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Sultanate of Oman
Ministry of National Economy

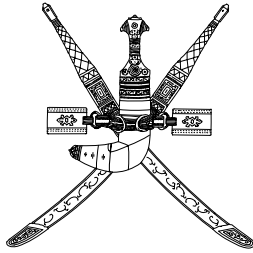


Human Resources Development

Volume II

Zul Hija 1422 AH

February 2002



Sultanate of Oman

Ministry of National Economy



Sultanate of Oman
Ministry of National Economy



Sixth Five Year Development Plan
2001-2005

Human Resources Development

Volume II

Zul Hija 1422 AH

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His Majesty Sultan Qaboos Bin Said

FOREWORD

The Ministry of National Economy is pleased to publish the Human Resources Development document. This document represents the second volume of the Sixth Five-Year Development Plan (2001-2005). In addition to this volume the Plan book includes three other developmental documents, namely; The "General Framework of the Plan", "Economic Diversification Sectors Development", and the " Investment Programme for Civil Ministries"

Fully recognizing the fact that the human being is the main tool for achieving development, and at the same time its objective and ultimate end, the successive development Plans, and this Plan in particular, strive to improve the quality of living for the Omani citizen and upgrade the human capital through providing all the basic services whether in terms of health care, social welfare, education or training services. In addition to providing services the Plans seeks the direction of the human creative capacities toward scientific research as well as the youth, cultural and sports fields. The Human Resources Development Strategy constituted one of the basic dimensions of the Vision for Oman's Economy: Oman2020, beside the other strategies involving the creation of a Sustainable Development within a stable macroeconomic framework, Economic Diversification Strategy, and Private sector Development Strategy.

Based on the above, the Sixth Five-Year Development Plan attached a significant attention to the human resources development issue. In fact it allocated this special document, which is considered a continuation of the concurrent development efforts launched by the government on all economic dimensions.

The preparation of the Sixth Five-Year Development Plan, with its four volumes, is in accordance with the provisions of Article (3) of the Royal Decree No. (1/2001) ratifying the Sixth Five-Year Development Plan. The Article stipulated that the Ministry of National Economy shall publish the details of the Sixth Five-Year Development Plan in special reports to be issued for this purpose.

As the work in the Human Resources Development volume is now concluded, I would like to express my sincere thanks to all the institutions and individuals who contributed to the production of this special document. In particular I would like to extend special thanks to the members of the Supreme Committee for Formulation of the Sixth Five-Year Development Plan, the Chairman and members of the Ministerial Committee for Labour and Human Resources, the technical and sectoral taskforces, the concerned employees at the different Ministries and government units, and to all the staff of the Ministry of National Economy.

We pray to almighty God to grant success to our efforts and help us direct our skills and capacities to serve our beloved country under the inspiring leadership of His Majesty Sultan Qaboos Bin Said, the Sultan of Oman.

Ahmed Abdul Nabi Macki
Minister of National Economy
*Deputy Chairman of the Financial Affairs and
Energy Resources Council*

INTRODUCTION

The Human Resources Development document is the second volume of the Sixth Five-Year Development Plan book. In addition to this volume the Plan book includes other volumes concerning the General Framework of the plan, Diversification Sectors Development, and the Investment Programme for Civil Ministries.

This volume reviews all the human resources development sectors which include: Labour and Omanization, Education and Training, Health, Scientific Research and Development, Social Affairs, Culture, Information, Heritage and Youths. More emphasis were put in this document on some important sectors, such as Labour and Omanization, Education and Training, and Health sector. Less emphasis were put on the role of the other sectors that have direct as well as indirect impact on upgrading and developing the human resources development.

This volume has assigned a special chapter for each one of the sectors. Each chapter included a thorough evaluation of the sector performance in the Fifth Five-Year Development Plan (1996-2000), and the obstacles faced by each sector during the implementation period of that Plan. Most of these obstacles are considered as still challenges facing the implementation of the Sixth Five-Year Development Plan. This volume included the detailed objectives of the human resources development sectors in the Sixth Five-Year Development Plan. In addition it included the policies, mechanisms and programmes that ensure achievement of such objectives, as well as the investment programmes expected to be implemented during the Plan period. The formulation of such policies, mechanisms and programmes is all according to the priorities, principles and bases adopted by the "Supreme Committee for Formulation of the Plan" in resources allocation and investments distribution, in consultation with the official authorities and private sector concerned with human resources development.

Some of the main human resources development objectives in the Plan involve creation of a tangible increase in the Omani labour force participation in the labour market, expanding and upgrading the basic education, increasing the enrollment of general secondary outputs in higher education institutions. The Plan also strives to provide primary health care services and improving the health status of the citizens. It also seeks building the national capacities in the national scientific research and development field and establishing a sound base for enhancement of this important activity in the public and private establishments. The plan focuses in particular on the Culture sector, which emerges as one of the priority sectors. The Plan also aims at upgrading the Youths sector , improving the living standard of the needy families , enhancing and upgrading the information work, giving more attention to heritage and its maintenance.

A special ministerial committee, namely " The Committee for Labour and Human Resources" contributed to the preparation of the human resources development document. The committee is chaired by H.E. the Advisor to His Majesty the Sultan, for Economic Planning Affairs and the former President of Sultan Qaboos University. The committee membership included their Excellencies the ministers and the some of the concerned officials in the government as well as from the popular and private sectors.

The work of the aforementioned committee has been assisted by several technical and sectoral taskforces of specialists and experts from the relevant concerned ministries. (A list of the names of the members of the committees and the technical taskforces is attached). To all those people we extend our thanks and appreciation for the remarkable achievement that we hope to bear its fruits in upgrading the capacities of the Omani citizen and achieving our aspirations of welfare and prosperity.

We pray to Almighty Allah to grant success to our efforts to achieve our objectives under the wise leadership of His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said, Sultan of Oman.

