariate statistical techniques were used to approximate groupings of countries sharing similar characteristics of women's economic participation. Results of statistical analysis were verified by qualitative information.

Box 1

CONCEPTUAL MODEL



of gender sensitive indicators to assess the patterns and determinants of women's economic participation in the ESCWA region.

Sources of Data:

The patterns, determinants and future trends of Arab women's participation in manufacturing are analyzed in this study primarily through quantifiable data, complemented by qualitative research. Statistical data on women's employment patterns and other socio-economic indicators are considerably well covered and updated in countries of the ESCWA region, except for a few countries where data is extremely scarce as in the case of Lebanon and Palestine. Nevertheless, such information gaps have been supplemented by existing qualitative research, and the two countries are included as separate case studies. Yemen is also dealt with separately, however, not because of the lack of data but because of the substantial statistical difference between it and the rest of the region.

The basic sources of data used in this study are: the ESCWA Statistical Division database; the UNIDO Global Econometric database; the ILO Year Book of Labour Statistics; the World Bank Development Report; and United Nations database on Women's Indicators and Statistics (WISTAT).

Table 1

List of Variables and Indicators

I. LABOUR FORCE CHARACTERISTICS
Variable 1.1. Size and distribution of Economically Active Population (EAP)
1.1.1. Women's economic activity rate (15 years +) ~
1.1.2. Gender disparity in economic activity rate (15 years +) ~
1.1.5. Women's participation rate in the agricultural sector
1.1.6. Gender disparity in agricultural activity
1.1.7. Women's participation rate in the tertiary sector (commerce and services) ~
1.1.8. Gender disparity in tertiary activities
1.1.9. Women's share in total EAP ~
1.1.10 Annual growth rates in female rates of participation in EAP
Variable 1.2. Size and distribution of employment
1.2.1. Women's employment rate ~
1.2.2. Gender disparity in employment
1.2.3. Women's employment rate in non-agricultural employment
1.2.4. Gender disparity in non-agricultural employment
1.2.5. Women's employment rate in the tertiary sector
1.2.6. Gender disparity in tertiary employment
1.2.7. Women's employment rate in services
1.2.8. Index of male/female disparity
1.2.9. Women's share in employment ~
1.2.10 Annual growth rates in women's employment rate
Variable 1.3. Employment Status
1.3.1. Women's self employment rate
1.3.2. Gender disparity in self employment
1.3.3. Women unpaid family employment rate
1.3.4. Gender disparity in unpaid employment
Variable 1.4. Employment by employer
1.4.1. Women's employment rate in public sector
Variable 1.5. Occupational status
1.5.1. Women's participation rate in professional and technical positions
1.5.2. Gender disparity in professional and technical positions
1.5.3. Women's participation rate in administrative and managerial positions
1.5.4. Gender disparity in administrative and managerial positions
II. INDUSTRIAL LABOUR FORCE CHARACTERISTICS
Variable 2.1. Size and distribution
2.1.1. Participation rate of women in manufacturing ~
2.1.2. Gender disparity in manufacturing activities
2.1.3. Participation rate of women in manufacturing employment
2.1.4. Gender disparity in manufacturing employment
2.1.11. Women's share in manufacturing employment
2.1.12. Annual growth rates in women's manufacturing employment
III. ECONOMIC AND INDUSTRIAL ENVIRONMENT
Variable 3.1. Level of economic development
3.1.2. Share of agricultural sector in GDP
3.1.3. Share of tertiary sector in GDP
3.1.4. Share of MVA in GDP ~

Table 1

List of Variables and Indicators

3.1.5.	Share of exports in GDP
3.1.8.	Share of government expenditure in GDP
3.1.9.	GDP per capita (absolute values US\$)
Variable 3.2. Level of Industrial Development	
3.2.1.	Logarithm of MVA/capita -
3.2.2.	Share of manufactured goods in total exports -
3.2.3.	Share of food and textile subsectors (31 & 32) in total MVA
3.2.4.	Share of metal, machinery and equipment products (38) in total MVA
3.2.5.	MVA per capita
3.2.6.	Annual growth rate for industry -
3.2.7.	Annual growth rate for service sector
IV. SOCIAL AND DEMOGRAPHIC CONDITIONS	
Variable 4.1. Size and distribution of population	
4.1.1.	Urbanization -
4.1.2.	Gender disparity in urban population
4.1.4.	Total fertility rates -
4.1.8.	Female headed-households
4.1.9.	Dependency ratio
Variable 4.2. Access to Education	
4.2.1.	Gender disparity in literacy rates
4.2.2.	Female primary enrollment rate
4.2.3.	Gender disparity in primary enrollment rates
4.2.4.	Female secondary enrollment rate -
4.2.5.	Gender disparity in secondary enrollment rates
4.2.6.	Female tertiary enrollment
4.2.7.	Gender disparity in tertiary enrollment rates
4.2.10.	Women among potential technicians
4.2.11.	Annual growth rates in female secondary enrollment
4.2.12.	Annual growth rates in female tertiary enrollment
V. POLITICAL ENVIRONMENT	
Variable 5.1. Distribution of Power	
5.1.1.	Parliamentary representation -
5.1.2.	Cabinet representation
VI. LEGAL AND INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK (qualitative dummy variables)	
Variable 6.1. Legal Protection	
6.1.1.	Ratification of CEDAW convention -
6.1.2.	Ratification of ILO convention #100
6.1.3.	Ratification of ILO convention #111
6.1.4.	ratification of ILO convention #156

CHAPTER I. ECONOMIC AND INDUSTRIAL ENVIRONMENT

I.I. Regional Economic Trends:

Industrialization processes are neither uniform nor of comparable nature in countries of the ESCWA region. Considerable variations exist in the histories of industrialization and the present economic organization of the different member countries. In Egypt, Syria, Iraq and to a considerable degree in Jordan, industrialization assumed both political and economic priority in the fifties and sixties as an integral phase in the process of modern nation-building after years of colonization. Under a centralized state controlled economy, industrialization has been largely carried by the public sector. The economies of the Gulf countries, on the other hand, have rested predominantly on oil production and exportation, with industrialization mainly focused on oil related industries. Yet different from both sub-regions, albeit closer to the diversified economies, is Yemen where the economy remains largely agricultural, with a relatively meager industrial base.

Industrialization processes in countries of the ESCWA region vary quantitatively and qualitatively from one sub-region to another, with the more traditional labor-intensive industries mainly located in countries with diversified economies, while the more capital-intensive industries are found in the oil-producing Gulf region. The size and gender composition of the industrial labor force in the region thus corresponds to, and is reflected in, the type of industrial activities in the different countries.

The quantitative and qualitative diversities in the economic and industrial environment in countries of the ESCWA region reflect substantial differences in both the existing industrial organization and policies, and future economic trends. Such diversities require that we address the region along two main sub-groups: the diversified economies of Egypt, Iraq, Jordan Lebanon, Syria and Yemen, and the oil-producing economies of the GCC countries comprising Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates.

The share of manufacturing industries in the GDP of ESCWA member states remains considerably low throughout the region. Several factors have contributed to the poor performance of the manufacturing sector in recent years. The Gulf War has left an adverse effect on the economies of Iraq and Kuwait in particular, and neighboring countries like Jordan. Fluctuations in oil prices, the high import component in raw materials and capital goods needed for manufacturing, the short and medium range effects of the shifts in economic orientation from centralized to market economies, and scarcity of hard currency in the non-oil producing countries, have all to varying degrees negatively impacted the performance of manufacturing industries in the region.

According to a 1992 ESCWA report on recent developments in the manufacturing sector⁴, the year 1990 witnessed a very sharp decline in manufacturing activities.

⁴Review of Recent Developments in the Manufacturing Sector of the ESCWA Region. United Nations Economic and Social Council, ESCWA, November 1992.

recording a negative average of annual rate of growth of 18.7%, compared to a positive rate of growth of 11.1% in 1989 and 6.7% in 1988. Excluding Iraq and Kuwait, which register the extreme negative annual rates of growth, still the average annual rate of growth for the rest of the region shows a mere 1.4% for 1990. In general, the GCC countries (excluding Kuwait) have experienced a better rate of annual growth in manufacturing industries, registering 1.7% annual growth in 1992, compared to 0.8% realized by the diversified economies (excluding Iraq) in the same year. The share of the manufacturing sector to the GDP has, however, remained higher in the diversified economies, registering an average of 13.9%, compared to 7.5% in the GCC countries. On the regional level, the contribution of regional MVA to regional GDP averaged 9.4% in 1990.

Manufacturing activity in the GCC countries is generally limited to petrochemical, oil refining and fertilizers industries. The nature of such manufacturing activities, and the cultural norms governing women's "acceptable" work domains, have rendered women's share in manufacturing employment rather minimal in most of the Gulf countries. While impressive exceptions can be cited, as in the case of Oman where women are assuming the once traditionally male reserved jobs of field engineers in petrochemical and refinery plants, in other countries of this sub-region women experience near absolute exclusion from industrial and manufacturing jobs.

In the more diversified economies, the predominant manufacturing activity rests with traditional labor-intensive industries such as textile, clothing, leather, food and beverages, largely carried till very recently by the public sector. The share of women in such industries has remained traditionally high, albeit at the lower end of the job ladder.

The shift towards industrial privatization suggests potential problems for women's participation in manufacturing in the more diversified economies. With the public sector traditionally the largest employer of women, the eventual liquidation or contraction of that sector may severely affect the rate of female employment in manufacturing enterprises. Private enterprises may be inclined to reduce their female employees to evade the costs incurred through the legal provisions provided to women workers, as paid maternity leave and day care centers for their children. Such evasions already exist in some countries where industrial enterprises are legally obliged to provide nursery service if they employ thirty or more women. To avoid such regulations, factory owners have kept the maximum number of female employees at twenty-nine.

1.2. Global Economic Trends and Regional Challenges:

Economic developments on the international scene will undoubtedly affect the future economic and industrial performance in countries of the ESCWA region. As noted in a recent regional report on the future economic prospects in Western Asian and North African Arab countries, "the formation of new economic giant cooperation blocs, the conclusion of the Uruguay international trade agreement, the development of the European Community single market in January 1993 and the establishment of

Table 2

System Characteristics of Selected Indicators for All Countries

Country	System I							System II			System III						System IV						System V	System VI			
	1.1.1	1.1.2	1.1.5	1.1.7	1.1.9	1.2.9	1.2.1	2.1.1	2.1.2	2.1.3	3.1.2	3.1.3	3.1.4	3.2.1	3.2.2	3.2.5	3.2.6	4.1.1	4.1.4	4.1.9	4.2.1	4.2.4	4.2.5	4.2.6	4.2.7	5.1.1	6.1.1
Regional Means	20%	0.83	15%	59%	5%	12%	86%	9%	0.82	5%	10%	44%	11%	5.94	34%	\$ 704	3%	69%	5.64	76%	0.30	61%	0.22	32%	-0.02	2%	0.31
Bahrain	29%	0.79	0%	82%	4%	16%	100%	2%	0.92	2%	1%	75%	17%	7.23	6%	\$ 1,360	15%	83%	4.19	61%	0.23	97%	0.00	88%	-0.28	0%	0.00
Egypt	29%	0.61	56%	66%	4%	9%	87%	21%	0.11	10%	18%	50%	19%	4.78	35%	\$ 117	4%	48%	4.00	76%	0.31	73%	0.21	6%	0.41	2%	1.00
Gaza Strip (Palestine)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	84%	-	100%	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.00
Iraq	10%	0.87	15%	61%	5%	10%	61%	8%	0.83	-	19%	24%	12%	6.28	3%	\$ 534	7%	72%	5.28	66%	0.22	37%	0.39	1%	0.48	11%	1.00
Jordan	14%	0.85	3%	61%	7%	11%	63%	9%	0.80	8%	7%	49%	13%	4.88	50%	\$ 146	6%	78%	5.60	83%	0.17	62%	0.08	10%	0.08	0%	1.00
Kuwait	34%	0.68	0%	86%	6%	24%	97%	1%	0.97	1%	0%	41%	15%	7.39	87%	\$ 1,814	-2%	86%	6.81	61%	0.12	51%	0.08	17%	-0.30	0%	0.00
Lebanon	-	-	20%	59%	4%	-	-	-	-	-	9%	-	13%	6.38	62%	\$ 217	10%	84%	4.60	67%	0.31	64%	-	16%	0.36	2%	0.00
Oman	11%	0.88	20%	45%	5%	11%	99%	1%	-	-	4%	-	4%	5.67	67%	\$ 281	10%	11%	7.84	86%	0.21	53%	0.30	7%	0.12	0%	0.00
Qatar	28%	0.89	0%	96%	6%	10%	100%	1%	0.99	1%	1%	36%	13%	7.54	14%	\$ 1,880	8%	90%	4.49	45%	0.06	83%	-0.01	211%	-1.58	0%	0.00
Saudi Arabia	7%	0.98	2%	23%	6%	15%	99%	2%	-	-	7%	23%	8%	6.14	7%	\$ 464	-3%	77%	6.46	84%	0.66	41%	0.28	2%	0.63	0%	0.00
Syrian Arab Republic	18%	0.82	47%	1%	5%	7%	97%	28%	0.67	6%	31%	50%	5%	4.61	36%	\$ 138	8%	50%	7.69	104%	0.50	43%	0.29	3%	0.42	8%	0.00
United Arab Emirates	24%	0.95	0%	96%	7%	10%	99%	1%	0.99	1%	2%	-	8%	7.40	41%	\$ 1,838	-2%	81%	5.91	48%	0.06	73%	-0.01	9%	-1.38	0%	0.00
Yemen	20%	0.83	-	10%	4%	11%	25%	28%	-	-	20%	-	9%	3.66	1%	\$ 39	-28%	29%	7.60	109%	0.82	51%	0.81	2%	0.83	3%	1.00

in January 1994 as the world's largest free trade bloc" all have direct implications on the economies of the region and the future of the manufacturing sector.⁵

Such developments do not only imply a changing industrial and trade environment in terms of organization, but more importantly, they denote a qualitative change upon which future industrial and trading activities will depend. The information and telecommunication revolution, advanced technological innovations, alternative management techniques and highly competitive capital-intensive production which will govern future manufacturing industries, present serious challenges to the economies of the developing world.

In the ESCWA region, efforts to link the domestic economies to the global market have induced a shift in the economic orientation and industrial policies of most of the region's countries. Such changes will undoubtedly affect the level and nature of industrialization and economic growth in general, and the role of women in the economic and manufacturing activities in particular. The movement towards economic privatization, capital-intensive and advanced technology industry, export oriented economies and free zone production sites, provide for a changing industrial and economic context along which women's future role in manufacturing will have to be assessed.

In addition to the challenges of economic restructuring, capital and investment flow, quality control, efficiency and competitiveness, one basic challenge is the qualitative development of the industrial labor force itself. In order to meet the requirements of a highly competitive global economy, advanced technical and managerial training together with skill development programs have to be systematically undertaken. While most public and private manufacturing enterprises already provide technical and managerial training for their employees, the thrust of such programs would have to address the new industrial and manufacturing market demands. Given that women's share of conventional skill development and training opportunities has been considerably minimal, their share of advanced technical and managerial training in the future may be even more limited. With the expected changes in the skill requirements for advanced industrial operation, women will thus face an added problem of qualifying for the type of skills needed in modern manufacturing production.

The relocation of labor-intensive manufacturing industries to developing countries will increasingly affect the future role of women in this industrial sub-sector. While women remain the largest conventional pool for cheap labor in the export oriented labor-intensive garment, textile, electronic and food industries, advanced technical and competitive production required by manufacturing investors necessitate the presence

⁵Economic Outlook and Manufacturing Prospects in the ESCWA and North Africa Region, 1994-1995. Paper presented to UNIDO Workshop on Regional Forecasting, October 1994, by Hassan Charif and Umayma Y. Nasser, Industry Section: Sectoral Issues and Policies Division, UN ESCWA.

of a skilled labor force in the host countries. Accordingly, although the relocation of labor-intensive manufacturing industries theoretically promise more opportunities for women's participation in manufacturing in the developing countries, without the skill qualifications and diversification needed for future manufacturing production, relocated industries may not automatically enlarge the demand for women in the manufacturing labor force.

In summary, the economic reorientations of privatization, trade and fiscal liberalizations, capital-intensive and technologically advanced production prompted by the ensuing global economic trends pose compounded problems for countries of the ESCWA region. On the one hand, the impediments of capital scarcity, technological underdevelopment, restrictive fiscal and trading regulations, investment policies and management techniques, are substantial problem areas which need immediate attention. On the other hand, linking the region's economies to the global economic order poses the challenge of preparing a labor force with the needed production skills. In the absence of gender sensitive training and skill advancement programs, women may be the first to drop out from such an industrial labor force.

CHAPTER II. PATTERNS AND DETERMINANTS OF WOMEN'S ROLE IN MANUFACTURING

In this chapter, the main characteristics governing the participation of women in the economy and manufacturing are analyzed according to the six systems outlined in the study's conceptual frame. A number of gender sensitive indicators are used in this chapter to delineate the determinants of women's participation in the modern sectors of the economy, with particular focus on the nature and patterns of women's industrial activity (see Table 2). An overview of the economic and industrial environment in the region is provided to help put into context the patterns and determinants of women's economic participation in the region.