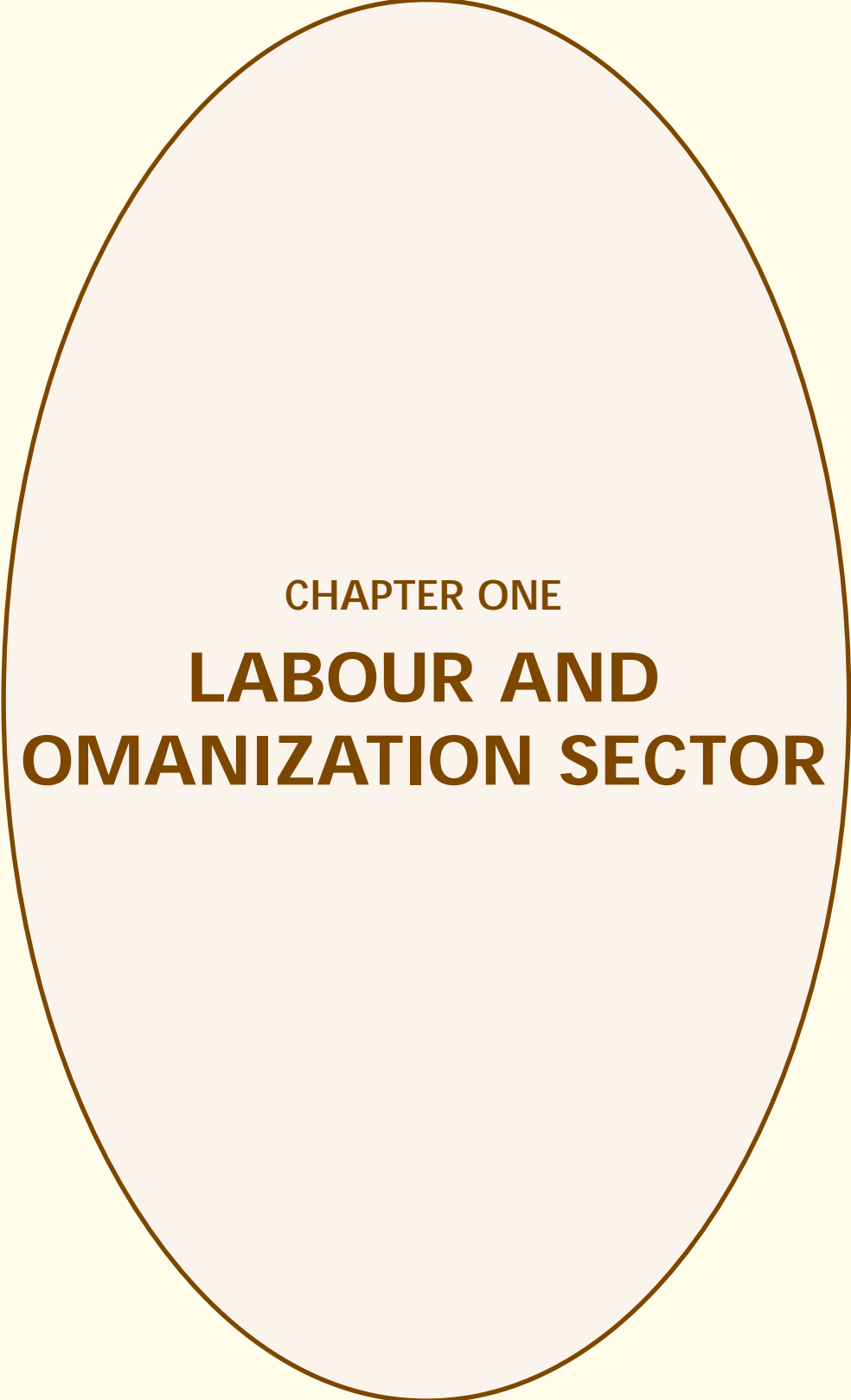
Rajiha bint Abdul Ameer bin Ali
Undersecretary of the Ministry of National Economy
for Development Affairs.

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CHAPTER ONE

**LABOUR AND
OMANIZATION SECTOR**

CHAPTER ONE

Labour and Omanization Sector

1-1 : Introduction:

Human resources constitute one of the primary pillars for achievement of comprehensive and sustainable development. The labour force plays a pivotal role in the production process, beside land, capital, management and technology. The human resources development constitute one of the main bases for refinement and mobilizing capacities and development of human potentials in its scientific, practical, professional and attitudinal terms to meet the demands of the society and Labour market for labour force at its different standards and specializations which satisfy the development requirements. In consideration of this aspect of development, human resources development, labour affairs education, qualification and training have been awarded special attention in the objectives and polices of the long-term development strategy for the period (1970-1995). The experiences from that period indicated that, the Sultanate achieved a noticeable progress in relation to broadening labour market and increasing national Labour force participation and qualification.

In spite of the pronounced improvement in the indicators related to Labour market and human resources development during the period (1970-1995), there was, still, a group of challenges that face the labour and omanization sector. To overcome these challenges, the vision for Oman's Economy : Oman 2020 gave a special attention to human resources development and qualification of national Labour force. The Vision for human resources involves : (Creation of well developed Omani human resources with capacities and skills that conform with the technical and technological development and characterized by high efficiency for management of changes. This is in order to face the regional and international continuously changing conditions and ensure maintenance of Omani traditions and customs. The labour and Omanization sector vision, in the vision for Oman's Economy: Oman 2020 objectives involve provision of employment opportunities in both Omani public and private sector and their training and qualification in a manner suitable to Labour market. This can be achieved through:

- Provision of employment opportunities for Omanis, to avoid unemployment, and provide them with training and qualification in order to conform with the Labour market needs.
- Substituting expatriate labour with highly qualified Omani labour. This is to shift the economy from low value added economy to one with high value added . Furthermore, to increase the participation of the Omanis in the labour market in general and with particular focus on increasing the Omani women participation.
- Increasing the efficiency of Omani Labour market through reducing the differentials in allowances between the public and private sectors.

1-2 : Evaluation of Labour and Omanization sector performance during the Fifth Five-Year Development Plan (1996-2000) :-

1-2-1: Evaluation of the sector performance related to the approved objectives in the Plan :

The objectives and directives of the Fifth Five-Year Development Plan (1996-2000) for the Labour and Omanization sector involve the following:-

- Increasing the participation ratio of national Labour force in the Labour market through adopting a group of policies and programmes to achieve this objective.
- Giving special attention to technical education and vocational training in order to qualify and train Omanis, interested in joining labour market, and provide them with the best international standards available.

The plan performance, related to increasing the national labour participation in Labour Market, was lower than expected. The total Labour force, in the plan, increased at an average annual growth rate of (2.3%) compared to the planned rate of (6.1%). This result is due to the concentration of the plan investments on high capital intensive projects and the less than adequate implementation of the projects related to privatization and natural gas dependent industries programmes.

In the Omanization domain, the plan performance was also less than the planned, whereas :-

- Omanization ratio in the private sector increased from (14.7%) in 1995 to (16.6%) in 2000 due to increased employment rate of Omanis compared to non-Omanis by (5.1%) relative to (2.3%). Hence, it appears that the planned Omanization ratio in private sector employment, by the end of the plan in 2000, which was estimated to be (255) has not been accomplished.
- In the civil public sector the Omanization rate increased slightly from (68.5%) to (74%) during the period (1995-2000). This increase is attributable to the increasing number of employed Omanis at a growth rate of (1.5%) and the negative growth for non-Omanis during the period at a rate reaching (3.8%).
 - Regarding the total employees in the two sectors, it was noticed that, the Omanization ratio did not change much, as it increased from (34%) to (34.3%) between 1995 and 2000. Therefore the planned Omanization ratio for total Labour in 2000, which is estimated at (38.9%) has not been achieved.
 - The preliminary results of the Household Expenditure and Income Survey of 1999 when compared to Labour Force Survey in 1996 indicate an increased unemployment rate among Omanis. Part of this unemployment is voluntary (non acceptance of available employment opportunities due to low pay) and the other part is frictional. This could be attributed to the weak economic performance of the non-oil sectors during the Fifth Five-Year Development Plan and also the tangible increase in the education and training systems outputs.

The Omanis qualification and training received special attention and support in the plan, as tangible steps have been taken to expand the technical education and vocational training. This has led to increased enrollment in technical and vocational training institutions. In spite of this, the enrollment rate in technical education and training

relative to the total enrollment in higher education is still low and not exceeding (20.1%) in 2000. In addition, the qualification and training processes in the plan, had faced some difficulties. The most important of these involved the problems and obstacles that faced the implementation of the General National Vocational Qualifications (GNVQ). To deal with this, adoption of improved technical education in the technical and industrial colleges was proposed in the form of a High National Diploma (HND). Chapter two of this volume reviews in detail the plan efforts related to qualification and training.

1-2-2: Evaluation of sector performance related to approved policies and mechanisms in the plan:

a. *Support of the institutional structure for human resources planning and Omanization policy:-*

A number of decisions and procedures have been taken during the plan period. They are all aiming at supporting the institutional structure of human resources planning and Omanization policy promotion. The important decisions and procedures involved were as follows:

1. The decision of the (former) Supreme Committee for Vocational Training and Labour assigning the Ministry of Commerce and Industry to assume the responsibility of applying the prescribed Omanization ratios to the private sector establishments working in manufacturing and hotel sectors and the coordination with these establishments for employees training to achieve the approved Omanization rates.
2. The decision of the (former) Supreme Committee for Vocational Training and Labour concerning the approval of an Omanization plan in the teaching authorities in the technical and industrial colleges (96-2020) which was presented by the Vocational Training Authority(VTA) .
3. Formulation of the Omanization Monitoring and Follow-up Committee as per the Royal Decree No. (95/1997). The committee is responsible for following-up and monitoring the implementation of the plans and programmes related to Omanization in public and private sectors. The committee is affiliated to the Diwan of Roayl court and has broad powers.
4. Abolishing the Royal Decree No. (31/91) establishing a Supreme Committee for Vocational Training and Labour (1997) and promulgation of the Royal Decree No. 95/1997. According to the 5th article of the Royal Decree No. 95/97 the Ministry of social affairs, Labour and Vocational Training undertook the responsibility of defining the national economy's Labour force needs, formulation of bases and rules which help the concerned units to match the education and vocational training policy with these needs, together with formulation of necessary policies for expatriate labour force employment in the country.
5. The decision of the Council of Ministers concerning the formation of a ministerial committee , chaired by H.E. the (former) Minister of Justice, Awqaf and Islamic affairs , to formulate the required frameworks to address the Omanization issue in private sector

6. Ministerial decision approving the annexation of the Office of Labour Force Planning to the office of H.E. Minister of Social Affairs, Labour and Vocational Training and defining its responsibilities.
7. Ministerial decision for setting up a follow-up team for the Omanization plans of specified group of professions in the private sector
8. Tangible steps have been taken during the plan period towards improvement of labour database in the Ministry of Social Affairs, Labour and Vocational Training.

In spite of the efforts, in the plan, of promoting the institutional structure for planning of human resources and Omanization policy, this structure is still suffering from the multiplicity of authorities involved in labour and Omanization. In addition to this, some decisions regarding Omanization haven't considered the prevailing realities, as they specified a number of months to achieve its targeted percentage, and included all sectors and establishments without material selection or carrying out labour and payment structure study in these establishments.

On the other hand, the units authorized to implement the Omanization plan, extended the deadline for achieving the required Omanization ratio and slackened in imposing the violation fees that weakened the credibility of the plan to a great extent from the perspective of the private sector

Regarding the labour database, the preparation of realistic and objective plans for employment and Omanization which require integration of labour database in the Ministry of Social Affairs Labour and Vocational Training with databases in the Ministries and concerned units (The General Organization for social insurance, Ministry of Commerce and Industry and Ministry of National Economy)

b. Support of financial resources for employment, training and incentives programmes of the Omanization Plan:

The important procedures taken during the plan period to support the financial resources for employment, training and incentives programmes of the Omanization plan are as follows:

1. Increasing the financial levies on employers in private sector from O.R. 60 to O.R. 120, or (7%) of the expatriate worker's salary , whichever higher.
2. Setting the vocational training levies, paid by employers in private sector, at O.R. (100) per each expatriate worker starting from March 1998 and cancellation of previously adopted system indicated in section (1) above.
3. The decision of the Supreme Committee for Vocational Training and Labour No. (7/96) concerning the government bearing (100%) of the cost of training citizens as per the regulation of training organization according to (GNVQ), (NVQ) systems. The total expenditure totaled O.R. (9.4) million for covering cost of training of (6388) Omanis during the period (1997-1999).

In spite of raising fees for expatriate labour recruitment from O.R. (70) to O.R. (100), the relaxing of the implementation of the regulations organizing the recruitment resulted in a large flow of expatriate labour force and doubled its number by the end of the plan period. This, on the one hand illustrates the importance of integrating all the measures together. On the other hand it proves that, as long as the increase in cost of expatriate employer is less than the salary differential to the business owner in case of employing an Omani employee (in addition to his associated social insurance levy which is (10% of the salary), they will continue to prefer the expatriate worker. It is therefore necessary to periodically review the fees with the objective of increasing such fees in order to reduce the gap mentioned above (it may require setting a minimum wage rate for expatriate workers in the formal sectors).