II.1 WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN THE ECONOMY AND MANUFACTURING

II.1.1. Labor Force Characteristics:

Women's rates of participation in the labor force in countries of the ESCWA region are among the lowest in the world. While reasonable growth rates averaging 5 to 6 per cent per annum are witnessed over the period 1980-1990, still by 1993 only 22% of the women population in the ESCWA region are estimated to be economically active, constituting 19.4% of the entire labor force in the region. On average, women's participation rates in the individual ESCWA countries stands at 20%, with substantial disparities among the various countries of the region (see Figure 2). Such discrepancies between the individual countries can be explained, on the one hand in relation to the overall nature of the countries' economic structure and annual growth rates, and on the other hand through the variations in the levels of women's educational attainment and cultural norms governing the patterns of women's

involvement in, or seclusion from, the public work domain.

The disparity between the rates of women participation in the labor force and that of men is considerably high in the thirteen member countries. Egypt shows the lowest degree of disparity with 39 women to every 100 men, followed by Kuwait and Bahrain and Syria, with 32 and 21 women to every 100 men, respectively. While the least disparity rate is still substantially high, the maximum disparity level points to a more gloomier picture, with a mere 3 women to every 100 men in Yemen. On average, the disparity rate between female and male participation in the labor force is considerably high, with 15 women to every 100 men.

The age distribution of the economically active women in the region indicates that the largest age group represented in the labor force is the age category between 25-59 years. The same age bracket also claims the highest representation of males in the labor force. Such age group concentrations matches the relatively high dependency ratio in countries of the region. Cultural norms may help explain such late entries into the labor force where the practice of combining work and education simultaneously is not too common in the Arab World. For those who are fortunate enough to complete their formal school and university education, the norm in Arab countries is to go through the various educational stages with no or minimum interruption. Unlike some other societies, engaging in work in the Arab region is generally delayed till after the completion of third level or even university education. Given that in most countries both school and higher university education is free, a growing number of the population is enrolled and hence outside the regular job market. For that portion of the population who are not enrolled in secondary or higher levels of education, their work is generally casual or informal in nature, and hence largely unaccounted for in labor surveys. In addition to the education norms, marriage plays a further role in delaying women's movement into the labor force. Most Arab women seek employment after they get married, although some studies indicate a gradual easing of such norms, primarily because of economic necessity.

The sectoral distribution of the economically active women in the ESCWA region indicates a relatively high concentration of women in the tertiary, claiming a regional average of 59% of all working women (see Figure 3). As noted in a recent ESCWA report, "in 1993 the proportion of women working in the agricultural sector stood at around one-fourth of the total female labor force with less than one-fifth working in the industrial sector; while the services sector employed, on average, over one-half of the female labor force".⁶ On average, in countries of the region where agriculture exists, the share of women from the total agricultural labor force is 16.2%.⁷ As a percentage of the total women labor force, the female agricultural labor force in the region averages 22%. Growth rates in the number of women in the agricultural labor force over the 1980-1990 decade indicate either very slow rates of growth in women's agricultural activity or actual decline, compared to an average growth rate of 5.2%

⁶ESCWA. Survey of Women and Development, 1994. p.13

⁷FAO. Printout of AGROSTAT, 1993

in women's participation rate in the total labor force over the same period.⁴

The growth in the participation rate of women in the labor force is predominantly absorbed by the service sectors where women's growing levels of educational achievement coupled with an overriding cultural preference for women's work in this sector have contributed to women's growing involvement in the formal economy. Across the countries of the ESCWA region, on average 66% of the economically active women population are working in the tertiary sector.

In addition to educational attainment, cultural factors, particularly in the Gulf countries, have prompted women's participation in gender segregated work domains, such as teaching in girls schools or nursing in hospitals reserved for women patients. In countries where there are no strict norms of gender seclusion, women have also tended to concentrate in jobs perceived as "culturally" acceptable, those being predominantly in the services sector. The industrial sectors are conventionally perceived in the region as male domains. Nevertheless, women's participation in these sectors has increased over the last two decades, albeit with considerable differentials in terms of job levels and promotional possibilities available to their male counterparts in the same sector.

In nine of the region's thirteen countries where data on women's occupational distribution is available, the largest occupational group concentration of working women is in professional and technical occupations, with an average of 41% of the working women in those nine countries falling in this occupational group. On average, women constitute roughly one third (30%) of the total labor force working in this occupational group in nine countries of the region on which data is available. Such occupational group concentration reflects the increasing levels of educational attainment of women in the Arab world, where in some countries they have reached full parity with male enrollment at the secondary and third educational levels, and in a few cases even surpassed the share of their male counterparts.

However, women remain meagerly represented in administrative and managerial occupations, where they constitute on average 0.6% of the total women labor force. As a percentage from the total labor force in management occupations, women's share in this occupational group averages 5.2%. Such figures indicate a substantial degree of horizontal exclusion of women from leading positions in their respective work domains.

Women's employment rate in countries of the region is relatively high compared to their rate of participation in the labor force (see Figure 4). On average, 86.2% of all working women in the ESCWA region are employed. Predominantly, most working women fall in the category of employees, except in the case of Yemen where women are mostly unpaid family workers (74% of the economically active women). Excluding Yemen, women employees range from 47% in Syria to 98% in Kuwait of the total economically active women population, with that employment status

⁴ESCWA. op.cit.

absorbing on average 72.7% of all economically active women in the region (excluding non-nationals). While data on the distribution of the labor force among the employment sectors is not available for all countries in the region, research findings and sample surveys show that the overriding concentration of women employees is in the government and public sectors. For instance, the results of a labor force sample survey conducted in Egypt in 1988 indicate that the government sector absorbs 70% of all educated women working in professional and technical occupations.

Compared to the share of employees in the total labor force, the percentage of women employees does not exceed 21%, falling to as low as 6%. On average, in eight of the region's thirteen countries where data is available, the percentage of women employees from the total number of employees is a mere 13.5%. On the other hand, the percentage of women who are unpaid family workers from the total unpaid family workers averages 25% throughout the region, with the percentage of women in this category reaching roughly 48%, 53% and 69% in Syria, Iraq and Yemen, respectively. It is noteworthy that the highest percentage of women in the two categories of unpaid family workers and own account employers are found in countries with substantially large agricultural economies. It should, however, be noted that most women in the region do not perceive of their activity within the family as constituting work. Hence, when asked, most women who in reality undertake unpaid work in the family, do not place themselves in this category. Statistical estimates obtained through national censuses and surveys accordingly do not reflect the real size of women's unpaid family work, reporting in essence women's "perception" of their activities rather than the actual nature of their work. Accordingly, one can safely assume that in most countries of the region the percentage of unpaid family workers among women is substantially higher than that reflected in survey estimates.

While the rates of Arab women's participation in the formal economy show positive trends over the last two decades, the economic situation experienced by most countries in the region over that same period has propelled a simultaneous mushrooming of the informal sector where women have been increasingly represented. Particularly in the non-oil economies of the region, the structural adjustment programs adopted in the eighties have impacted severely on those already burdened with poverty and unemployment. The shifts in the economic orientation of most Arab countries from a centralized state economy premised on public sector led industrialization, and policies of import-substitution, income redistribution and welfare programs, to a free market economy with the gradual lifting of subsidies and the dismantling of the public sector which provided the main work venue for most of the labor force in favor for an infant private sector largely unwilling or unable to carry the expense of industrialization, have all simultaneously erupted in severe economic hardships, unemployment and rapidly widening poverty ridden strata who were already socially and economically disadvantaged.

For the already employed, albeit with incomes increasingly losing in real value in the face of the mounting inflation resulting from the economic reform packages, the informal sector provided an additional venue for a second income to compensate for the lost value of their wages. For the unemployed, the informal sector often presented

the only possibility for generating income. For women, who are the most affected among the poor strata, informal economic activities which were conventionally carried out for "additional" income such as raising poultry, cottage industry, food vending and weaving, became essential for their livelihood and subsistence. The scope and nature of informal economic activities also broadened, moving from the traditionally home based individual tasks, to collective small-scale manufacturing or sales enterprise usually engaging around five to ten individuals. According to official estimates in Egypt, in 1986 small scale enterprises with less than ten workers constituted 96.5% of all private establishments in that year.⁹ As noted in a recent study on Egypt's informal sector, it is estimated that roughly 90% of the total private sector employment outside agriculture is absorbed by the informal sector.¹⁰ In spite of its precarious organization, the informal sector ultimately proves more appealing, particularly to women who have traditionally been marginalized from the formal system and are today unable or unwilling to perform through it.

II.1.2. Industrial Labor Force Characteristics:

Compared to their share in the service sectors of the economy, women's share in industrial employment in the ESCWA region is considerably low, probably among the lowest in the world. In ten of the thirteen countries on which data on women's industrial employment is available, on average their share of employment in this sector does not exceed 4.5% of the total industrial labor force. Women's share in manufacturing employment is again quite meager, reaching on average 8.6% of the total manufacturing labor force. As a percentage of the total women labor force, female participation rates in manufacturing averages 9.26% in the ESCWA region (see Figure 5).

The share of women in manufacturing from the total female industrial labor force, is however, substantially high, reaching on average 74.4% in ten out of the thirteen countries in the region (see Figure 6). While variations exist between the different countries, except for U.A.E., the share of women in manufacturing from the total female industrial labor force exceeds 53%, reaching as high as 91.4% in Jordan.

Variations in the participation rates of women in manufacturing in the ESCWA region reflect, on the one hand, the overall industrial level of the different countries in the region, and on the other hand, variations in the socio-economic and cultural determinants governing women's participation in industry in general. For instance, the lowest rates of women's participation in manufacturing are found in countries with relatively short histories of industrialization, high socio-economic levels in terms of GDP, higher levels of women tertiary education, and cultural norms favoring women's employment in the services sector, such as in the Gulf states. On the other

⁹ CAPMAS, Establishment Census 1986

¹⁰ Handoussa, Heba and Gillian M. Potter. "Egypt's Informal Sector: Engine of Growth?". Paper presented to the MESA Conference, Portland, October 1992, p.4

hand, countries with relatively high rates of women's manufacturing employment, such as Egypt, Iraq, and Syria (and lately Jordan) have experienced earlier industrialization efforts, have lower GDP levels, are generally less gender segregated than the Gulf countries, and have lower educational attainment levels among their women population. With women's manufacturing employment in the region generally limited to labor intensive industries and low-skill jobs, women in countries with lower socio-economic levels tend to see more women participation in manufacturing as opposed to the wealthier Oil states where industrialization is considerably recent and where women's educational attainment, and gender segregation norms, largely limits women's participation to the tertiary sector. Furthermore, it is in the less wealthier countries of the region that the informal sector has traditionally existed, and recently mushroomed in the face of growing poverty and policies of economic privatization carried through the packages of structural reform. Traditionally providing income generating opportunities to women, the informal sector currently absorbs a substantial portion of women's manufacturing employment in the non-oil producing countries.

Statistical data on the employment status of women in manufacturing only exists for five of the region's countries (Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Syria, and Former Republic of Yemen). Except for Former Republic of Yemen, the overriding majority of women in manufacturing are employees, ranging from 92.7% in Egypt to 63.7% in Jordan. While the data on employment is not distributed according to private and public enterprises, labor sample surveys and empirical research on women's employment show an overwhelming concentration of women employees in the public and government sectors. Women employers in manufacturing are quite rare, where on average they do not exceed 1.1% of women's manufacturing employment in the five countries. The percentage of own account workers and unpaid family workers are relatively high in the five countries, averaging 22% and 8.1%, respectively. These two categories are generally assumed under informal sector employment, where own account employment absorbs 45.7% of women in manufacturing in Yemen, 20.8% in Syria and 20.1% in Jordan. According to available data, women's informal manufacturing employment is highest in Yemen, where only 30% of all women in manufacturing are employees.

While statistical data on the occupational distribution of women in manufacturing is mostly lacking, case studies show that women's manufacturing activities are concentrated at the low end of the occupational hierarchy. For instance, the findings of a study covering women's participation in textile and food industries in Egypt, Iraq, Syria, Jordan and Yemen shows that women in these industries are largely concentrated on the assembly line, with apparent horizontal patterns of discrimination within the individual work establishments.¹¹ The percentage of women holding administrative and supervisory jobs in these industries is practically negligible. While such occupational segregation has often been explained in relation to women's lower educational status, there is little empirical evidence supporting such an assumption.

¹¹ESCWA Study on the Participation of Women in Food and Textile Industries in the ESCWA Region, 1994.

For instance, in a study on women's participation in pharmaceutical and electronic industries in Egypt, Jordan and Syria, the percentage of women with secondary and third level education exceeds that of their male counterpart in the same factory in Egypt and Syria, and is at parity level in Jordan. Nevertheless, women were predominantly excluded from the administrative and supervisory jobs in those two industries.¹²

II.2 Characteristics of Social and Demographic Conditions

In the following section, a number of gender sensitive socio-demographic indicators are reviewed to delineate the social context affecting the rate and nature of women's economic activity in the ESCWA region. Socio-demographic conditions generally reflect the level of economic development of societies. Theoretically, the relationship is often multi-directional, where economic development usually prompts more favorable socio-demographic conditions and the latter in turn allows for an environment more conducive to economic development.

One of the basic demographic characteristic of the Arab world is its exceedingly high dependency ratios, probably among the highest in the world. On average, throughout the countries of the ESCWA region, the dependency ratio is estimated at 79.3%. Pictured on a pyramid like shape, the size of the economically active population is staggeringly small, with the base of the population pyramid comprising on average 41% of the population below 15 years of age. Added to the already low rates of economic activity in general, such high dependency ratios further augment the development challenges faced by the region.

Average total fertility rates in the region reflect such a youth structure of the population, where total fertility rates average 5.84 and exceed 7.5 in three of the region's countries (Oman, Syria and Yemen). With the mean age of first marriage among Arab women 22 years, and given the cultural pressure to bear children very soon after marriage, the child bearing span is substantially long. Nevertheless, statistics show a positive trend in some countries of the region to limit and/or regulate child bearing, where the use of contraceptives among women in Bahrain and Egypt for instance reached in 1990 53% and 50%, respectively.

The spatial distribution of population in the ESCWA region indicates relatively high levels of urbanization, where roughly 70% of the population (1995 estimates) reside in urban areas. While urbanization rates generally reflect higher rates of industrialization, in the Arab world, urbanization trends have not been parallel by comparable rates of industrial growth. Nonetheless, the trend in itself is a positive and necessary indicator for potential industrial development.

Women constitute on average 46.3% of the total urban population, which is more

¹²ESCWA Study on The participation of Women in Pharmaceutical and Electronic Industries in Countries of the ESCWA Region. December 1993, pp.11-22

than their share of the rural population where on average they constitute 43.5% of the total rural population. The disparity rate between women and men residing in urban areas is generally at parity level, except for the U.A.E. and Bahrain where the disparity rate is 47 and 70 women to every 100 men, respectively. In Kuwait, the disparity level is in favor of women where to every 100 men in the urban population there are 130 women. The share of urbanite women provides a positive indication for the potential socio-economic betterment among women in the Arab region. With the general pattern of centralization of services in large urban centers in the Arab world, urban women stand a better chance of receiving formal education and assuming jobs in the formal sectors of the economy than their rural counterparts.

In the six countries where data is available on the breakdown of rural/urban population by economic activity rates, in only two of these countries (Egypt and Syria), the rate of economically active women is higher in rural areas than in urban centers. This is basically due to the two countries' large agricultural base which engages a substantial number of working women in the rural areas. On average, only 18% of the women population aged 15 and above in urban areas are economically active, compared to 17% of their total population in rural areas. The percentage of unemployed women in urban areas averages 13.6% of the total women labor force, while it drops to an average of 11% in rural areas. Compared to their male counterpart, unemployment among men in the urban centers averages 4.8%, and 3.9% in rural areas. While both populations exhibit the same pattern of unemployment in both urban and rural areas, the women's share of unemployment in both urban and rural areas nearly triples that of men. Such high unemployment rates among the women population in general has added considerably to their share of informal sector activities.

Educational attainment is a basic measure of societal development. In the ESCWA region, the last three decades have witnessed considerable improvement in the educational level of the population in general. Nevertheless, relatively high illiteracy rates persist, particularly in rural areas, and specifically among the women population. According to the 1990 estimates (UNDP, Human Development Report, 1991-1994), literacy rates among the women population aged 15 years and above stands at 57.3%, compared to 48.8% in 1985. Compared to their male counterpart, literacy rates among men in 1990 stood at 77.1%, compared to 68.4% in 1985. According to latest censuses, the regional gender disparity in literacy rates still indicates 70 literate women to every 100 men.