As for the Omanization incentives, the government support for the private sector, and particularly the exemption of equipment and raw materials from customs fees, constituted a strong incentive for employers in the manufacturing industries and hotels to achieve the approved ratios. However, it has not received the same response in the trade sector. This indicates the importance of choosing the appropriate incentive for each sector. The continuance of the deterrent and incentive policy in the private sector in the area of Omanization could be the appropriate approach.

c. *Upgrading the vocational handicraft training and qualification for Omani cadres*

1. The Supreme Committee for Vocational Training and Labour decision No. 4/96 and the decision No. (10/96) on issuing and approving the Training Organizations Regulation according to the National Vocational Qualifications (NVOs) and General National Vocational Qualifications (GNVOs) systems.
2. Allocation of O.R. (7) million in the development budget for the Vocational Training Authority to train (5000) Omani citizens, not employed in the public and private sectors, according to the new training regulations, from the human resources development programme provisions.
3. Approving the training plan according to the National Vocational Qualifications for 1997 and training (3787) citizens, as new trainees in 1997 and (2500) in the second level from 1996 class so that the total capacity of private vocational training institutes reaches (6287) citizens in 1997.
4. Cooperation among Ministry of Information, Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour, and the Vocational Training authority to formulate an information programme to enlighten the citizens and employers in private sector, about the nature of the National Vocational Qualifications programmes and the employment opportunities that could be provided through this training.
5. Specifying a maximum limit for the compensation paid to private training institutes within the framework of the (NVO) training system according to the domain and level of the programme.
6. Amending the conditions for joining the first level of the (NVO) training system to (6) years of primary education.
7. Approving Omani training programme in the area of industrial weaving.

8. Approving Omanis training programme in the area of fiberglass manufacturing in a way that the cost per trainee should not exceed O.R. (1600).
9. Approval of training programme for Omanis in the area of operating and driving heavy duty equipment and vehicles and specifying a maximum limit for cost according to the type and level of training.
10. To approve that Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour is to provide the vocational guidance services.

In spite of the efforts for qualifying Omani cadres, the technical education and training faced a number of difficulties and challenges specially the National Vocational Qualifications (NVQ) and the General National Vocational Qualifications GNVQ systems.

d. Regulating the labour market and labour recruitment and upgrading Omani employment:

Regarding regulation of labour and labour recruitment and upgrading Omani employment the following procedures were taken during the plan period.:

1. Banning expatriates from driving buses of schools, establishments employees, transport of agricultural products inside and outside the country and selling and transporting cooking gas cylinders in 1998.
2. Banning expatriates from printing and photocopying works starting from January 1999.
3. Establishments transactions with the Directorate of labour are performed by their Omani employees only.
4. Raising ratio of Omanization in auto service stations to (50%) in 1998.
5. Sponsors to pay employee's travel costs in case of delay in issuance or renewal of labour card for more than 3 months.
6. Specifying the minimum salary rate for Omani employees in private sector by O.R. (100) plus O.R. (20) as transport and housing allowance.
7. Conduction of labour inspection raids and deporting violators of labour and residence laws after giving them a period to adjust their status. About (31) thousand have been deported in 1998 and about (42) thousands have been deported in 1999.
8. In 1996 the decision for regulating the rules of early retirement has been taken. The application of the decision succeeded in reducing surplus employment in the civil service from one side, and has given a clear signal to employment seekers to the true government intention of putting the employment responsibility on the hands of the private sector
9. Lack of information about the extent of effectiveness of national labour recruitment offices in the private sector for provision of employment opportunities for citizens. However, the role of these offices could be broadened to cover the provision of employment opportunities for Omani labour outside the Sultanate (in the Gulf countries, particularly in the United Arab Emirates).

1-2-3: Structure and characteristics of labour force in the Fifth Five-Year Development Plan (1996-2000):

a. *Employees in the civil public sector:*

Employment in the civil public sector has been affected by two main factors. Those are the approval of the early retirement system and the Omanization processes. In spite of the effects of these two factors, the employee's structure in the sector maintained to some extent, its characteristics before the start of the Plan period. The employment data in the sector indicated the following:

1. Retraction of the number of civil public employees slightly by (0.3%) by the end of 2000 compared to the end of 1995. Total number of employees decreased from (110529) employees to (110498). This came within the framework of the policies related to employment in the civil service stated in the vision for Oman's Economy.
2. Increase in rate of omanization in the civil public sector to (74%) by the end of 2000 compared to (68.5) at the end of 1995. The Omanization rates increased slightly in the civil services from (69.3) in 1995 to (75.5%) in 2000. In Diwan of Royal Court the Omanization increased from (63.8%) in 1995 to (67%) in 2000 and the public government organizations from (70.7%) in 1995 to (74%) in 2000.
3. Female employees in the civil service formed about (33.2%) of the total labour force in the sector in 2000. Omani woman employment concentrated in education and health professions. The percentage of those working in health sector reached (22.8%) while those employed in education sector were (68.9%) of the total Omani woman employees in the civil service in that year.
4. The age distribution for employees in the civil service shows that (68.1%) of the Omanis are in the age group of less than 35 years and (65%) of expatriates in the age group of more than 35 years.
5. Omani employees structure in the civil service according to their education level, in 2000, shows that, the illiteracy rate represents (11.4%). Those who can read and write formed (10%), while elementary and preparatory schools graduates were about (14.6%). Holders of general secondary certificate and post secondary diploma represent (40.8%), while university graduates (21.5%). Masters and Ph.D. Holders were (0.8%). This indicates the shortage of specialized and experts Omanis in civil service sector compared to about (10%) among expatriates in 2000.

b. *Employees in Private Sector :*

Regarding the employment in the private sector, the available data indicates the following:

1. The number of employees in private sector increased from (518.3) thousand employee in 1995 to (592.9) thousand employee in 2000. According to these numbers, the number of employees in the private sector, during the period (1996-2000) increased at an annual rate of (27%). The Omani labour force increased by about (5.1%) compared to (2.3%) for expatriate labour force. Omanization ratio increased in the private sector from (14.7%) in 1995 to (16.6%) in 2000.

2. The data on employees distribution in the private sector by economic activity indicated the following:
 - About (78%) of the total labour force was concentrated in five main sectors. These are wholesale and retail trade, restaurants and hotels, construction and building, agriculture and fishings and manufacturing.
 - About (70.6%) of the total Omani labour force in the private sector were concentrated in five main sectors. These are wholesale and retail trade, restaurant and hotels; agriculture and fishings; transport; storage and communication; financing, insurance, real-estate and labour services; mines and quarries.
 - (94.7%) of the expatriate labour force in the private sector were concentrated in five main sectors. These are wholesale and retail trade, restaurants and hotels; construction and building; manufacturing; community and personal services; agriculture and fishing.