Improvements in the enrollment rates of females in all three educational levels reflects positive trends towards an enhancement of women's access to education. Secondary and tertiary school enrollment in particular provide important indicators for the potential of women's increasing rates of participation in the formal sectors of the economy. While gender disparities in the enrollment rates at these two educational levels still persist, the gap is closing in many countries of the region and even exceeding parity levels in favor of females in many of the countries (see Figure 7). Data on Yemen shows the highest gender disparity rates in the region, where the share of women in secondary enrollment is as low as 19%, and 17% in the tertiary level.

It is interesting to note that the least gender disparity rates in educational enrollment at the secondary and tertiary levels are predominantly found in countries of the Gulf. While this suggests a positive correlation between secondary and tertiary school enrollment and higher GDP levels, it is important to realize the cultural, rather than the purely economic, determinants which induce such high enrollment rates among females in some of the Gulf states.

Contrary to conventional wisdom, gender segregation prevalent at varying degrees in the Gulf states has helped increase women's share of formal education. Gender segregated schools help maintain the cultural norms of gender seclusion, however, at the same time allowing an increasing number of girls to receive formal school education as their male counterparts. High school enrollments in Lebanon and Jordan also find cultural justification, albeit differently, where there is cultural stress rather than restriction on females equal access to education.

Economic factors, however, tend to have a more direct effect on women's access to education in countries at the lower end of the GDP levels. The least female school enrollment rates, and the highest gender disparities, in the region are found in countries with the lowest GDP. Cultural seclusion patterns per se do not rank prominently in these countries, unlike the Gulf states. Cultural factors, however, in conjunction with low economic standards of living explain the low rates of female school enrollment, where in situations of economic need, the cultural preference is to educate boys rather than girls. Given such a choice, most families perceive of their daughters' future as wives and mothers, with their main role restricted to the household activities. Female education for the majority of the poor in the region is thus considered an unaffordable luxury.

The distribution of enrolled female students at the tertiary level among the various educational fields shows an overriding concentration in the fields of Educational Sciences, Humanities and Communications and Business Administration. Particularly in the Gulf countries, females are predominantly concentrated in educational sciences, where the increasing demand for women teachers to work in gender segregated girls' schools in these countries explains the high concentration of females in this educational field.

While female enrollment in the scientific and technical fields of education is generally low in the region, the share of female graduates from these fields gives a more positive indicator of women's potential employment in the technical and scientific fields. In four out of eight countries (Jordan, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates) where the relevant data is available, female graduates from these fields exceeds the share of male graduates, ranging from 61.6% to 52.8% of all graduates in the technical and scientific fields in the U.A.E. and Saudi Arabia, respectively. In Bahrain, Iraq and Qatar, the share of female graduates from the field of Natural Sciences in 1990 reached 39%, 54.9% and 58.3%, respectively, of all graduates from this field. In Egypt, where the lowest rates of female enrollment in the scientific and technical fields exists, their share from the total number of graduates in these fields is 22.7%.

These figures support the relatively high rates of women's concentration in the professional and technical occupational category. Nevertheless, the share of women graduates from these fields do not correspond with their share of professional and technical occupations, indicating persisting patterns of disparity between women and men at the higher occupational levels.

II.3 Characteristics of Political and Institutional Environment

In this section, the institutional environment in which women exist is examined according to a number of indicators used to measure the extent of political representation and legal guarantees available for women in the ESCWA member countries. The considerable institutional variations between the various countries in the region makes it difficult, if not impossible, to address the region along comparable institutional contexts. Women are thus subject not only to quantitative differences in the level of institutional development in the various ESCWA countries, but to basic qualitative differences.

There is little doubt that the political and institutional environment impacts directly on the nature, level and potential of socio-economic development in any society. Given the patrimonial nature of political organization in most Arab countries, the political and legal structures are of immediate importance in understanding and assessing the socio-economic determinants of development in the Arab world. Exceedingly more than in institutionalized systems, in patrimonial organizations the political, social and economic are meshed, largely through informal structures.

In addition to their patrimonial structures, the political and institutional environment of most of the Arab countries is largely patriarchal. That is, women are generally excluded from leading formal political, judicial and executive positions. While exceptions do exist in some of the region's countries where there is no explicit legal exclusion of women from political participation or holding high level public office, women's share in the political arena remains extremely minute. In other countries of the region, women have yet to enjoy equal personal and civil rights as full citizens.

In the few countries where formal political organization exists, women have been represented in parliament and to a lesser extent in cabinet offices. Nonetheless, such representation has remained extremely minimal, averaging 2.26% throughout the region at the parliamentary level, and even less at the executive cabinet level. Nevertheless, some positive indications are witnessed in countries like Egypt, Jordan and Syria, where women have headed ministries traditionally assigned to men such as Industry, Information, Culture and Scientific Research. On the Palestinian political scene, women have also played an active role as official spoke persons in political negotiations and have assumed leading positions in the emerging formal Palestinian political structure. On the whole, while women are still far from having equal access to leading political positions, a few cases suggest that the inclusion of women at the higher ranks of the decision making process is not totally unattainable.

II.4. Determinants of Women's Participation in Manufacturing:

The results of the correlation analysis across the six systems and within each system suggest which indicators seem to affect the integration rate and pattern of involvement of women in manufacturing industries. It should be noted, however, that while correlation analysis is not a causal relationship, it does provide an indication of the strength which some indicators assume in our understanding of the impediments and determinants of women's participation in manufacturing in the ESCWA region.

II.4.1. Relationships between Systems:

Indicators characterizing the labor force (system I) and those characterizing the industrial labor force (system II) show strong correlations in countries of the ESCWA region, both in relation to one another and in relation to indicators characterizing the supply of the labor force (system IV). However, due to the cultural and developmental specificity of the region, such correlations are not always in the direction which our theoretical knowledge of intervening factors affecting the supply and demand of the labor force in general, and the industrial labor force in particular, suggests.

A strong, albeit negative, correlation exists between women's economic activity rate and both their share from and rate of manufacturing employment. Such a pattern suggests that most of the economically active women in the region are not formally engaged in manufacturing industries. It also suggests that, particularly in the diversified economies of Egypt, Syria, Iraq, Jordan and Yemen, a substantial portion of women in manufacturing activity are engaged in the informal sector. The result of the correlation analysis strongly suggests such an informal pattern of manufacturing activity where a considerably high correlation exists between women's participation rate in the agricultural sector and their participation rate in manufacturing activity. On the other hand, as expected, a very strong negative correlation exists between women's participation rate in the tertiary sector and their participation rate in manufacturing activity. This is largely due to the situation in the Gulf region where most of the economically active women are in the tertiary sector and are largely excluded from the industrial and manufacturing sectors.

As expected, a relatively high relationship exists between women's low economic activity rate and high gender disparities in primary school enrolment. Women's employment rate is also negatively affected by high gender gaps in literacy rates and wide gender disparities in primary and secondary school enrolment. Nevertheless, there is no significant relationship between women's activity rate and secondary school enrolment, suggesting that a considerable portion of the economically active women population (particularly in the diversified economies) is working outside the formal sectors of the economy.

It is interesting to note that there is no significant correlation between women's employment rate and total fertility rates. This is largely because the highest fertility

rates are found both in countries with high female employment rates, such as Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates, and in countries with lower female employment rates such as Syria, Saudi Arabia, Oman and Yemen. This suggests that fertility rates in the region are largely a product of cultural norms rather than purely socio-economic factors.

The results of the correlation analysis further reflect some unconventional relationships between the rates of female participation in manufacturing and women's socio-economic status, together with some macro economic indicators. Such apparent incongruencies are on the one hand largely due to the fact that most female manufacturing activity is found in the economically diversified, albeit less affluent, countries of the region, where women's socio-economic status is relatively lower than that found in the more economically affluent countries of the Gulf, and on the other hand because most of the manufacturing activity of women is in the informal sector which is much more pronounced in the diversified economies.

For instance, a strong correlation is detected between higher women's participation in manufacturing activity and lower rates of urbanization, poor levels of industrialization and low GDP per capita. On the other hand, female manufacturing activity is higher in countries with high female agricultural activity, high dependency ratios, wide gender gaps in primary, secondary and tertiary school enrolment, low female secondary enrolment, and low age at first marriage for women. Such relationships suggest that within the diversified economies, significant structural factors affect women's participation in the formal manufacturing sector, leaving most of the female manufacturing activity in the informal domain. On the other hand, women's exclusion from the industrial and manufacturing sectors in the more socially and economically affluent countries of the Gulf region is primarily a cultural rather than a structural challenge.

II.4.2 Relationships within Systems:

A strong negative relationship exists between women's economic activity rate and women's unpaid family employment rate, suggesting that a growing portion of the economically active women population in the region are engaged in paid activity. In three countries, a strong relationship exists between women's economic activity rate and their activity rate in non-agricultural activity. This is probably on account of the nature of women's tertiary employment in the Gulf region, where a very strong relationship is also detected between women's employment rate in general and their concentration in the non-agricultural sectors. Significantly high negative correlations also exist between women's employment rate and both their self employment rate and unpaid family employment. This suggests that the predominant employment status for women is in the category of employees.

The participation rate of women in manufacturing activity shows a strong correlation with their participation rate in manufacturing employment. On the other hand, the latter is strongly negatively correlated with gender disparities in manufacturing

employment, and to a lesser extent with gender disparity in industrial activity. Understandably, a strong relationship is also seen between higher gender disparities in manufacturing employment and the decrease in women's overall share in manufacturing employment.

Among the economic indicators, a high correlation is found between GDP per capita and MVA per capita. However, both GDP per capita and MVA per capita show a significant negative correlation with the share of the food and textile sub-sectors in total MVA. This is of particular concern to our study where most of the women working in manufacturing are found in these sub-sectors.

Correlations of social and demographic indicators show a strong relationship between wide gender gaps in literacy rates and gender disparities in both primary and secondary school enrolment, and to a lesser extent although still significant with high dependency ratios. The gender gap in literacy rates also negatively correlates with the mean age at first marriage for women where an increase in the former matches a decrease in the latter. Furthermore, female secondary school enrolment shows a significant negative correlation with both the household size and gender gap in literacy rates, suggesting that an increase in the latter two indicators negatively affects the rate of female secondary school enrolment.

Figure 2

■ 1.1.2 Index male / female in EAP (years 15+) □ 1.1.1 Women's economic activity rate (15 +)

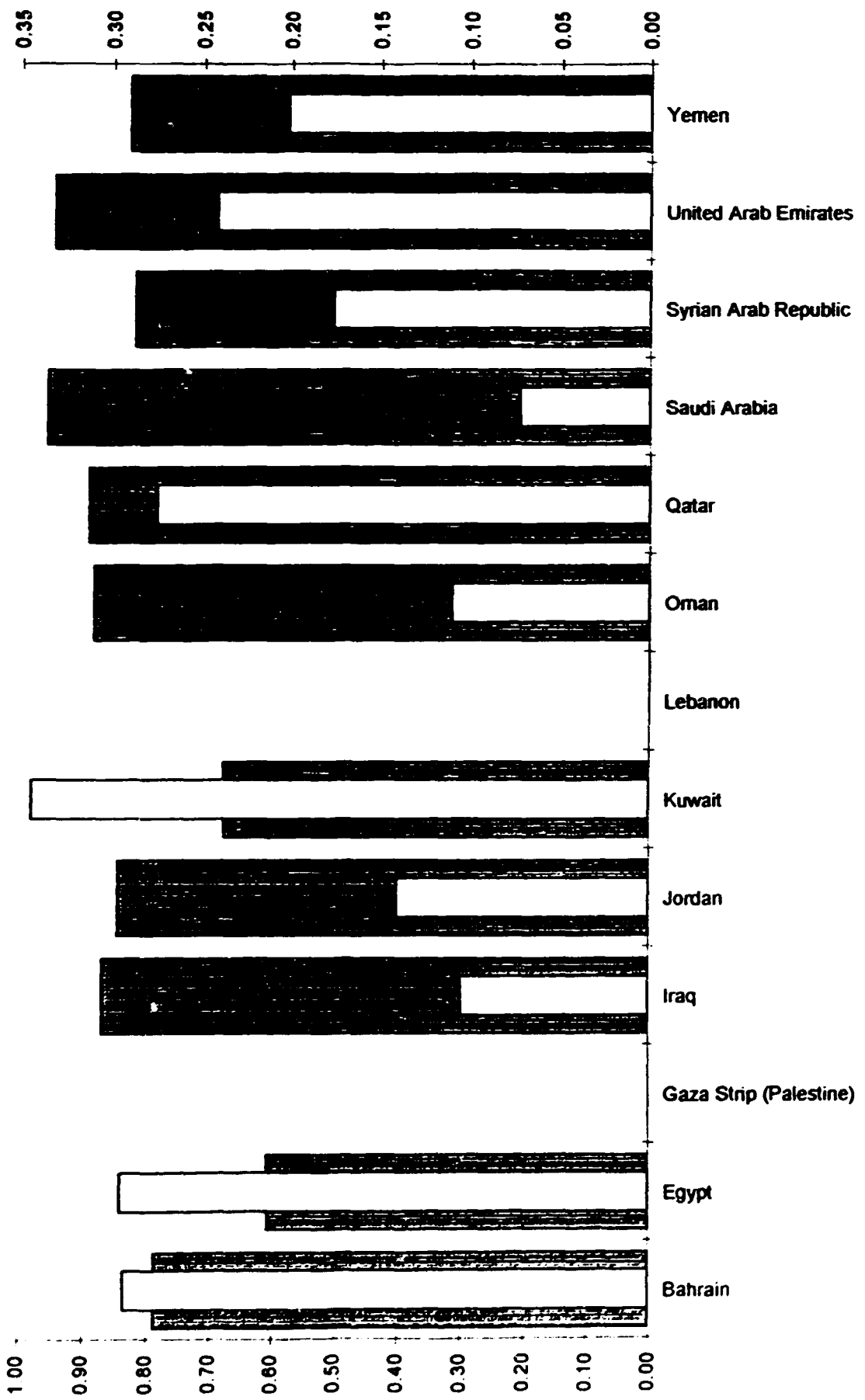


Figure 3

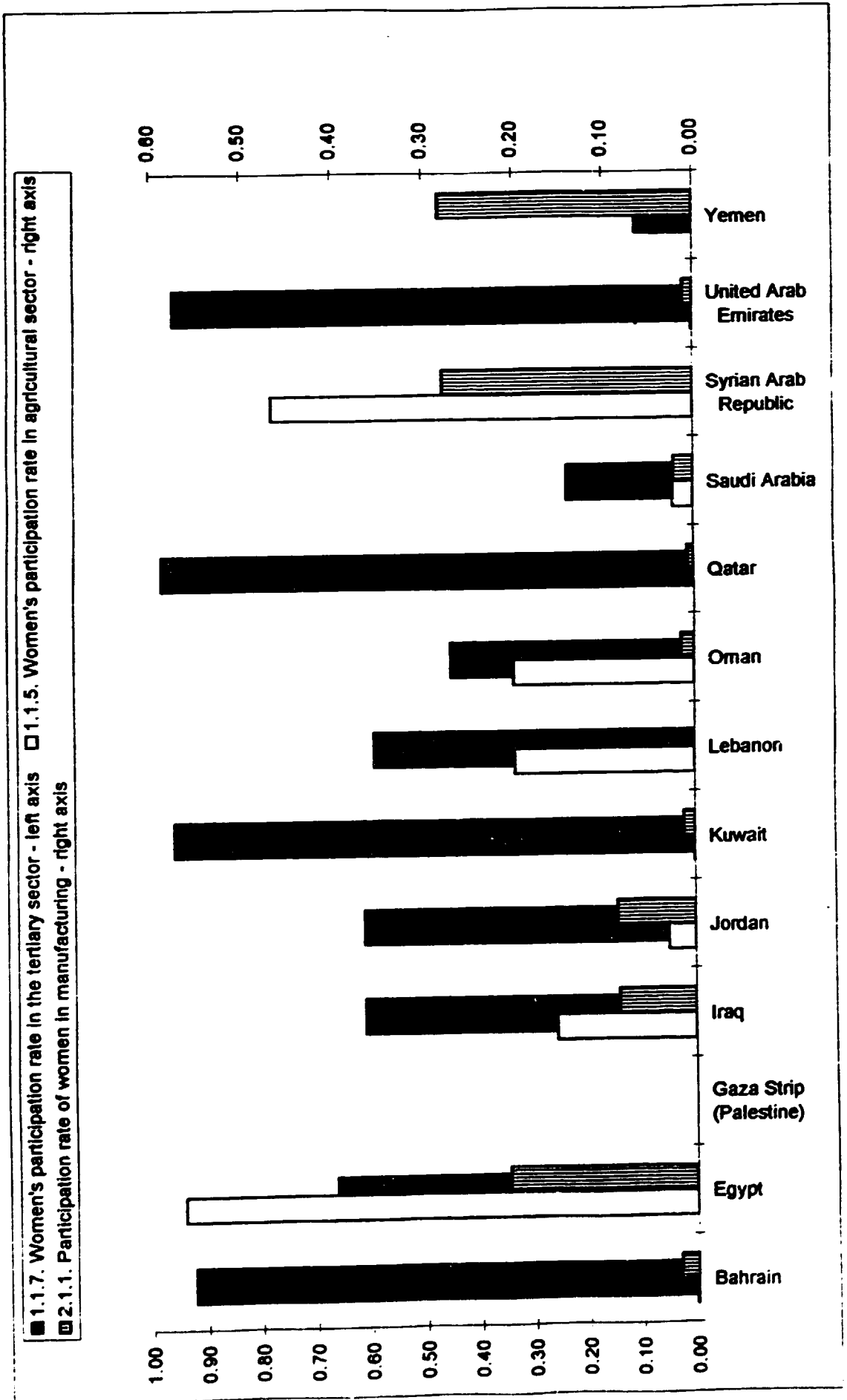


Figure 4

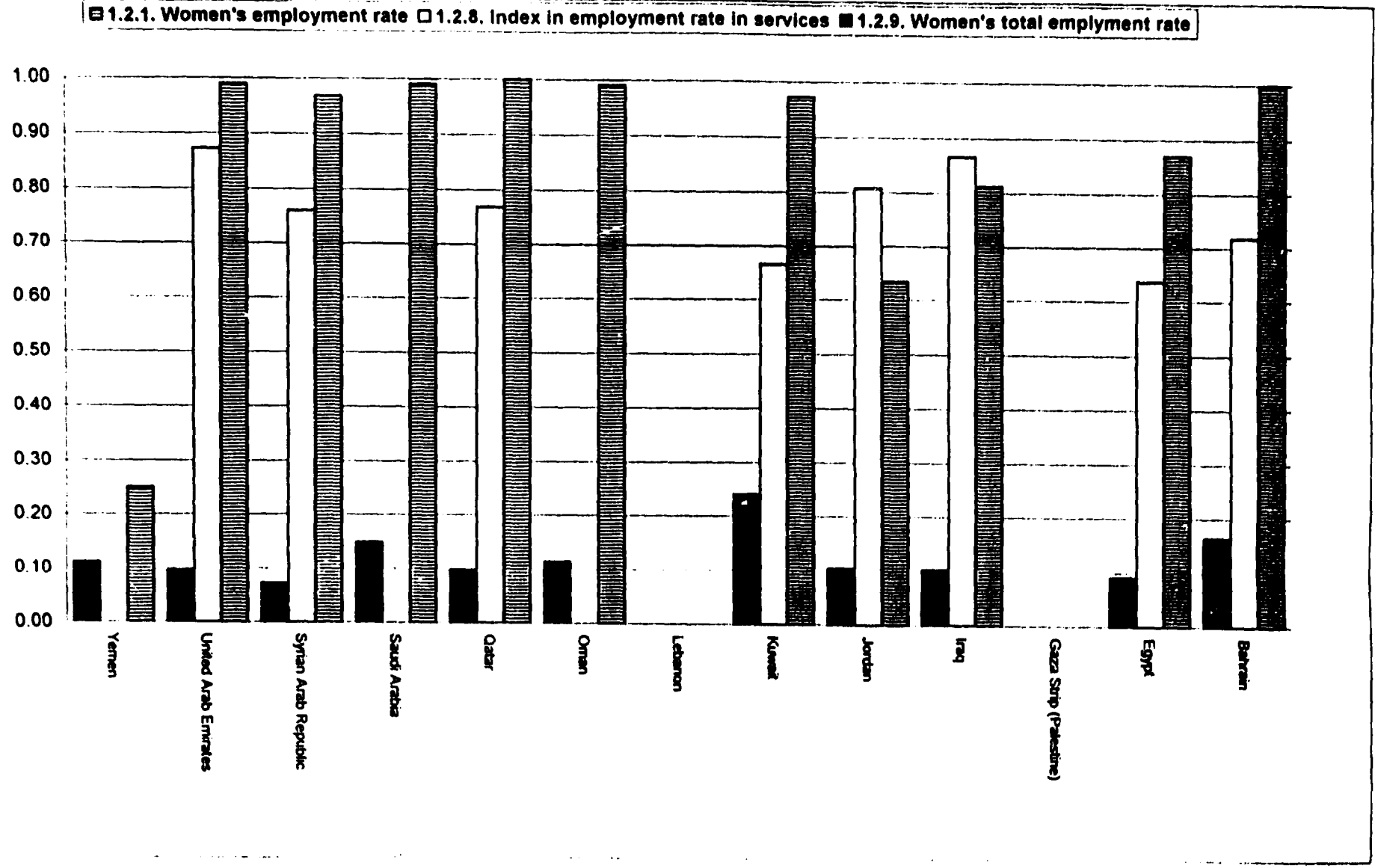


Figure 5

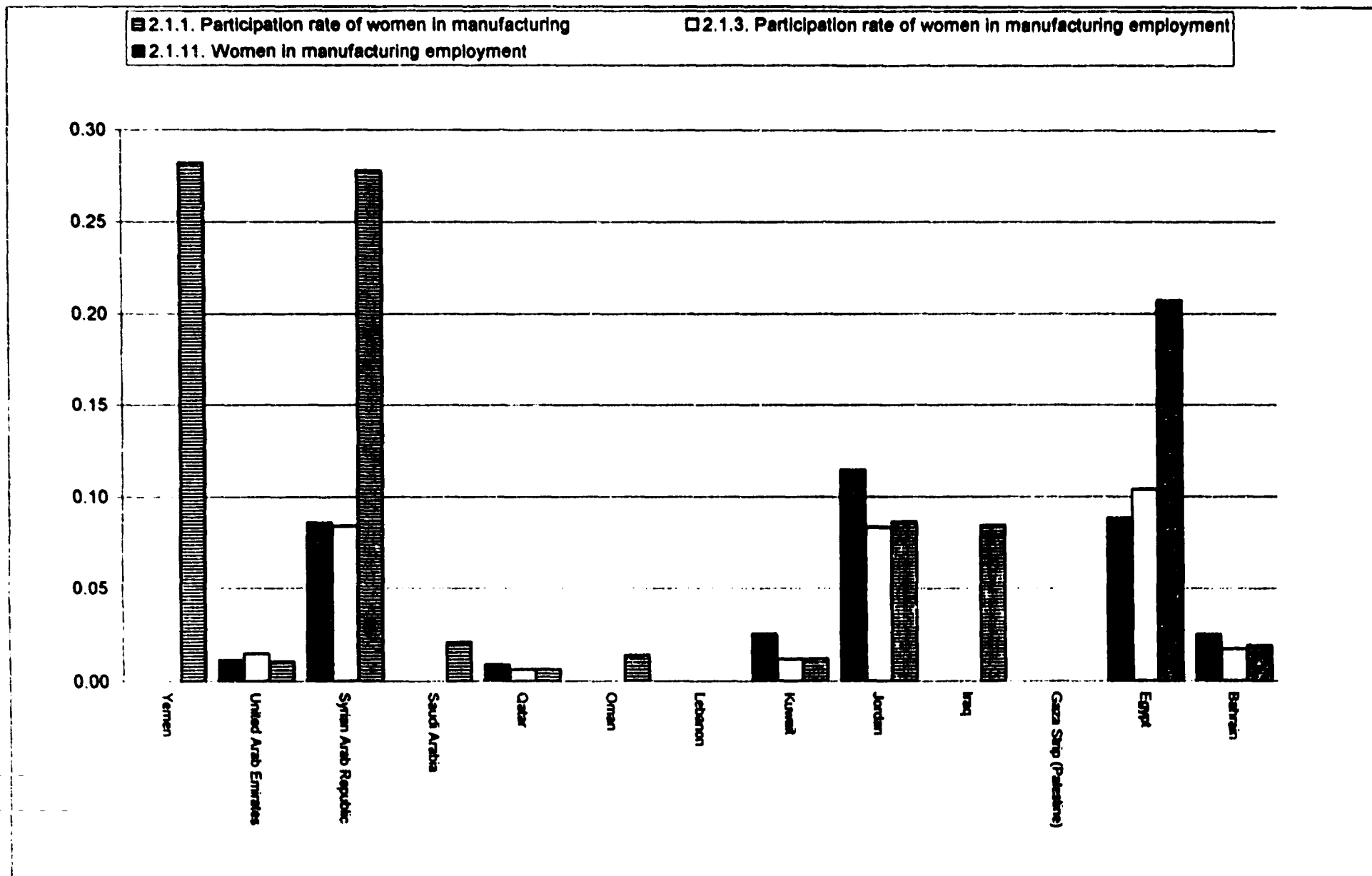


Figure 6

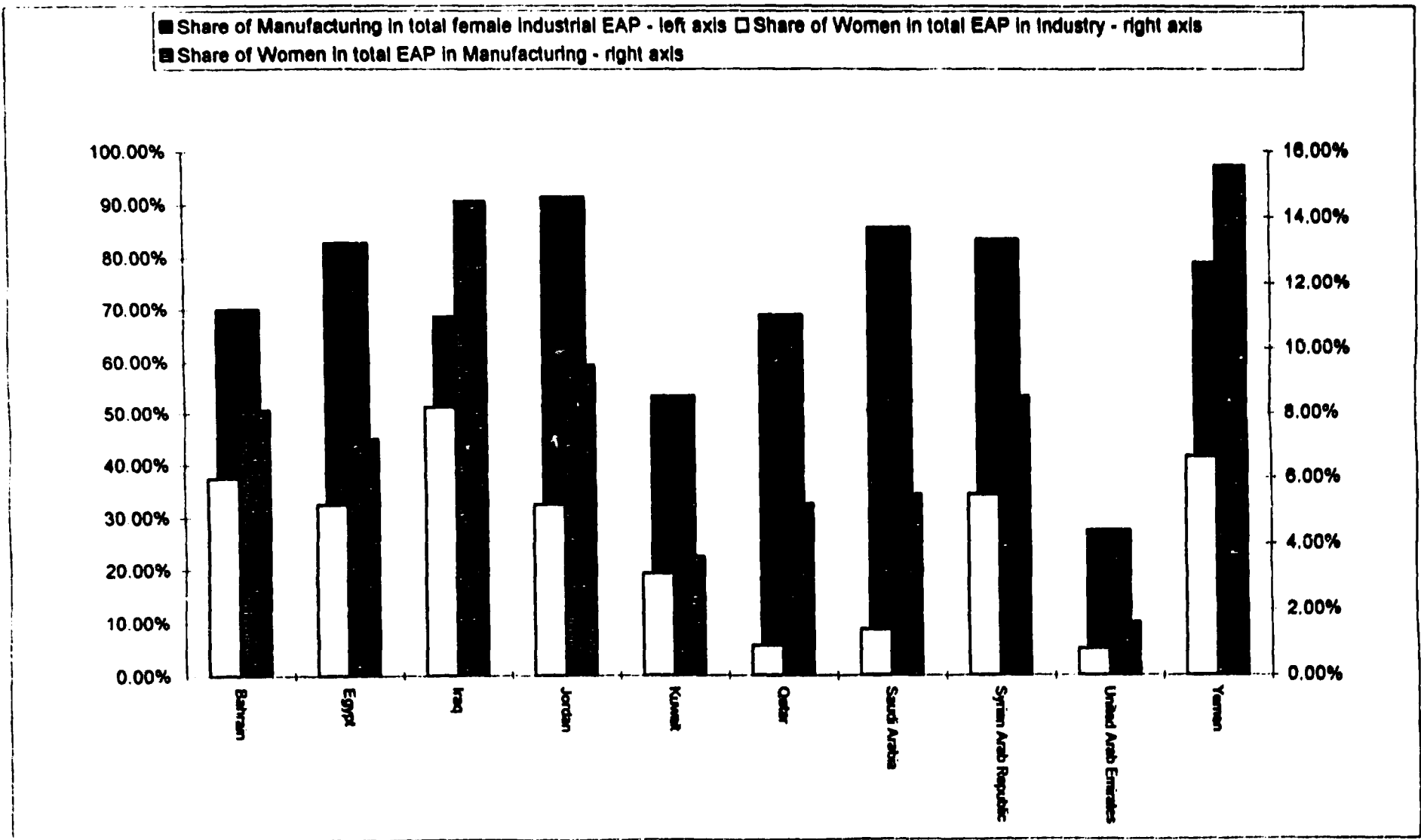
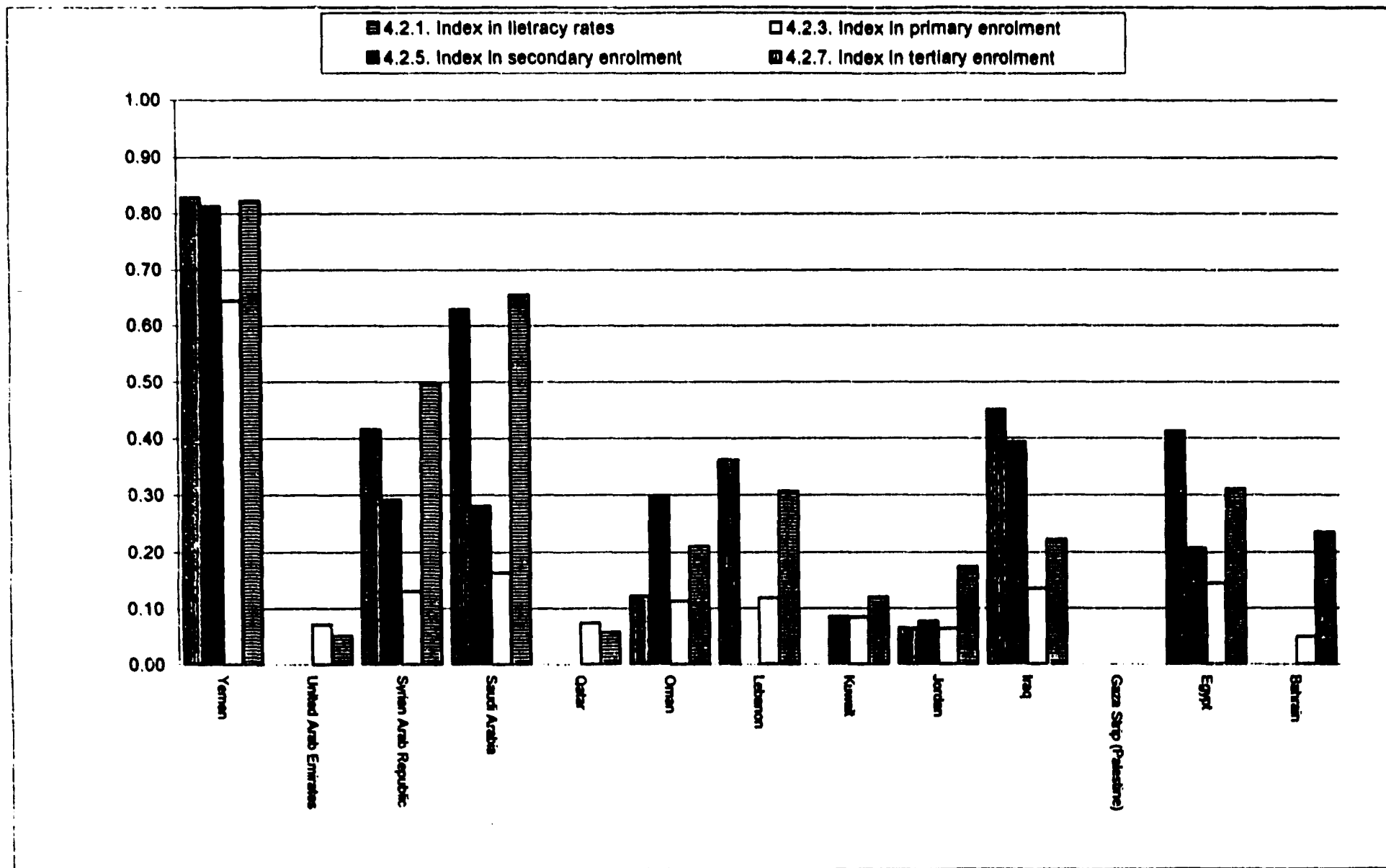


Figure 7



CHAPTER III. GROUPS OF COUNTRIES AND THEIR CHARACTERISTICS

In this chapter, an analytical review of the country clusters is presented in an effort to delineate the basic characteristics, constraints and determinants affecting women's socio-economic status and their participation in manufacturing employment in the region. As used in this study, cluster analysis helps in grouping individual countries according to selected social, economic, industrial, political and legal indicators that reflect both the level of societal development in general and women's status in particular. Designed to incorporate measures of the six sub-systems addressed in the study, the country groupings allow for a more explicit identification of the challenges faced by countries sharing the same -- or similar -- characteristics, and consequently a more concise formulation of the strategies for action needed to enhance women's social and economic status in the ESCWA region.

Three main country groupings were derived from the clustering analysis, covering ten of the region's thirteen countries. Palestine and Lebanon were not included in the clustering analysis due to the scarcity of data on them. On the other hand, due to its substantial variation, Yemen did not cluster with any of the three country groupings and is accordingly addressed separately.