3. The Omanization data in the private sector indicated that the five economic sectors with the lowest Omanization ratio were agriculture and fishing; wholesale and retail trade, restaurants and hotels; manufacturing and construction and building; community and personal service. In these sectors about (521) thousand employees were working, i.e. (88%) of the total employees in the private sector About (467) thousand of those were expatriate who comprised (95%) of expatriate labour force in the private sector

The four main economic sectors which were of the highest Omanization ratio were transport, storage and communication; finance insurance, real estates and labour services; mines and quarries; electricity, water and gas. About (50) thousand employees were working in these sectors in 2000, i.e. (8%) of the total employees in the private sector About (15.9) thousand employees were expatriates which constituted (3.2%) of the total expatriates in the private sector

4. The data on total employees in private sector according to occupational groups indicated the following:
 - About (81.7%) of total employees in the private sector were concentrated in five main occupational groups, which are: services and sales occupations; professionals and handicraft; operation of machines, equipment and transport means, skilled labours in agriculture, animal rearing and fishing, and employees in secondary occupations.
 - (80.4%) of Omani labour force in private sector concentrated in five main occupational groups. These are: employees in secondary occupations; skilled labours in agriculture, animal rearing and fishing; employees in operation of machineries, equipment and transport vehicles; clerical occupations; services and sale occupations.
 - (82.6%) of the total expatriates in the private sector work in five main occupational groups. These are: services and sale occupations; vocational and

handicraftsmen, operation of machineries, equipment and transport vehicles; skilled labour in agriculture, animal rearing and fishing, and specialists.

5. The results of the labour force survey of 1996, that are related to labour force distribution in private sector according to occupational status, educational and payment status indicated the following:
 - (57.7%) of Omani labour force in the private sector were paid employees while (33.1%) were self-employed. The sum of those paid and self-employed totaled (90.8%) of the total Omanis in the private sector
 - More than half of the Omani labour force in the private sector were of an educational level lower than elementary or illiterate (57.4%) and only about (14%) attended secondary school. The university graduates and those of higher degrees represented only (2.6%) of the Omani labour and (2.7%) were of graduates of technical colleges.
 - (44%) of the employees were from age groups below (35) years. Those are ages distinguished by increased activity of individuals ability to learn, and increasing productivity .Only (5.3%) of employees were of age group above 65 years.
 - Regarding the expatriate labour force in the private sector, the information available to the Ministry of Social Affairs, Labour and Vocational Training, indicated their low educational level. About (82%) of expatriate labour force were of the preparatory school level or less while those holders of university degrees did not exceed (6.4%).
 - (34.4%) of the labour force receive monthly wage that is less than O.R. (50), while (51%) receive an income in the range of OR (51-100). This indicates that (85.4%) of expatriate labour force receive monthly salary of less than O.R. (100). This appears to be connected to their educational levels.
6. The number of Omani women employed in the private sector totaled about (15.6) thousand i.e a about (16%) of the total Omani labour force in the private sector The number of expatriate women in private sector totaled (38.6) thousands, i.e. about (8.2%) of the total expatriate labour force. The Omani women employment concentrated in education, financial intermediaries, wholesale and retail trade, manufacturing and agriculture. The expatriate women labour force in the sector concentrated in the services sector (health, education, domestic services).

1-3: Challenges and obstacles facing the labour and Omanization sector in the Sixth Five-Year Development Plan (2001-2005):

Inspite of great improvement in the indicators related to labour and Omanization sector during the previous three decades, there is a group of challenges, and obstacles which face the sector. These in volume the following:

- a. Low rates of economic participation of Omanis in the labour market. This is due to the following reasons:
 - Reluctance of some youth to work in vocational and handicraft occupations due to wrong social concepts.

- Refrainment of some employers from employing Omanis and the complaint about inadequate technical and vocational qualification for those looking for work.
 - Preference of expatriate labour force by employers due to differentials in wages and allowances.
 - Low rate of Omani women participation in labour market.
 - Employment conditions and working environment in the small and medium scale establishments do not encourage Omani labour force to work therein.
 - Limited programmes directed to encourage Omanis for self-employment due to shortage in financing and lack of marketing skills and experience in dealing with free trade.
- b. The continuous increase in number of people looking for employment in response to increased number of graduates.
- c. Low level of conformity between labour market needs and educational system outputs due to the following reasons;
- Interest in going for academic education.
 - Limited intake capacity of technical and industrial colleges and vocational training centers.
 - Limited programmes for vocational extension and guidance and lack of sufficient and suitable information for students regarding the appropriate educational and training opportunities suitable for labour market needs.
- d. Lack of clear and well-studied plans for Omanization and the non-observance of Omanization policies and ratios. This led to weakness in Omanization plans for vocational occupations and employment in public and private sectors.
- e. Incomplete information systems and shortage of reliable data and information about labour force and labour market planning. Such information could assist in educational, training and Omanization policies.
- f. Challenges emanating from globalization and international trade liberalization:
- Wages competition, as global companies were directing their investments to countries characterized by low wages for employees.
 - Observance of free market economies and competition rules including application of international labour standard in labour market such as wages, working hours, insurance, safety conditions, occupational health...etc.

1-4: The main objectives of the sector in the Plan:

Employment of Omanis received special attention in the Sixth Five-Year Development Plan (2001-2005), as the plan pursue to produce tangible increase in the contribution of Omani labour force to the labour market. The labour and Omanization sector objectives were formulated according to the challenges that face the sector and expected improvements in the national economy and in accordance with the sector vision. Based on this, the objectives of the sector in the plan involve the following:

1. Provide education, training and qualification for Omanis to be able to benefit from the available employment opportunities inside and outside the Sultanate. This will introduce

a change in the Omani labour force structure by upgrading its educational and vocational levels.

2. Introducing change in labour market structure in the private sector for the benefit of the Omani labour force and reducing the dependence on expatriate labour force without prejudice to the development objectives.
3. Addressing the phenomenon of disguised unemployment of the national labour force in some occupations and economic activities.
4. To achieve upgrading of production efficiency of government units and the optimum utilization of available resources.

1-4-2: Forecasts of Labour force demand and supply in the Sixth Five-Year Development Plan (2001-2005):

a. Population projections in the Plan :

The population statistics, in terms of their volume, rates of growth and characteristics, are considered one of the main data on which the development planning processes are dependent, specially labour force planning processes. The present available data about population, depend on the results of the 1993 General Census of Population Housing and Establishments of 1993, the first of its kind in the Sultanate.

For the preparation of the population projections, two major population groups were identified in the Sultanate. Those were Omani population and expatriate population, whereas, the projection for each of these two major groups was conducted separately and independently.

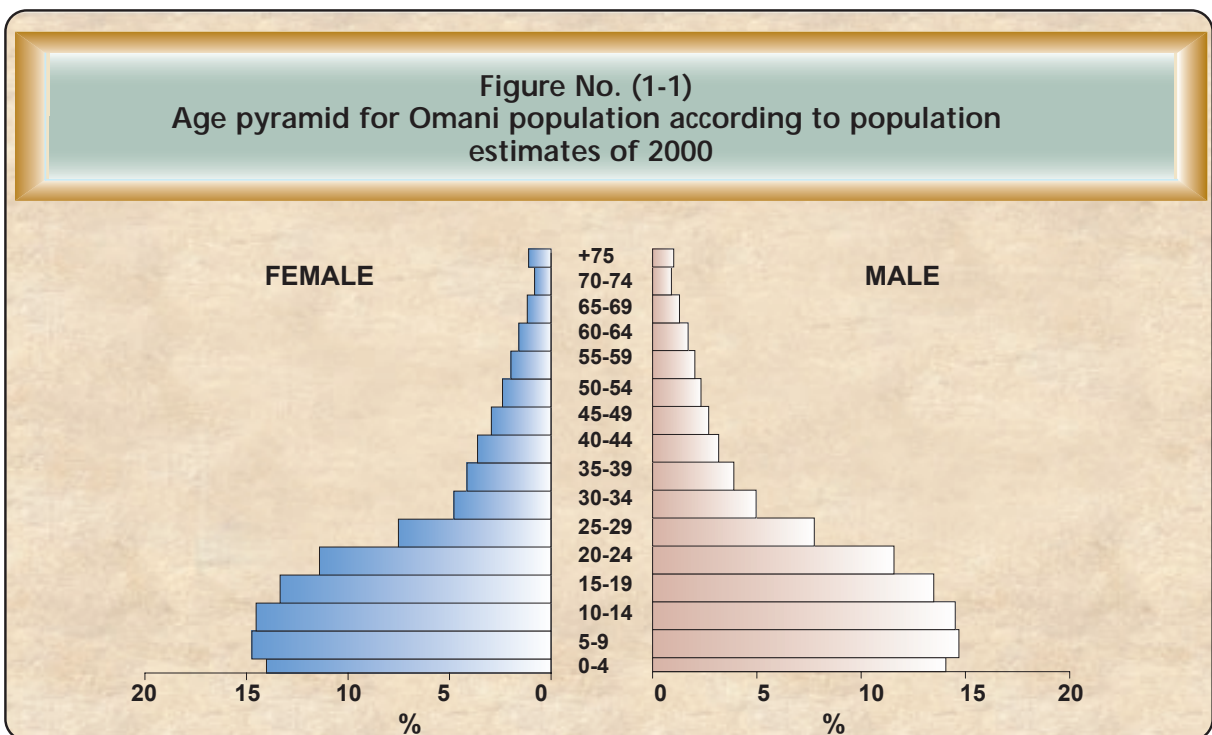
For the preparation of the projections of the Omani population the Ministry of National Economy adopts the "Components Method". This method takes into consideration the primary elements that affect the population growth and those particularly involve:

- Distribution of women at reproductive age.
- Life expectancy at birth.
- Fertility levels (average number of children born by a woman according to her age at the census).

The expatriates population projections were prepared by using demand forecasts for expatriate labour force and dependency rates of expatriate population.

The preparation of the population projections, in the Sixth Five-Year Development Plan (2001-2005) were based on that the total population size of the Sultanate, taking 2000 as the base year, is estimated at about 2.4 million. Omanis constitute about 74% of the total population while the expatriates form about (26%). The distribution according to the gender varies between Omanis and non-Omanis. The distribution of Omani population is (50.8%) males and (49.2%) females . The distribution according to gender for non-Omani population, however, is (79.9) males and 20.1% females. This indicates

that the distribution of the total population in terms of Omanis and non-Omanis is (58.4%) males and (41.6%) females. This is due to the non-Omanis population structure. The distribution of Omani population in terms of age is similar to age distribution in developing societies where the population pyramid is distinguished by a wide base that gradually narrows. These indicate the increase in fertility and birth rates and thus increase in the percentage of children in the population. Figure No. (101) illustrates more this view and indicates that, more than (43%) of the total Omani population are in the age group of less than (15) years. Those who are of less than fifteen years of age of expatriates are about (11.6%) of the total expatriate population. Based on this, the economic dependency rate (ratio of unemployed population to employed population) for the Omanis is about (5.3 : 1) while it is (0.16 : 1) for expatriates.



On the assumption of total average fertility of (3.9 birth / woman), it is expected that, the Omani population will grow at an average annual rate for the plan period of about (2.64%). This will increase the Omani population from 1778 thousand in 2000 to about 2025.7 thousand in 2005. Regarding the expatriate population, based on demand forecasts for expatriate labour force during the plan period, and using their economic dependency rate, which is estimated in 2000 by about (0.16%), their number is expected to increase from 624 thousand in 2000 to about 632.9 thousand in 2005. Accordingly the total Sultanate population is expected to increase from about 2402 thousand in 2000 to about 2658.6 thousand in 2005, at an average annual rate of (2.1%).

Table No. (1-1)
Population Projections for the Sixth Five-Year
Development Plan period (2001-2005)

(Thousand population)

Population	Base Year	Sixth Five-Year Development Plan					Average Annual Growth Rate %
	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	
Omani	1778.0	1822.7	1871.6	1921.7	1973.2	2025.7	2.6
Expatriate	624.0	671.5	712.0	730.6	678.5	632.9	0.3
Total Population	2402.0	2494.2	2583.6	2652.3	2651.7	2658.6	2.1

b. Labour force supply forecasts in the Plan:

The forecasts for the labour force overall supply, during the plan years, were prepared based on the Omani population projections according to age group and sex. This forecast depends on the results of the 1993 General Census for Population, Housing and Establishments , and by using the economic activity rates which are derived from the results of the Labour Force Survey in 2000 for the different age groups and males and females. It is not expected that these rates will change during the relatively short plan years.