The methodology used in this study is one based on a cluster analysis technique, whereby countries are grouped according to how they measure on a number of gender sensitive social, demographic, economic, legal and political indicators together with the countries' level of economic and industrial development at large. Because of such a conceptual and methodological approach, some of the country groups derived at, particularly in the case of cluster 3, do not seem to match our conventional knowledge of the countries involved. For instance, according to the composite measure of the above mentioned indicators, Syria falls in the same country grouping with Saudi Arabia and Oman. Given its diversified economy, Syria indeed differs from those two countries at some level, however, the statistical proximity between it and Saudi Arabia and Oman on the value of the above indicators places it within the same statistical cluster. Nevertheless, given the differences in the non-quantifiable cultural factors between Syria and both Saudi Arabia and Oman, the proposed strategies for the increase of women's participation in manufacturing in Syria are largely those proposed for countries of cluster 2.

The identified country groupings are as follows:

Cluster 1	Bahrain, Qatar, Kuwait and United Arab Emirate
Cluster 2	Egypt, Jordan and Iraq
Cluster 3	Oman, Saudi Arabia and Syrian Arab Republic

III.1. SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS

Countries in each of the three cluster groupings identified reflect considerable similarities in the level of industrial development, women's economic activity rates, women's share in manufacturing employment and social development indicators (see Table 3).

- Cluster 1 Newly industrialized economies with positive rates of industrial growth; reasonable rates of women's economic activity; and nearly negligible rates of women participation in manufacturing.
- Cluster 2 Diversified economies with relatively old industrial and manufacturing infrastructures (except for Jordan); with poor industrial growth rates; low rates of women participation in the economy; and above regional average of women's participation in manufacturing.
- Cluster 3 Diversified and newly industrialized countries with high industrial growth rates; poor levels of women's economic participation; and relatively low female participation in manufacturing.

The results of the system factor analysis suggest that in the presence of high levels of industrialization (MVA/capita), women's employment rate tends to be also high, however, not in the manufacturing sector but in the tertiary sector. This is understandable since the higher industrialization levels are found in countries of the region (cluster 1) where socio-cultural factors largely restrict women's participation in industrial activity in favor of tertiary activity. Factor analysis also suggests that women's employment rate is favored by smaller gender disparities in the literacy rates, and by urbanization rates, albeit to a lesser extent.

Women's rates of participation in the economy in general and in the manufacturing sector in particular is largely conditioned by, and a reflection of, the level of industrial and social development of their societies. While some of the region's countries show reasonably good levels of industrial growth, by and large, the share of manufacturing in the GDP remains considerably low, averaging throughout the region only 11.19%. Accordingly, the low rates of female manufacturing employment find justification in light of the low level of industrial development.

Nevertheless, the variations between the different clusters in the rates of female manufacturing employment and their participation rate in the economy in general further reflect certain socio-cultural determinants working against women's inclusion in the manufacturing sector. Cluster 1 is most indicative of such a case where its countries have the highest rates of women's participation in the economy (EAP) and the lowest rates of female participation in manufacturing. In these countries, women in the labor force are predominantly found in the tertiary sector which claims 95.4% of all working women in Cluster 1.

The concentration of women in textile, garment, leather, food and pharmaceutical manufacturing activity is also supported by the high rates of women's participation in manufacturing in countries of Cluster 2 where most of the manufacturing production of these countries rests with such labor-intensive industries. Countries in this cluster also show the highest share of MVA in GDP and close to the regional average for the contribution of manufactured goods in total exports.

The predominant sectoral concentration of working women in the public sector in the region is again supported by the higher rates of female participation in manufacturing

Table 3

Cluster and Regional Means for Selected Indicators

Indicator	Cluster 1	Cluster 2	Cluster 3	Means
1.1.1* Women's economic activity rate (15 +)	29%	18%	12%	20%
1.1.5 Women's participation rate in the agricultural sector	0%	25%	23%	16%
1.1.7* Women's participation rate in the tertiary sector	95%	63%	23%	60%
1.1.9* Women's share in total EAP	6%	6%	5%	6%
1.2.1* Women's employment rate	99%	77%	98%	92%
1.2.9* Women's share in employment	15%	10%	11%	12%
2.1.1* Participation rate of women in manufacturing	1%	13%	10%	8%
2.1.3 Participation ratio of women in manufacturing employment	1%	9%	8%	6%
3.1.2 Share of the agricultural sector in GDP	1%	15%	14%	10%
3.1.4* Share of MVA in GDP	13%	15%	6%	11%
3.2.1* Logarithm of MVA per capita	0.07	5.34	5.57	3.66
3.2.2* Share of manufactured goods in total exports	36%	29%	36%	35%
3.2.5 MVA per capita	\$ 1,627.94	\$ 265.40	\$ 296.50	\$ 729.95
3.2.6* Annual growth rate for industry	5%	5%	5%	5%
4.1.1* Urbanization	67%	66%	46%	67%
4.1.4* Total fertility (births per woman)	5.28	4.95	7.33	5.85
4.1.9 Dependency ratio	53%	83%	95%	77%
4.2.4* Female secondary enrollment ratio	73%	57%	46%	59%
4.2.6 Female tertiary enrollment	83%	7%	4%	31%
5.1.1* Share of women in total MP's	0%	4%	3%	2%
6.1.1* Ratification of CEDAW convention	0%	100%	0%	33%
Disparity Index				
1.1.2* Index male / female in EAP(years 15+)	0.63	0.77	0.89	0.83
2.1.2 Index male / female in manufacturing activity	0.97	0.61	0.87	0.82
4.2.1* Index male / female literacy rates	0.12	0.24	0.45	0.27
4.2.5 Index male / female in secondary enrollment rates	0.01	0.22	0.29	0.18
4.2.7 Index male / female in tertiary enrollment rates	-0.87	0.31	0.39	-0.06

* Included in cluster analysis

in countries of Cluster 2 where most labor-intensive industries have traditionally been carried by the state sector in those countries (Egypt, Iraq and Jordan). The movement towards economic privatization and capital-intensive industry may thus have an adverse effect on the future participation of women in manufacturing in those countries. Such shifts in economic and industrial policies suggest an immediate need for gender sensitive labor regulations imposed on the private sector, and equal training opportunities and skill development programs for women in the manufacturing sector.

Across the three clusters, a strong correlation exists between rates of female participation in manufacturing and secondary education. The higher the educational attainment the lower the rates of manufacturing employment among women. With the rates of secondary and tertiary enrollment particularly high among women in countries of Clusters 1 and 3, and given the cultural barriers of gender segregation, most women in these countries assume tertiary activities in gender segregated work environments.

The rates of fertility also show high correlations with women's manufacturing employment. Cluster 2 is most indicative of this, where the least fertility rates and the highest participation rates of women in manufacturing exist. Nevertheless, fertility rates are higher in countries with high levels of educational attainment and mostly high GDP per capita levels as in the case of Clusters 1 and 3. High birth rates in these two clusters (mostly Gulf countries) suggest that cultural rather than educational factors tend to be most detrimental in population growth. It is also worth noting that the high fertility rates in the Gulf region throws doubt on the absolute validity of the often cited correlation between poverty and population growth. Here again, the cultural rather than the economic seems to be at work.

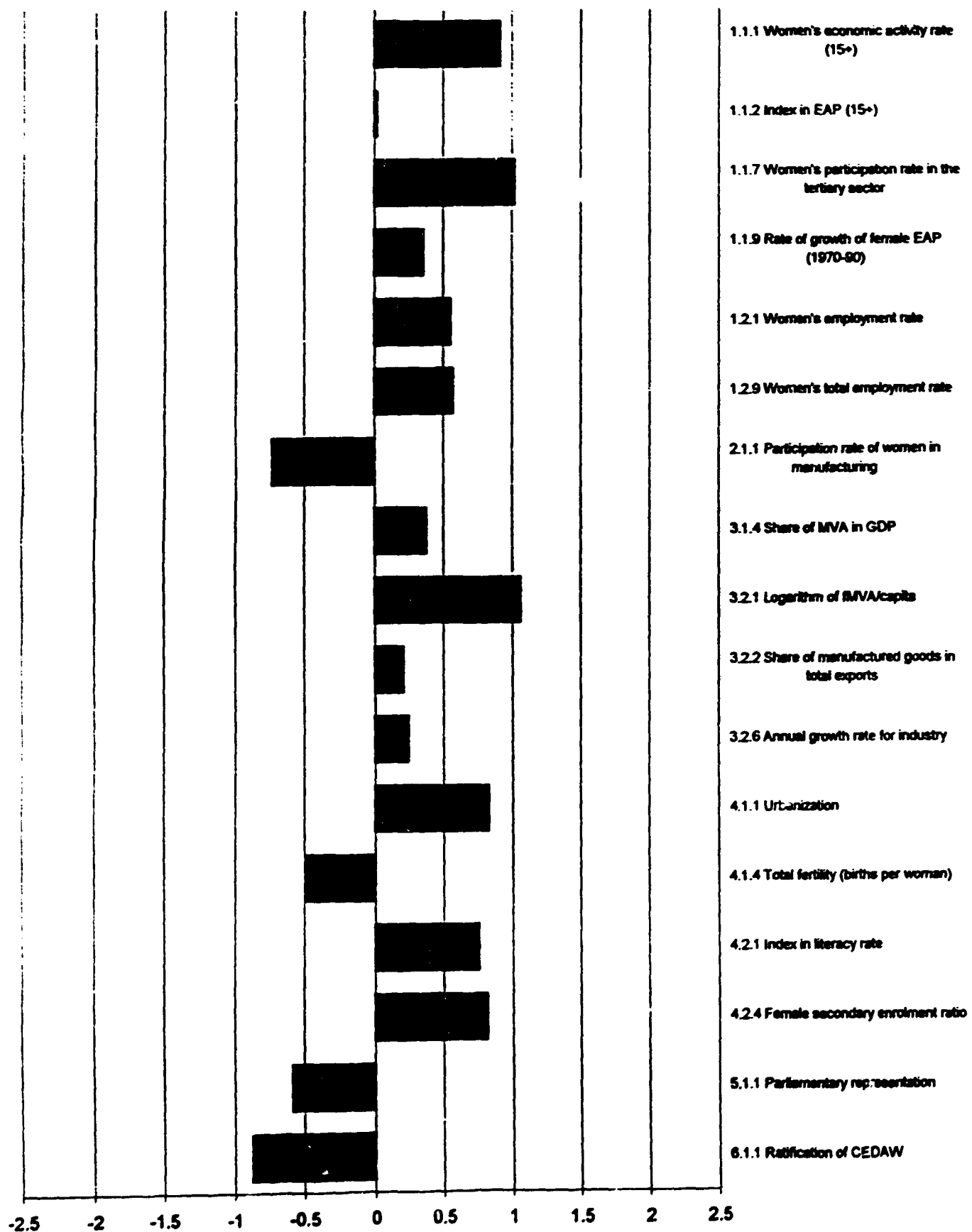
Gender disparities in rates of economic activity are substantially high (in favor of men) throughout the region, with comparatively low rates of growth of female economic activity averaging 5.6%. However, the gender disparity rate shows a decrease in countries with higher rates of female manufacturing activity, as in countries of Cluster 2.

III.2. ANALYSIS OF INDIVIDUAL COUNTRY GROUPS

The analysis of the individual country groupings draws on a broader range of indicators in addition to those used in the clustering exercise in order to provide a more comprehensive picture of the factors affecting women's participation in manufacturing in the different country groupings. Analysis in this section thus focuses on the macro economic indicators and selected gender sensitive social, economic, legal and political indicators.

Cluster 1 Countries with above regional average rates of women's economic participation, however, negligible rates of female participation in manufacturing (Bahrain, Qatar, Kuwait, United Arab Emirates) See Figure 8.

Indicators for Cluster 1: Bahrain, Qatar, Kuwait, and United Arab Emirates.
Figure 8



Bahrain, Qatar, Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates have the highest literacy rates among women aged 15 years and above in the region. Female educational enrollment at the secondary and tertiary levels is again the highest in the region, with gender disparity rates in favor of women at the tertiary level. Such high rates of educational attainment is reflected in the high rates of women's participation in the tertiary sectors of the economy which claim 95.4% of all working women in this cluster, nearly double the regional mean for female tertiary employment.

Urbanization rates in these four countries are the highest in the region, reaching 87.4%. However, the gender disparity in the urban population is in favor of men, except in the case of Kuwait. Given the absence of any significant agricultural base in these countries, and the high levels of income, urbanization denotes more of a population concentration in the major cities rather than a shift towards the non-agricultural centers. It should also be noted that most of these countries are city-states, and hence the concentration of the population in the city is more of a geographical rather than a socio-economic indicator.

Women's economic activity rates in this cluster are the highest in the region, exceeding the regional mean. Nevertheless, the gender disparity in economic activity rates is substantially high, with only 17 women to every 100 men in the labor force. Women's employment rate is nearly 100%, however, their share from total employment shows a mere 15%. Women's manufacturing participation is the lowest in the region, standing at a mere 1.2% of all the economically active women population.

The correlation between low female participation in manufacturing and low levels of industrial and manufacturing growth at the macro level does not hold with much vigor for countries of this cluster. The annual growth rates for industry in these four countries shows a positive annual increase of 9.3%, nearly a third more than the regional average of industrial growth. The share of MVA in GDP is also relatively high compared to the rest of the region and exceeds the regional average. The share of manufactured goods in total exports in these four countries is again the highest in the region, reaching 37.6%.

Accordingly, macro economic factors do not seem to provide realistic justification for the low rates of female manufacturing employment. For on the one hand, these countries seem to be moving well into an industrial phase which requires an industrial labor force, and on the other hand, they are still far from an advanced stage of industrial and post-industrial development which in the developing world has triggered a decrease in the female industrial labor force and an increase in their participation in the tertiary sectors. It seems that the basic obstacle enforcing women's exclusion from the manufacturing sector is a cultural one. While in most of the region's countries there is a cultural preference for female employment in the tertiary rather than the industrial sectors, women in the Gulf states bear the additional obstacle of gender segregation norms. To varying degrees, women in this group of countries are generally employed in, or are expected to be, work domains where no, or very little, contact with the opposite sex exists. Such an employment qualification naturally places the industrial sectors beyond the reach of most women in the Gulf.

Table 4

System Characteristics of Cluster 1

Indicator	Bahrain	Kuwait	Qatar	United Arab Emirates	Means
1.1.1* Women's economic activity rate (15 +)	29%	34%	28%	24%	29%
1.1.5 Women's participation rate in the agricultural sector	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
1.1.7* Women's participation rate in the tertiary sector	92%	96%	98%	96%	95%
1.1.9* Women's share in total EAP	4%	6%	6%	7%	6%
1.2.1* Women's employment rate	100%	97%	100%	99%	99%
1.2.9* Women's share in employment	16%	24%	11%	7%	15%
2.1.1* Participation rate of women in manufacturing	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%
2.1.3 Participation ratio of women in manufacturing employment	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%
3.1.2 Share of the agricultural sector in GDP	1%	0%	1%	2%	1%
3.1.4* Share of MVA in GDP	17%	15%	13%	6%	13%
3.2.1* Logarithm of MVA per capita	0.07	0.07	0.08	0.07	0.07
3.2.2* Share of manufactured goods in total exports	8%	87%	14%	41%	36%
3.2.5 MVA per capita	\$ 1,380	\$ 1,614	\$ 1,660	\$ 1,636	\$ 1,628
3.2.8* Annual growth rate for industry	15%	-2%	8%	-2%	5%
4.1.1* Urbanization	83%	96%	90%	81%	87%
4.1.4* Total fertility (births per woman)	4.19	6.51	4.49	5.91	5.28
4.1.9 Dependency ratio	61%	61%	45%	48%	53%
4.2.4* Female secondary enrollment ratio	97%	51%	83%	73%	76%
4.2.6 Female tertiary enrollment	96%	17%	211%	9%	83%
5.1.1* Share of women in total MP's	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
6.1.1* Ratification of CEDAW convention	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0%
Disparity Index					
1.1.2* Index male / female in EAP(years 15+)	0.79	0.68	0.89	0.95	0.83
2.1.2 Index male / female in manufacturing activity	0.92	0.97	0.99	0.99	0.97
4.2.1* Index male / female literacy rates	0.23	0.12	0.06	0.05	0.12
4.2.5 Index male / female in secondary enrollment rates	0.00	0.08	-0.01	-0.01	0.01
4.2.7 Index male / female in tertiary enrollment rates	-0.26	-0.30	-1.55	-1.38	-0.87

Women's political participation and legal institutional protection is relatively absent in this group of countries, at least formally. While the absence of effective participation in the decision-making process extends to most of the population, and hence women cannot be singled out for exclusion, the protection of women's rights in the work domain has yet to be formalized. None of the four countries in this group are signatories of the CEDAW convention, nor the ILO convention No.100 on equal remuneration. Only Kuwait and Qatar have ratified ILO convention No.111 on discrimination in employment and occupation.

While guaranteeing institutional protection for working women through the ratification of international conventions is undoubtedly needed for the advancement of women's status, any effective change in the status of women has to start with addressing the cultural factors which remain largely hostile to women's incorporation in industry in the Gulf states.

Cluster 2 Countries with low female economic activity rates and relatively fair rates of women manufacturing activity (Egypt, Iraq Jordan). See Figure 9

This cluster comprises countries with diversified economies with relatively longer histories of industrialization (except for Jordan) than the rest of the region. With both industrial and agricultural infrastructures, the economically active population in those three countries is stretched across the different economic sectors, however, at varying rates.

The urbanization rate in these countries is above the regional mean. Gender disparities in the urban population is very low, nearing total parity levels. Although the urbanization rate is less than that witnessed in countries of cluster 1, the fertility rates are among the lowest in the region. This suggests that higher fertility rates do not automatically, nor constantly, positively correlate with either urbanization rates or economic growth.

Gender disparities in literacy rates while still away from parity levels, are close to the regional average. Female secondary enrollment ratios are, however, below the regional average, showing 67.9%, with a gender disparity in secondary enrollment in favor of men by 22%.

Although the countries of this cluster have modest rates of annual industrial growth, they have the highest rates of women's participation in manufacturing. Such poor industrial growth rates reflect on the one hand the economic hardship resulting from the Gulf war, particularly in the case of Iraq where industrialization has been severely affected, and in Jordan where the economy is largely intertwined with its neighboring economies. In the case of Egypt, the shifts from an import-substitution industry and a centralized state economy to economic privatization and export oriented manufacturing have created a bottle-neck effect which some argue is a temporary phase in the transition from state monitored and controlled economies to a free market economy.

Figure 9

Indicators for Cluster 2: Jordan, Egypt, and Iraq .

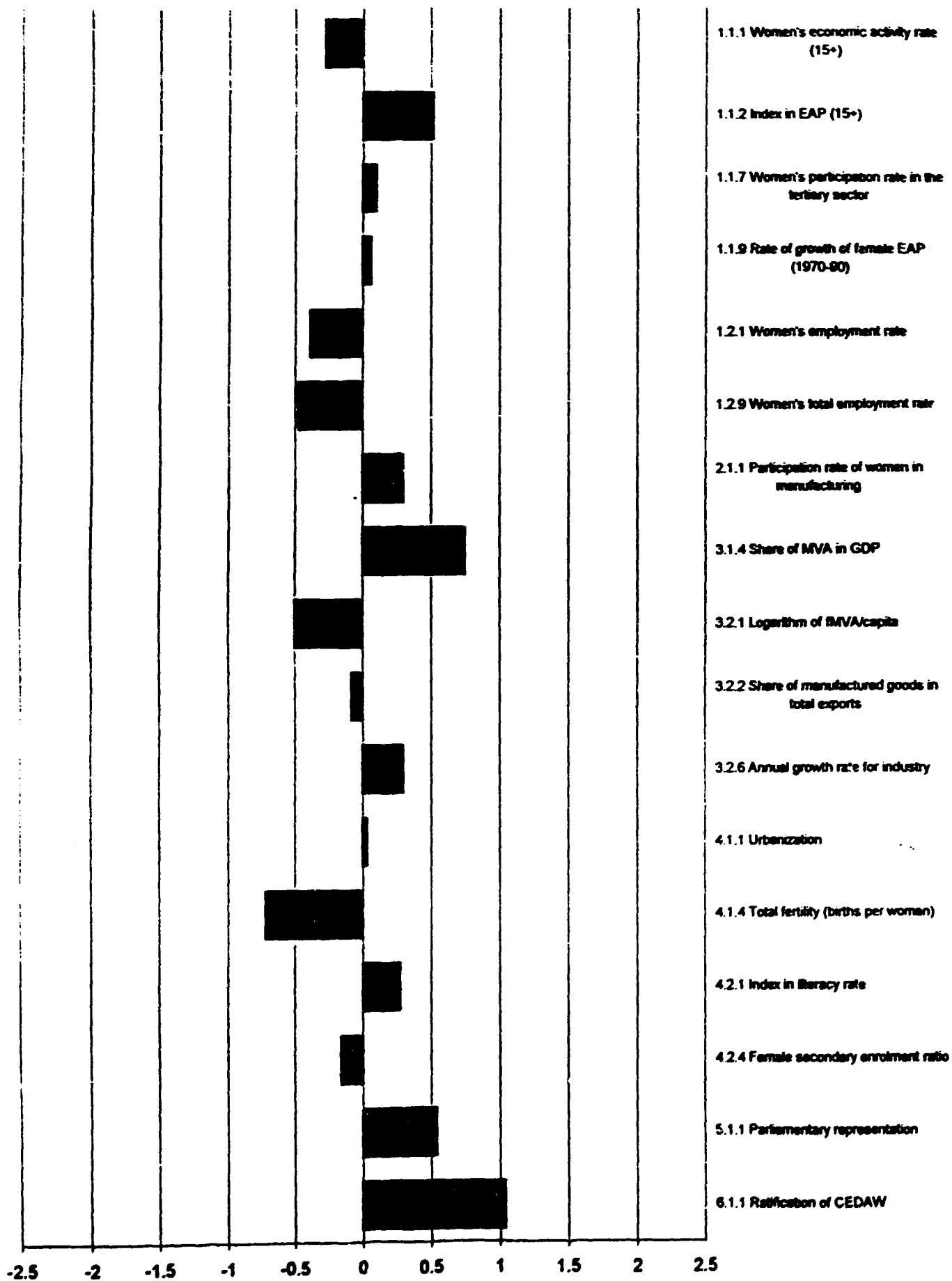


Table 5

System Characteristics of Cluster 2

Indicator	Egypt	Iraq	Jordan	Means
1.1.1* Women's economic activity rate (15 +)	29%	10%	14%	18%
1.1.5 Women's participation rate in the agricultural sector	56%	15%	3%	25%
1.1.7* Women's participation rate in the tertiary sector	66%	61%	61%	63%
1.1.9* Women's share in total EAP	4%	5%	7%	6%
1.2.1* Women's employment rate	87%	81%	63%	77%
1.2.9* Women's share in employment	9%	10%	11%	10%
2.1.1* Participation rate of women in manufacturing	21%	8%	9%	13%
2.1.3 Participation ratio of women in manufacturing employment	10%	-	8%	9%
3.1.2 Share of the agricultural sector in GDP	18%	10%	7%	15%
3.1.4* Share of MVA in GDP	19%	12%	13%	15%
3.2.1* Logarithm of MVA per capita	4.78	6.28	4.98	5.34
3.2.2* Share of manufactured goods in total exports	35%	3%	50%	29%
3.2.5 MVA per capita	\$ 117	\$ 534	\$ 146	\$ 265
3.2.6* Annual growth rate for industry	4%	7%	6%	5%
4.1.1* Urbanization	48%	72%	78%	66%
4.1.4* Total fertility (births per woman)	4.00	5.25	5.60	4.95
4.1.9 Dependency ratio	76%	89%	83%	83%
4.2.4* Female secondary enrollment ratio	73%	37%	62%	57%
4.2.6 Female tertiary enrollment	9%	1%	10%	7%
5.1.1* Share of women in total MP's	2%	11%	0%	4%
6.1.1* Ratification of CEDAW convention	1.00	1.00	1.00	100%
Disparity Index				
1.1.2* Index male / female in EAP(years 15+)	0.61	0.87	0.85	0.77
2.1.2 Index male / female in manufacturing activity	0.11	0.83	0.90	0.61
4.2.1* Index male / female literacy rates	0.31	0.22	0.17	0.24
4.2.6 Index male / female in secondary enrollment rates	0.21	0.39	0.08	0.22
4.2.7 Index male / female in tertiary enrollment rates	0.41	0.45	0.06	0.31

One could argue that these countries have remained closer to a more sustainable development path. While countries in clusters 1 and 3 show a comparable annual growth rate in their economies, the share of their tertiary sector in the GDP is much higher than that of the MVA in the GDP. As such, the higher levels of GDP have been sustained either through oil exports which are ultimately finite, or services, both of which do not provide for the development premise or core which industrialization allows. Saudi Arabia (cluster 3) may prove to be the exception where concrete industrial progress is realized.

The sectoral distribution of the economically active women population in this cluster shows a dominance of women's concentration in the tertiary sector, followed by the agricultural sector and lastly the manufacturing sector. While as in cluster 1 the largest participation rates for women are in the tertiary sector, that sector claims 63% of the economically active female population in cluster 2, as opposed to 95% in cluster 1.

The political and institutional environment affecting women's status in countries of cluster 2 is the most favorable in the region. While far from equal or even substantial political participation, women in these three countries are presented at the higher echelons of the decision-making process, claiming the highest rates throughout the three sub-regional clusters. In terms of legal protection in the work domain, all countries in this cluster have ratified the CEDAW and ILO conventions No. 100 and 111.

Cluster 3 Countries with low rates of women's economic participation and low rates of female manufacturing activity (Oman, Saudi Arabia, Syria) See Figure 10.

Urbanization rates in those three countries are the lowest in the region, except for Yemen. Fertility rates are also the highest in the region, averaging 7.3 in the three countries. The gender disparity in literacy rates shows the highest disparity rate in the three sub-regions or country clusters. On the other hand, female secondary enrollment ratios are very high, however, gender disparities in enrollment rates still linger.

Women's economic activity rates in Saudi Arabia, Syria and Oman are the lowest throughout the region. The sectoral distribution of the economically active female population is equally claimed by the tertiary and agricultural sectors, with 23% respectively, and 10% by the manufacturing sector.

In the case of Saudi Arabia and Oman, cultural factors tend to be working against women's participation in the economy, a situation comparable to that experienced by women in countries of cluster 1. In Syria, while there are no explicit cultural barriers of gender segregation, women's poor participation rates reflect economic and structural factors rather than cultural imperatives. Women's low socio-economic status in Syria, reflected in the high gender disparity rates in literacy, high fertility rates, poor rates of female participation in manufacturing and their very meager share in total employment leaves most working women without regular and sustainable

Indicators for Cluster 3: Oman, Saudi Arabia, and Syrian Arab Republic.
Figure 10

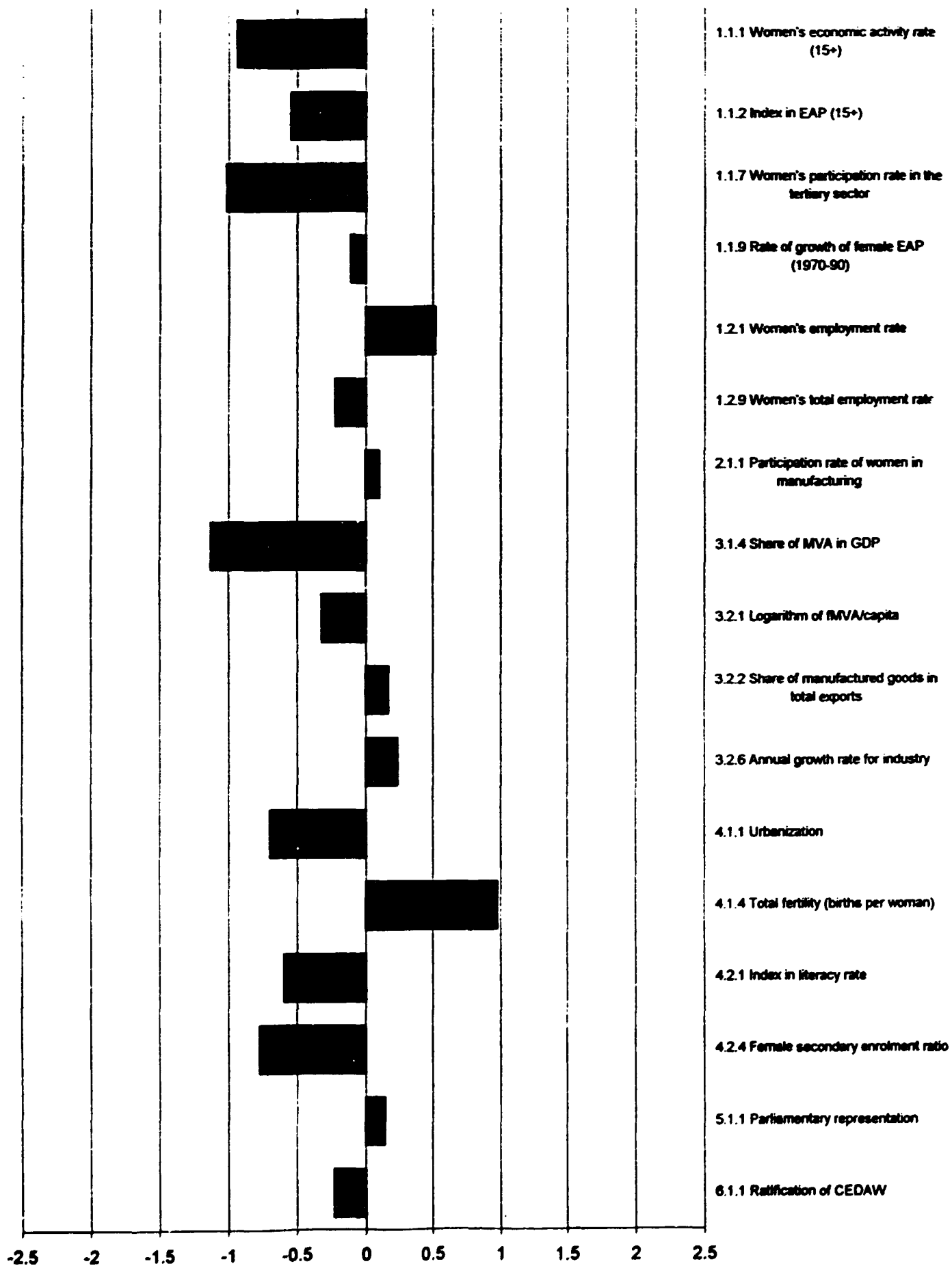


Table 6

System Characteristics of Cluster 3

Indicator	Oman	Saudi Arabia	Syrian Arab Rep.	Means
1.1.1* Women's economic activity rate (15 +)	11%	7%	18%	12%
1.1.5 Women's participation rate in the agricultural sector	20%	2%	47%	23%
1.1.7* Women's participation rate in the tertiary sector	45%	23%	1%	23%
1.1.9* Women's share in total EAP	5%	6%	5%	5%
1.2.1* Women's employment rate	99%	99%	97%	98%
1.2.9* Women's share in employment	0.11	0.07	15%	11%
2.1.1* Participation rate of women in manufacturing	1%	2%	28%	10%
2.1.3 Participation ratio of women in manufacturing employment	-	-	8%	8%
3.1.2 Share of the agricultural sector in GDP	4%	7%	31%	14%
3.1.4* Share of MVA in GDP	4%	8%	5%	6%
3.2.1* Logarithm of MVA per capita	5.67	6.14	4.91	5.57
3.2.2* Share of manufactured goods in total exports	67%	7%	36%	36%
3.2.5 MVA per capita	\$ 291	\$ 464	\$ 135	\$ 297
3.2.6* Annual growth rate for industry	10%	-3%	8%	5%
4.1.1* Urbanization	11%	77%	50%	46%
4.1.4* Total fertility (births per woman)	7.84	6.46	7.69	7.33
4.1.9 Dependency ratio	98%	84%	104%	95%
4.2.4* Female secondary enrollment ratio	53%	41%	43%	46%
4.2.6 Female tertiary enrollment	7%	2%	3%	4%
5.1.1* Share of women in total MP's	0%	0%	8%	3%
6.1.1* Ratification of CEDAW convention	0.00	0.00	0.00	0%
Disparity Index				
1.1.2* Index male / female in EAP(years 15+)	0.88	0.96	0.82	0.89
2.1.2 Index male / female in manufacturing activity	-	-	0.87	0.87
4.2.1* Index male / female literacy rates	0.21	0.66	0.50	0.45
4.2.5 Index male / female in secondary enrollment rates	0.30	0.28	0.29	0.29
4.2.7 Index male / female in tertiary enrollment rates	0.12	0.63	0.42	0.39

* Included in cluster analysis

On the other hand, women's political participation is apparent only in Syria, however, at a very minimal scale as in the rest of the region. In Oman and Saudi Arabia, women's formal political participation is non-existent. On the level of institutional protection for working women, none of the countries have ratified CEDAW, however both Saudi Arabia and Syria have ratified ILO convention No.100 on equal remuneration.

This cluster is a mix between clusters 1 and 2. On the one hand, countries in cluster 3 share to a certain extent the cultural barriers against women's full economic integration as in countries of cluster 1. On the other hand, their separation from cluster 2 in terms of impediments and determinants of women's participation in manufacturing is a question of degree rather than kind. That is, while there is a certain proportion of women in manufacturing employment unlike the countries in cluster 1, their share in employment is different from that found in cluster 2, because of differences in magnitude, not the nature, of constraints, namely, educational, demographic and institutional.

Countries not included in the clusters: Gaza Strip, Lebanon, Yemen

The West Bank and Gaza Strip:

The history of occupation and political strife witnessed in Palestine since 1948 have undoubtedly affected the economic performance of Palestinian society. Predominantly agricultural, very little industrialization has been realized in the occupied territories, with a correspondingly small and generally low skilled industrial labor force.

According to the latest UNDP report on the situation of women in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, roughly 37% of the adult female population are economically active, with 15.5% of those engaged in industry. The majority of the economically active women population are, however, in the agricultural sector. Estimates for 1990 indicate that the share of women from the total labor force is 12.4% in the West Bank and 2.8% in the Gaza Strip¹⁴. The intifada has induced more female economic participation where women have had to assume jobs to compensate for lost incomes due to the detention, imprisonment or death of men in their families. It should be noted, however, that women's economic activity in the West Bank and Gaza is generally within the informal sector, leaving female actual economic participation rates mostly unaccounted for in official employment data. Women's informal economic activity is largely linked to household garment sewing, handicraft embroidery, ceramic products and food processing which represent the most common manufacturing activities undertaken by Palestinian women.

Political and socio-economic factors explain the low rates of female participation in the labor force, particularly in the formal economic sectors. Most notably, Palestinian

¹⁴Gender-in-Development Programme. UNDP. Report of the UNDP Needs Assessment Mission for Palestinian Women in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, 1994, cites these figures as 8.8% for the West Bank and 1.2% for Gaza.

society has the highest rates of total fertility in the Arab region, very low literacy rates among the women population, and is among the lowest in female educational enrollment at the secondary level. The high fertility rates, while reflective of women's low economic and educational status in the West Bank and Gaza, also find political justification in this part of the region. As an occupied society, Palestinians, even the better educated and more economically affluent, place great value on large families. At the family level, children have both an economic and a political value. On the one hand, children present an additional source of income, and on the other hand, the more offsprings the more the chance of family survivors in a situation of political and military strife. At the national level, a large population has been perceived by Palestinians in the occupied territories as a power premise in their confrontation with Israel.

In addition to the political and socio-economic factors which have affected Palestinian women's integration in the formal economy, the few who are employed confront discriminatory procedures in the work domain. As noted in the above mentioned UNDP report, women's wages do not exceed 60% of that paid to men for the same job. Women workers are often denied paid maternity leave and do not receive the same insurance benefits as their male counterpart. Such discrimination, even in situations where protective legislation exists, is on the one hand due to women's ignorance of their legal rights, and on the other hand, is compounded by women's dire economic need for work which forces them to accept such conditions and allows employers to take advantage of such a cheap labor supply.

At present, with the advent of a peace settlement, developmental needs assume utmost priority on the agenda for the future of the Palestinian people. The building of social, economic and educational infrastructures are basic to the developmental future of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. The socio-economic status of women in these territories and their integration in the mainstream economic life primarily depends on the general socio-economic improvement of Palestinian society at large.

Lebanon:

Statistical social, economic and demographic data on Lebanese society is largely lacking. The last comprehensive national census is that of 1972. The nearly two decades of civil war in Lebanon which ended in 1990 have left the country with a depleted infrastructure and a deteriorating economy. Efforts to rebuild Lebanese society are underway, however, experts project another few years till the country is back to its full production capacity.

Very little data exists on the present situation of women's employment in general, and even less concerning their role in manufacturing. Available data indicates that the rate of economically active women population in 1987 is 16%, with the tertiary sector claiming 56% of all working women in Lebanon, followed by industry which claims 25% and agriculture which absorbs 19%. Women's share in the total labor force is, however, quite low, albeit not much lower than their share in the rest of the region.

Available social and demographic data indicate that Lebanon's urbanization rate is well above the regional mean (84%), with the total fertility rates among the lowest in the region (4.6). The dependency ratio, while relatively high, is still below the regional mean. The gender disparity in literacy rates is still high in Lebanon, with 69 literate women to every 100 literate men. Female secondary enrollment in 1992 reached 54%, which is close to the regional enrollment mean of 59%. Female tertiary enrollment is, however, rather low compared to the rest of the region (16%).

Few qualitative studies highlight the entrepreneurial role of Lebanese women in industrial activities. According to the 1994 national report on Lebanon submitted to the United Nations preparatory committee for the Beijing conference to be held in 1995, the records of the Lebanese Industrialists Association include eleven prominent women industrialists, mostly in the garment industry. The national trade registration records also reflect a respectable percentage of women's economic participation where the percentage of women owned companies has risen from 18.9% of registered companies in 1985 to 22.4% in 1994. On the other hand, women owned enterprises increased from 11% in 1985 to 19% in 1994. However, such figures should be treated with caution since, particularly in the case of companies, they reflect the shareholders ownership not their actual involvement in the daily functioning of the company. Often times, women are registered as shareholders in their husband's or families' companies without working in these companies. Ownership of enterprises on the other hand may be a safer indicator of women's entrepreneurial activity since they are registered under a single name.

An interesting observation, however, is that the majority of working women in Lebanon are found in the private sector, a situation opposite to that found in the rest of the Arab region where most working women are employed by the public and government sectors. This may be explained in light of the general organization of the Lebanese economy which is predominantly private sector oriented. This suggests that the problems emanating from industrial privatization faced by other women in the region may not be of equal concern in the Lebanese case.

Yemen:

While information on Yemen exists, the levels of social and economic development of the country are substantially different from those of other countries of the region, and accordingly, it stood out in the clustering exercise. Yemen is the least developed country in the region. It is probably only second to Palestine. However, the history of Israeli occupation which the latter has experienced places it in a different developmental context which is not comparable to the rest of the region, with very specific circumstances and needs.

Statistically, women's economic activity rate in Yemen is among the highest in the region, reaching 20.2%. Furthermore, female participation rate in manufacturing is the highest in the region, indicating 28.2%. Nevertheless, such high rates of economic participation are mostly absorbed either under self-employment (informal sector) or unpaid family employment. Women's salaried employment in Yemen is

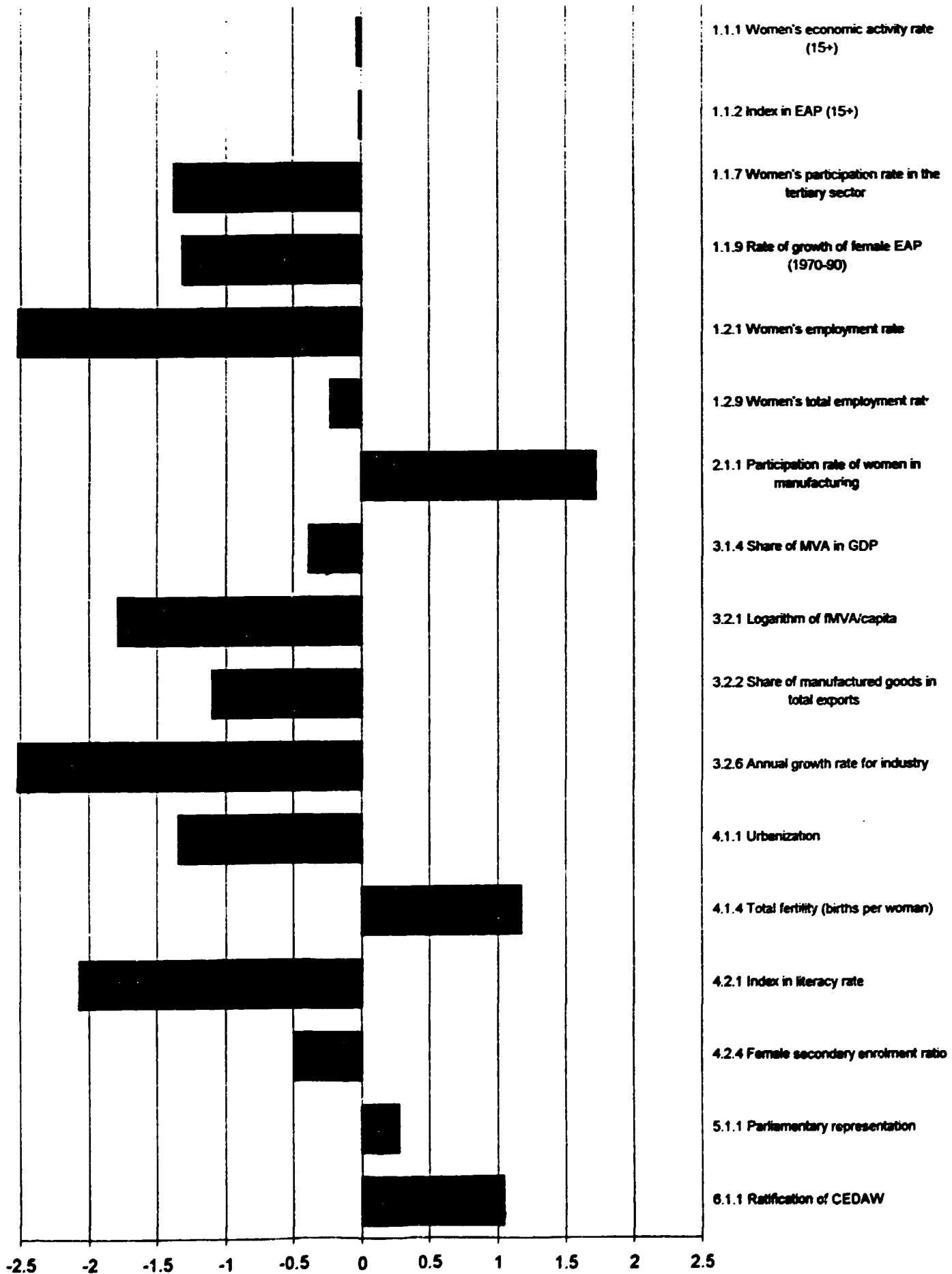
extremely low (24.9%), nearly one third of the regional average rate of female employment (86.2%).

Indicators of social development reflect very poor female social status in Yemen. Total fertility rates (7.6) are the highest in the region. Gender disparity in literacy rates is considerably wide, with 18 literate women to every 100 literate men. On the other hand, female secondary enrollment ratio is extremely low, standing at 9.2% where the regional mean reflects 98%.

Yemen is the least urbanized country in the region, with an urbanization rate of 29%, compared to a regional average of 69%. The overall economic performance of Yemen is substantially weak, with negative annual rates of industrial growth reaching 26%. The share of manufactured goods in total exports stands at a negligible 0.7%, with the share of MVA per capita a mere \$39, compared to a regional average of 34% and \$704, respectively.

Figure 11

Yemen.



CHAPTER IV. CHALLENGES AND CONSTRAINTS:

IV.1. Regional Challenges and Constraints:

The previous two chapters made explicit the basic development constraints confronting the region in general and women's participation in the industrial sector of the economy in particular. On the regional level, a basic developmental constraint is the low levels of industrialization and economic growth, particularly in the diversified economies. The shifts in the region's existing semi-industrial economies (the diversified economies) from centralized state controlled economies with an import-substitution industrial orientation to free market and trade oriented economies present a serious challenge, particularly in realizing a competitive edge in the global market.

The overriding constraints against women's equal incorporation in the industrial sectors of the economy are at one level a direct outcome of the region's low levels of industrialization and economic growth, and at another level, the result of socio-cultural, educational, demographic and institutional factors. The challenge in realizing gender parity in economic activity rates in general and participation in manufacturing industries in particular rests with the region's ability to confront its macro-economic constraints, and with the commitment of experts and international development agencies to formulate and adopt well informed and empirically grounded strategies for action.

From the multivariate system correlations, it seems that gender disparity rates in total employment, employment in the non-agricultural sectors and primary school enrollment, together with the size of female-headed households in countries of the region correlated with the share of government expenditure in GDP. That is, in countries with minimal government shares of expenditure in GDP, gender disparities in manufacturing employment and educational enrollment are highest. The increase in the number of female-headed households also reflects a lower socio-economic status for women. Largely due to male migration either to urban centers or to other countries, the burden of family support has been increasingly carried by women alone, where in Egypt for instance, female-headed households constitute 30% of all house-holds in the country.

Throughout the region, a pattern is detected between higher fertility rates and levels of industrialization, where the share of MVA in GDP negatively correlates with higher fertility rates. Furthermore, although to a lesser extent, high fertility rates correlate with women's low literacy rates, primary and secondary school enrollment, income and participation in the labor force (women's status index).

A pattern is also detected between low rates of female secondary enrollment and women's low socio-economic status, low participation rate in manufacturing employment and total shares of manufacturing employment, low rates of participation in tertiary activities, and low levels of political participation. Low educational enrollment does not seem, however, to constantly correlate highly with high fertility rates. This is largely because in some Gulf countries where the highest rates of female

secondary enrollment in the region exist, also present high fertility rates. However, in countries with the highest fertility rates such as Saudi Arabia, Syria and Yemen, the highest disparity rates in women's literacy rates and the lowest female secondary enrollment are detected. On the other hand, the lowest fertility rate in the region is found in Egypt, where female secondary enrollment ratios stand at 73%. Such discrepancies between educational levels and fertility rates point to different intervening factors affecting fertility rates in the different countries of the region. Higher economic levels (GDP/capita) do not seem to reduce the rates of fertility, where they are offset by cultural factors. On the other hand, lower economic levels (as in the case of Yemen) and poor female educational levels (as in Yemen and Syria) tend to adversely affect fertility rates.

Further discrepancies appear in the correlation analysis between women's poor levels of political participation and higher levels of secondary and tertiary educational enrollment and participation rates in the tertiary sector. Comparatively better levels of women's political participation are found in countries with higher rates of female participation in the agricultural sector, higher shares of agriculture in GDP, high gender disparities in secondary school enrollment, and less gender disparity in manufacturing employment.

Contrary to conventional wisdom, in the Arab world such a pattern reflects cultural and political imperatives rather than levels of socio-economic development. Political participation in general and women's participation in specific, are lowest, if not absent, in countries with highly patrimonial political systems and severe gender segregation norms. The latter characteristics tend to be found in countries with high levels of education and tertiary employment. On the other hand, in the more diversified economies of the region, while women's socio-economic status is lower than that found in the Gulf, gender segregation is not that explicit, and the countries' political systems are comparatively more institutionalized.

In countries with better levels of institutional and legal protection for working women, gender disparities in manufacturing employment tend to decrease, and a comparable increase is seen in women's participation rate in manufacturing employment and total share in manufacturing employment.

IV.2. Challenges Strategies and Actions for Individual Country Groups:

Cluster 1: Countries with high levels of social development, industrial growth, expanding rates of women's economic activity and extremely negligible female participation in manufacturing (Bahrain, Qatar, Kuwait and United Arab Emirates)

Major Challenges: Integrating women in manufacturing activities; changing the cultural barriers against women's involvement in conventionally male-dominated work domain such as the industrial sector.

On the level of the economy, the main challenge for these four countries is to

develop and sustain their existing industrial growth. Without a comparable manufacturing base, economic growth may be crippled in the medium and long terms. The high rates of tertiarization witnessed in these countries may prove illusive in the long run. In order to link their economies to the world market, they need to develop a competitive edge which in their case could be provided through focusing on manufacturing service or support industries catering for their free zone industrial bases, together with expanding their oil related industry. At the moment, the share of MVA in GDP stands at 13%.

Expanding the manufacturing economic base requires an equal expansion and development of a qualified native industrial labor force. The exclusion of women from that labor force not only affect the size of that labor force, but more importantly, it ultimately impacts on its efficiency. To keep the demand and supply limited to men means that the growing needs of the labor market may affect the qualitative level of the labor supply if limited to only one group, or the economy may have to resort (as it does) to a foreign supply of labor. In either case, the development of an indigenus and technically advanced labor force is sacrificed with industry remaining dependent on a foreign supply of man power.

While women's economic activity rate is the highest in countries of cluster 1 (29%), the tertiary sector absorbs 95% of all working women, while manufacturing claims a negligible 1%. A most immediate challenge facing these countries is to enlarge their female manufacturing labor force. On the other hand, women's share in the total EAP is a mere 6%, and their share from total employment is 15%. As the case with other countries of the region, women's extremely meager share from total EAP is a considerable challenge for enhancing their socio-economic status.

Gender disparity in EAP remains substantially high, with 17 women to every 100 men. Reaching parity levels in gender economic activity rates should be among the immediate priorities of decision-makers and international development agencies.

It seems apparent, albeit difficult, that the cultural stigma against women's participation in industrial activity needs to be addressed. Gender segregation in the Gulf countries adds to the constraints facing women's full and equal participation in the labor force in general and in the manufacturing sector in particular.

Women's participation in manufacturing employment in these four countries seems to be further hindered by political and institutional constraints. Female political representation in countries of cluster 1 is nil, and none of the countries have ratified the convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women (CEDAW).

The educational constraint against women's industrial employment does not hold in the case of this cluster. Gender disparities in literacy rates in cluster 1 is the lowest in the three clusters, however. Women in all four countries have high rates of secondary and tertiary enrollment. While such high educational levels in a sense limit the supply of labor to the industrial sector and channels it to the tertiary sectors, this should not be treated as a rule of thumb given the changing nature of modern

industrial and manufacturing activity. With manufacturing increasingly linked to the incorporation of advanced technology and a highly qualified labor force, high educational levels provide an already existing supply of skilled labor. The need might be to change the stereo-type perceptions associated with industrial activity and cultivate a job respectability for manufacturing activity as that given to tertiary employment.

Major Constraints:

The results of correlation analysis within this cluster together with results with factor and qualitative analysis highlight the following restrictive factors restricting women's participation in manufacturing in countries of cluster 1:

1. Stereotyped negative perceptions associated with industrial activity discourage the development of an indigenous industrial labour force in general, and female industrial employment in particular. Moreover, women's negligible manufacturing activity is adversely affected by the high rates of female participation in the tertiary sector.
2. Higher rates of fertility negatively affect women's employment rate.
3. Institutional and political constraints hinder women's participation in manufacturing employment.

Strategy components:

Channel the available highly educated female population towards modern industrial manufacturing activities; alleviate cultural barriers against women's industrial employment; reduce gender disparities in literacy rates.

Actions:

1. Promote an awareness among policy makers on the need for developing an indigenous industrial labour force and of the need and advantages of incorporating women in that labour force
2. Promote the translation into actions of the provisions on women's integration that are included in the national development plans
3. Promote the integration of highly educated women in the professional and managerial levels of industrial sectors
4. Promote an understanding of the changing regional and global economic context and organization and develop programmes aimed at identifying job opportunities in line with the new economic orientations
5. Develop technical and vocational programmes for women
6. Encourage women owned/run manufacturing enterprises

7. Promote technical and managerial training programmes for women entrepreneurs
8. Ensure the ratification of CEDAW and ILO conventions relating to the rights of working women.

Cluster 2: Diversified economies with relatively old, although limited, industrialization, with negative rates of industrial growth, lower than the regional mean in social development indicators, low rates of women's economic activity, and above the regional average of female participation in manufacturing (Egypt, Jordan and Iraq)

Major Challenges: Increasing women's manufacturing employment, enhancing women's socio-economic status.

* All three countries in this cluster have been experiencing severe economic crises, with a negative annual growth rate for industry of 3%. With the larger part of their industry for the past thirty to forty years carried by the public sector, economic restructuring and the movement towards privatization in the early nineties, particularly in Egypt, have negatively affected the country's industrial growth in this transitional phase. As for Iraq and Jordan, the Gulf war has left an unequivocal effect on their industrial performance. In all three countries, it will take some time to regulate their newly oriented economies. Nevertheless, and in spite of their negative annual rate of industrial growth, the share of manufacturing in the GDP, while relatively low (15%), is still the highest in the region.

** Women's economic activity rates are relatively low, standing at 18%, with their share in the total EAP only 6%. Women's participation in manufacturing is relatively better than in other clusters, reaching 13%. However, female manufacturing activity still stands at half their participation rate in agriculture (25%), and roughly one-fifth of their participation rate in the tertiary sector. Gender disparity in EAP, while the lowest in the region, remains high, with 23 women to every 100 men.

*** Gender disparity in literacy rates, although closing, still stand at 0.24 in favor of men, or 71 literate women to every 100 literate men. Female secondary enrollment ratios are the lowest in the three clusters, standing at 68%, while the regional mean indicates 105%. Fertility rates are nonetheless the lowest in the region, suggesting a positive pattern between higher rates of female participation in manufacturing and low birth rates.

Major Constraints:

According to the results of correlation and other analysis, the major constraints facing women's participation in manufacturing employment are:

1. Women's participation rate in manufacturing in countries of cluster 2 is adversely correlated with their share in total employment. This suggests that a large portion of women's manufacturing activity is done through the informal sector, adversely affecting women's regular employment in this sector.

2. A pattern is detected between higher fertility rates and women's low participation rate in manufacturing.
3. The higher the gender disparity in literacy rate, the lower the share of women's in the total economically active population and in total employment.

Strategy Components:

Promote the conversion of women manufacturing enterprises from the informal sector to sustainable community enterprises which could provide regular employment opportunities; maintain and increase women's industrial employment in the private sector; bridge the gender disparity in literacy rates; lower total fertility rates.

Actions:

1. Undertake in-depth studies and surveys on women's manufacturing activities in the informal sector to allow for an informal strategy of transforming such enterprises into viable community enterprises.
2. Promote women owned/run manufacturing enterprises catering for existing industries either through sub-contracting activities or providing support services for such industries
3. Facilitate women's access, including collateral requirements, to credit and loans for entrepreneurial industrial activities
4. Provide consultancy services and training for women in the identification and implementation of industrial projects.
5. Provide training in marketing techniques and identification of market requirements
6. Promote and develop agro-industries in rural areas
7. Enhance technical, vocational and industrial training for women already employed in the manufacturing sector in order to upgrade their skills
8. Enhance support services in the manufacturing sector to attract more women
9. Provide on the job training for women in the manufacturing sector to enable them to meet the technical skill requirements needed by advanced manufacturing technologies
10. Allocate government incentives to industrial enterprises to provide specific training in accordance with new industrial needs and job requirements
11. Actively work at improving literacy rates among the female population and close the gender disparity in literacy rates

12. Promote secondary and vocational courses in rural and remote areas.

Cluster 3: Diversified and newly industrialized economies, with high industrial growth rates, very low levels of female economic activity and relatively fair female participation in manufacturing compared to regional rates (Saudi Arabia, Oman and Syria)

Major Challenges: Promoting women's economic activity rates, in general and their participation in manufacturing employment in particular; Enhancing women's literacy and educational status; and lowering fertility rates.

While the annual growth rate for industry, although low, is comparable to the rest of the region, the share of manufacturing (MVA) in GDP is the lowest in the region, standing at 6% (nearly half the regional mean of MVA in GDP, 11%). This suggests a discrepancy in the share of the manufacturing sector from total industrial activity. With manufacturing increasingly gaining in value for the development of national economies and their incorporation in the international trade markets, it seems essential that direct attention be given to manufacturing industries in these countries.

Women's economic activity rate is the lowest in the three clusters, indicating 12% (well below the regional average which stands at 20%). Their share of the total EAP is also the lowest among the three clusters, with only 5% of the total labor force. Gender disparity in economic activity rates is also the highest in the region, with 11 women to every 100 men. Such poor levels of female participation rates and shares indicate an immediate need to integrate women into the economy.

Women's social status in countries of this cluster is among the lowest throughout the region. Gender disparities in literacy rates are substantially high in this cluster, with the rate of literate men more than double that of women. Total fertility rates are among the highest throughout the region, reaching 7.33, while the regional mean stands at 5.9. The enhancement of women's social status seems to be most urgent in this cluster, with their poor social status undoubtedly reflected in, and is sustained by, their low levels of economic participation.

The political and institutional environment in cluster 3 further indicates a gender bias against women. Although in the case of Syria women have limited access to political representation, in Saudi Arabia and Oman women are still far from realizing their political rights. At the level of legal protection of working women, none of the countries in this cluster have ratified the convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women (CEDAW).

Major Constraints:

1. A pattern is suggested between exceedingly low rates of women's economic activity rates in countries of this group and the exceptionally high fertility rates.

2. The low female share in EAP is matched with wide gender disparities in literacy rates and low female secondary enrolment ratios.

3. As in the case of cluster 2, a pattern is detected in cluster 3 between higher rates of female participation in manufacturing and low shares in employment, suggesting that female manufacturing activity is largely carried through the informal sector. Providing technical assistance to the informal sector is a complex task particularly due to its dispersed character and diversity of needs.

4. The institutional and political environments, particularly in Oman and Saudi Arabia, suggests a gender bias against working women.

Strategy Components:

Enhancing women's share in the EAP; alleviating women's social and educational status; integrating women in manufacturing employment; lowering fertility rates.

Actions:

1. Sensitizing policy makers to the value of women's economic participation, and the need to systematically address the normative barriers working against the realization of such a value.

2. Identify areas where women can participate in the formal economic sector

3. Promote female literacy through compulsory national educational programmes

4. Enhance women's educational attainment particularly at the secondary level

5. Promote vocational and training centers for women

6. Inform women of family planning options and means

7. Promote women oriented manufacturing enterprises at the community level to replace upgrade informal sector activities

8. Ensure the ratification and implementation of CEDAW and ILO conventions geared towards the protection of working women.

Other Countries

Yemen:

Major Challenges:

* At the macro level, Yemeni society faces a basic challenge of socio-economic underdevelopment, with an annual growth rate for industry registering a negative 26%.

The country's long history of civil strife has undoubtedly impacted its development status and economic performance.

****** Increasing women's employment rate is an immediate priority to improve women's socio-economic status in Yemen.

******* Enhancing women's social well-being is a further imperative for sustainable socio-economic development. Some of the acute challenges facing Yemeni women is the high rates of illiteracy plaguing its women population, and the exceptionally low levels of female educational enrollment.

******** High fertility rates present a serious challenge in Yemen, where they reflect the poor socio-economic levels of the country in general and women in specific, and at the same time, are induced by them. Accordingly, a more comprehensive development approach is needed in Yemen, where enhancing the overall social and economic status of women as educated and income earning employees will simultaneously reduce population growth.

Gaza Strip and the West Bank:

Major Challenges

***** A major challenge for Palestinian society is the building of the country's economic and social infrastructure.

****** Although the available data on the rates of female economic activity vary, still the best of these estimates are rather low. Furthermore, most of the economically active women are engaged in the informal sector. Systematic attention needs to be given to raising the socio-economic status of women in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip through their incorporation in the formal economy.

******* Poor social and demographic factors pose serious challenge to the well-being of Palestinian women in general and their integration in manufacturing employment in particular. Most notable of these challenges are the high rates of total fertility, the remarkable low literacy rates among the women population and the poor levels of female secondary school enrolment.

Lebanon:

Major Challenge

***** In the absence of recent and comprehensive data, any effort to address the situation of women in Lebanese society is hindered. Serious efforts have to be given to updating the national census of Lebanon and labor force surveys.

****** Although according to the available data, women's socio-economic status is generally comparable to that found in the diversified economies of the region, both the gender gap in literacy rates and female secondary school enrolment negatively deviate from the regional mean, suggesting at least two areas where attention needs to be given to women's socio-economic enhancement.

CHAPTER V. STRATEGIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION:

The following strategies and recommendations for action reflect the outcome of a UNIDO/ESCWA held validation workshop in which a number of experts participated in proposing the needed strategies and actions to increase, and incorporate where absent, women's integration in industrial development, particularly in manufacturing activities.

STRATEGIES	ACTIONS	CLUSTER 1	CLUSTER 2	CLUSTER 3	REGION	ACTORS
- Promotion of the Third Choice alternative.	1. The need for flexible and rotating working hours for women.				X	ESCWA, UNICEF, ILO, National Machinery, NGO's.
	2. Identification and promotion of alternative work conditions.				X	ESCWA, UNICEF, ILO, National Machinery, NGO's.
	3. Harmonize work duties and family responsibilities on a gender sensitive basis.				X	ESCWA, UNICEF, ILO, National Machinery, NGO's.
- Sensitizing policy makers to the value of women's socio-economic enhancement.	1. Promote an understanding of economic conditions and trends and the necessity of women's economic participation.	X	X	X		ESCWA, NGO's.
	2. Translate into actions, the provisions on women's integration included in the national development plans.	X	X	X		Governments.
	3. Identify areas where women can participate in the formal economic sectors.	X	X	X		ESCWA, UNIDO Governments, NGO's.
- Increasing women's participation in manufacturing activities.	1. Develop & enhance technical, vocational & industrial training for women.		X			Governments, Training Centers.
	2. Integrate women at the professional & managerial levels in the industrial sectors.	X				NGO's, Professional association, Private sector Enterprises.
	3. Promote women's professional & managerial representation in industrial sector.		X	X		NGO's
	4. Encourage women's participation in non-traditional industrial sub-sectors.	X	X	X		ESCWA, UNIDO, UNDP, NGO's.
	5. Enhance the support services for women in the manufacturing sector.		X	X		Governments, UNDP, NGO's.
	6. Provide on job training for women in manufacturing sectors.		X	X		UNIDO, ILO, Employer Trade Unions.

STRATEGIES	ACTIONS	CLUSTER 1	CLUSTER 2	CLUSTER 3	REGION	ACTORS
- Development of gender sensitive statistical indicators and techniques	1. Develop and update gender segregated data at the sectoral level.				X	ESCWA, UNIDO, ILO/ALO, other UN agencies, National statistical offices.
	2. Standardization of definitions.				X	UN Statistical Head office, National statistical offices.
	3. Develop survey techniques to account for all forms of female economic activity.				X	ESCWA & National Statistical Bureaus, ALO.
	4. Gender training for surveyors & statisticians.				X	ESCWA, National Statistical Bureau, ILO/ALO.
- Undertaking qualitative analysis of policies affecting women's participation in manufacturing.	1. Study the impact of structural adjustment programmes on women's employment in the manufacturing sector.		X			ESCWA, UNIDO, National Machinery for the Advancement of Woman.
	2. Identify job opportunities under new economic orientations.	X	X	X	X	ESCWA, UNIDO & National Machinery for the Advancement of Women.
	3. Study the impact of the relocation of manufacturing industries on female employment in the region.	X	X			ESCWA, UNIDO, ITC, World Bank, AIDMO.
	4. Study the impact of liberalization of trade (GATT) on female employment.	X	X	X	X	ESCWA, UNIDO, ITC, World Bank.
	5. Design gender sensitive packages for employment reduction in the public sector.				X	UNDP, UNIDO, ILO Governments, World Bank.
- Increasing women's share in the economically active population	1. Clarify economic priorities and orientations.	X	X	X		Governments, Private sector institution.
	2. Link education, training, & retraining to labor market requirements.	X	X	X		UNIDO, ILO, UNESCO, Ministries of Education, Labor, Training institution.

STRATEGIES	ACTIONS	CLUSTER 1	CLUSTER 2	CLUSTER 3	REGION	ACTORS
	7. Provide incentives to industrial enterprises to train women in traditional & non-traditional sub-sectors of industry.		X	X		Governments.
- Promoting small and medium scale women owned industries.	8. Linking advanced technical programs and skill requirements to the changing needs of industry.	X	X	X		UNIDO, ILO/AIO, Private Sector, Ministries of Industry, Training Institutions.
	9. Provide information on job opportunities and career counseling in the fields of manufacturing.	X	X	X		UNIFEM, NGO's, Women's Associate., Chambers of Commerce & Industry.
	10. Provide accurate job description for women's work in manufacturing industries.		X			ILO/AIO, Employers, Trade Union.
	11. Developing infrastructural facilities outside urban center to facilitate women's access to industrial locations.			X		Governments.
	1. Undertake indepth studies on women's activities in the informal sector.			X		UNIFEM, UNDP, ILO/AIO.
	2. Networking & developing links among women's professional & entrepreneurial associations.	X	X	X	X	UNIDO, UNIFEM, NGO's, Women's Associations.
	3. Promote women run manufacturing workshops either for sub-contracted activities or support services for industries.	X	X	X		UNIDO, UNIFEM, NGO's, Women's Association.
	4. Facilitate women's access (including collateral requirements) to credit & loans for entrepreneurial industrial activities.			X		UNIFEM, NGO's, Women's World Banks, Development Banks, Industrial Banks, Islamic Bank.
	5. Provide consultancy services, training in identification and implementation of projects.		X			UNIDO, NGO's, Women Association, Chambers of Commerce.

STRATEGIES	ACTIONS	CLUSTER 1	CLUSTER 2	CLUSTER 3	REGION	ACTORS
- Enhance women's formal scientific & vocational education.	6. Provide women entrepreneurs with technical & management training.	X	X			UNIDO, NGO's, Women Association, Chambers of Commerce.
	7. Develop & support agro-industries in rural areas.		X			FAO, UNIDO, NGO's, Women's Association.
- Enhancing women's legal and political rights.	1. Closing the gender literacy gap. Promote female literacy through compulsory national education programmes	X	X	X	X	UNESCO, Governments, NGO's.
	2. Increase women's secondary education enrollment.		X	X		UNESCO, Governments, NGO's.
	3. Diversify and raise the level of vocational and technical educational institutions.		X			UNESCO, ILO/ALO, Governments, NGO's.
	4. Encourage women's entry to vocational schools.		X	X		NGO's, Women's Association, Machinery. Governments.
	5. Allocate government training subsidies to industrial enterprises, to provide specific training in accordance with industrial needs.		X			Governments.
	6. Establish secondary and vocational classes for girls in rural & remote areas.		X	X		Governments.
	7. Promote activities within school curricula aiming at developing entrepreneurial skills.	X	X	X		UNESCO, Ministry of Education.
	8. Revise school curricula to increase gender awareness.	X	X	X		UNESCO, Ministry of Education.
	1. Ratification of CEDAW.	X		X		Governments.
	2. Ratifying ILO conventions #100.	X		X		Governments.
3. Ratifying ILO conventions #156.	X		X	X	National Machinery for the advancement of women.	

STRATEGIES	ACTIONS	CLUSTER 1	CLUSTER 2	CLUSTER 3	REGION	ACTORS
	4. Establish follow-up mechanisms for the enforcement & implementation of ratified conventions.		X			Women's Association, NGO's.
	5. Promote legal literacy programmes.	X	X	X		NGO's, National Machinery for the advancement of women.
	6. Enhance women's participation at the formal decision making & executive levels.		X			NGO's, National Machinery for the advancement of women.
	7. The realization of women's political rights.	X		X		NGO's, Governments, National Machinery for the advancement of women.
	8. Inform women of family planning options and means	X	X	X		

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