By applying the economic activity rates of the different age groups on the population projections during the Sixth Five-Year Development Plan, it was possible to attain rates in the range of (37% - 40%) for males and (8%-9%) for females and hence about (22%-24%) for the total Omani population for the years (2001-2005). These rates express the population change in the different age groups. Table No. (1-2) below illustrates the estimates of the overall supply of the labour force related to these rates during the plan period.

Table No. (1-2)
Estimates of the overall supply of the Omani Labour force during the Sixth Five-Year
Development Plan (2001-2005)

2000	Detail	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
1777.7	1. Total Population	1822.7	1871.5	1921.7	1973.1	2025.7
903.3	Males	926.8	951.7	976.7	1002.8	1029.5
874.4	Females	895.9	919.8	945	970.3	996.2
1008.9	2. Population 15 years and more	1045.2	1089.2	1138.2	1184.4	1230.9
512.7	Males	530.7	552.7	577.1	600.2	623.4
496.2	Females	514.5	536.5	561.1	584.2	607.5
365.9	3. Labour Force	409.4	430.7	452	473.6	495.3
301.5	Males	338.7	356.2	373.9	392	410.4
64.4	Females	70.7	74.5	78.1	81.6	84.9

It is clear from the data of the above table that the Omani labour force will increase during the Plan period at an average annual rate of about (6.2%) to (129.4) thousand employee i. e an average annual increase of (25.9) thousand employee. This increase is comparable to the estimates of the Fifth Five-Year Development Plan that give an increase in the labour force by about (103.2) thousand employees.

It is expected that, the labour force will grow by about (5.7%) and (6.4%) for females and males respectively compared to the growth rates of (12.4%) and (3.3%) respectively for the period (1996-2000) according to the labour force survey for these two years.

It has been noted that the supply of labour force depends on the rates of the economic activity and is affected by changes in those rates, particularly the female participation and increased rates of enrollment in education. This is particularly for individuals in higher education age (19-25) and the retirement policies that will be imposed by the state during the coming years. Establishing more colleges and universities will increase the enrollment in higher education institutions and will decrease the new comers to labour market from secondary school graduates. Eventually that will result in decreased supply and unemployment among this group.

Therefore, the estimates of (26) thousand annual new entrants to labour market during the coming Plan year can be considered as upper limit and assuming an annual rate of new entrants of (20-26) thousand.

In order to prepare the forecasts of the additional Omani labour force supply according to the occupation group, the output of educational and training system, in the Sultanate (males/females) for the years (2001-2005) was estimated by using the world bank model, known as (MEM), taking 1999 as the base year. In addition the forecasts used the internal efficiency indicators in the general education (rates of transfer to higher class, failure/ repetition of class and dropout) prepared by the Ministry Education, and the estimated internal efficiency rates for the rest of the education establishments. These numbers of graduates (or school dropout), i. e outputs of the education and training system, constitute the supply of the qualified national labour force – except the percentage of females and males who do not participate in the labour force.

According to these estimates (projections) the total sum of graduates of internal and external education and training institutions – during the plan years – was (123131) graduates, in addition to (43040) drop-out from the various education and training institutions at the work age. These figures exclude the individuals not essentially enrolled in education and training establishments. They are estimated to be (17.6) thousand and join the labour market at the work age. Those represent a small fraction of domestic labour supply due to the expansion in the elementary education in the Sultanate during the last three decades. Thus the total estimate of education and system output in the Sultanate, in addition to those returning from university studies abroad (government or private) of about (166,171) individuals during the plan years, at an annual average of (33,342) graduates.

By applying the rates of economic participation on outputs of education system, the total labour force supply is estimated to be (129,4) thousand distributed according to the occupations levels – as explained in Table No. (1-5) section. This explains, also, the employment opportunities created during the Sixth Five-Year Development Plan.

c. Labour force demand forecasts in the Plan :

The labour force forecasts in the plan were prepared according to the following assumptions:

- The plan targeted growth rates for the non-oil activities, added value, whereas the Plan aim to that the GDP, for the non-oil sectors (excluding Oil refining and those depending on Natural Gas and Petrochemicals) to grow by an average annual rate, during the Plan period, by about (4.5%).
- Improvement of the overall productivity, as it is expected that the overall productivity will improve gradually in the Plan at an average annual growth rate of (1.5%).

Thus, it is expected that the overall demand for labour force, in the Plan will increase by an average annual rate of (3%). The total volume will increase from about 703 thousand employees in 2000 to about 813 thousand employees in 2005. This means that the Plan will provide (109) thousand additional employment opportunities.

In the sectoral domain, the five sectors of highest contribution to provision of additional employment opportunities (according to rank) are construction, education, trade, manufacturing and transport, storage and communications. The five sectors of least contribution to provision of additional employment opportunities in the Plan, (in order of the least) are: mining, quarrying, fisheries, electricity and water, financial intermediation and health.

The estimates' results of total additional requirements of the labour force in the Plan, indicate that the demand for the labour force will be distributed according to the occupational groups as illustrated in Table No. (1-3) below:

**Table No. (1-3)
Distribution of Total Additional Demand for Labour Force according to occupational groups
in the Sixth Five-Year Development Plan (2001-2005)**

Occupational Group	New Employment Opportunitie (Employment Opportunity)	Relative Distribution of Total Additional Demand(5%)
Specialists	16695	15.3
Technicians	8944	8.1
Skiled wrkers	9124	8.4
Semi Skilled workers	19814	18.2
Other semi skilled workers	47198	43.2
Unskilled workers	7460	6.8
Total	109235	100

From the data of the Table above, it is clear that most of the additional demand will be for the other semi-skilled labour group. The additional demand for this category in the Plan is expected to be (47.2) thousand additional employment opportunities, i.e. (43.2%) of the total new demand. This reflects the dependence of small scale establishments on labour intensive production pattern by using low aid expatriate labour force. The percentage of this group is expected to reach (65%) in the transport, storage and communications sector, and (99%) in agriculture sector. However, a relative increase in the demand for highly qualified labour force is expected, whereas, the demand for specialists and technicians (technologists), as indicated in Table No. (1-2) above, will form about (15.3%) and (8.1%) respectively of the total additional demand in the Plan for labour force. This reflects the drive in the Plan towards upgrading the production base and adopting more sophisticated production approaches. Accordingly, a change is expected to take place in the labour force structure by occupational group. The ratio of specialists and technicians to the total labour force in 2005 is expected to increase compared to 2000. This will be at the expense of the semi-skilled and other semi-skilled groups as illustrated in Table No. (1-4) below:

Table No. (1-4)
Labour Force Structure according to occupational group in the Sixth Five-Year Development Plan (2001-2005)

Occupational Group	Year 2000	Percent (%)	Year 2005	Percent (%)
Specialists .	74464	11.6	91159	12.2
Technicians	35404	5.6	44348	5.9
Skilled Workers	53900	8.4	630024	8.4
Semi skilled workers	146565	22.8	166379	21.1
Other Semi-skilled workes	291964	45.5	339162	45.1
Unskilled workers	39725	6.2	47185	6.3
Total*	642022	100	751257	100

*The total represents the overall demand for non-oil private sector and includes only health and education sectors from the government sector.

d. Balance between supply and demand for labour force in the Plan:

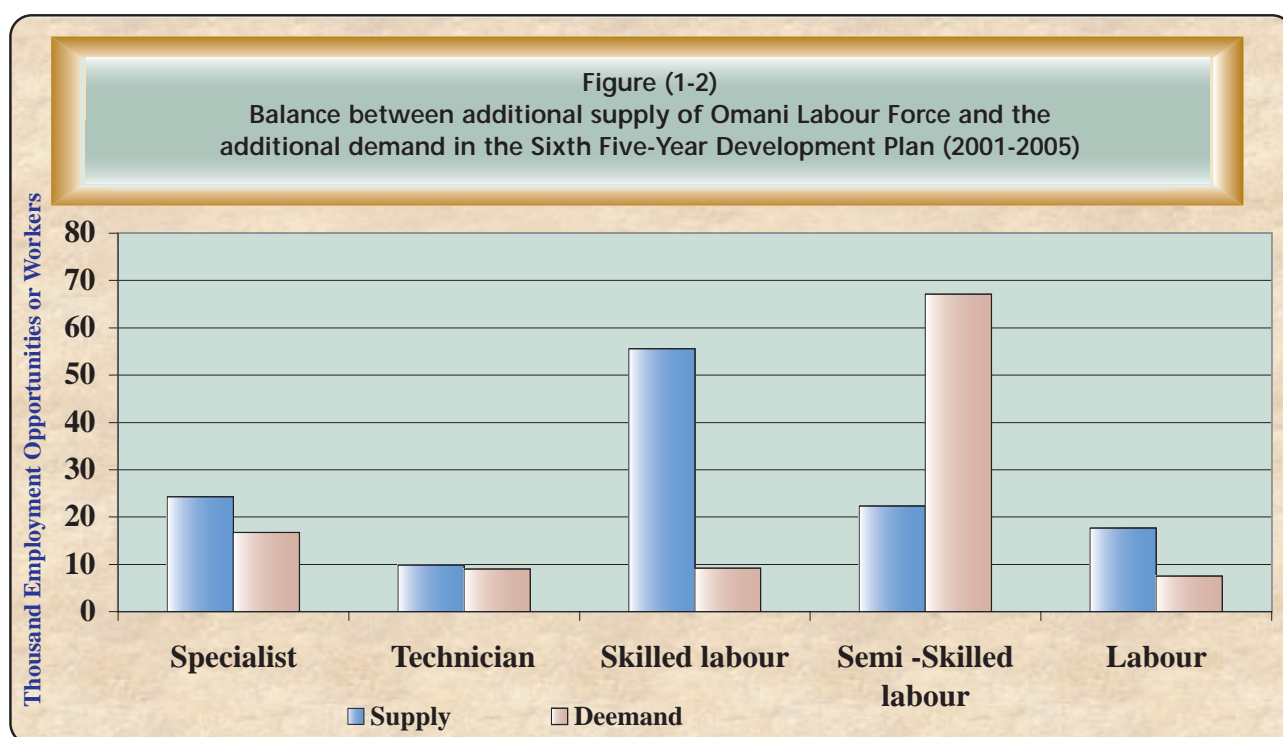
It can be concluded from the data of Table No. (1-5) below, that the total additional supply of the Omani labour force, during the Plan period (from the formal education system outputs), exceeds the additional demand by (18%). This high percentage is attributable to two reasons: First the high growth rates of Omani labour force, which exceed the expected employment rates, that are related to medium growth rates of production in non-oil sectors, estimated at (4.5%). The second reason is the increase in the outputs of educational and training system from one year to another. The overall balance of supply and demand is estimated to be in excess of (20) thousand, whereas the additional demand is estimated to be (109) thousands compared to (129) thousand for Omani additional supply.

Table No. (1-5)

Balance of additional supply of Omani Labour Force with the total additional demand during the Sixth Five-Year Development Plan (2001-2005)

Occupational Group	Additional Requirement	Omani Supply	Balance (Supply-Demand)	Expatriate workers in Private Sector
1. Specialist :	16695	24225	7530	44028
2. Technician :	8944	9780	836	12368
3. Skilled workers :	9124	55514	46390	57880
4. Semi-skilled workers:	19814	3590	-16224	118233
5. Other semi-skilled	47198	18706	-28492	239434
6. Unskilled workers .	7460	17585	10125	22756
Total	109235	129400	20165	494699

The data of the above table also indicates that the incompatibility of the outputs of the present education and training system with the occupational structure of additional demand for labourers still exists. While the labour market is still facing a deficit in the skilled and other semi-skilled labour force there is a surplus in the specialized professions, particularly the non-scientific occupations (for example social specialist.) and in the labour force that could be qualified through short term courses for clerical and skilled manual works. This is attributable to that, the development of the education system – so as to achieve the required consistence between outputs and labour market needs - requires a relatively longer time than the Plan period. In addition, to that, the additional labour force requirements reflect the targeted structural changes, which will result in increased demand for specialized occupational groups. Figure No. (1-2) explains the balance between overall additional supply of Omani labour force and the overall additional demand for labour force in the Plan at occupational group level.



Although the supply and demand balance indicates that the total expected supply of Omani labour force in the Plan exceeds the total additional demand for it, full employment of new entrants to the labour market could have been achieved through substitution of the huge numbers of the expatriates labour force .It would have also been possible to provide totally new employment opportunities for job seekers from the graduates of previous years. However, due to the inconsistency between the structures of supply and demand for labour force and also the realities of labour market situation this could not be realized

In view of the previous analysis of labour force demand and supply, and assuming realistic Omanization ratios that are consistent with the labour market status, particularly the private of labour part segment, it is expected that the employment during the Plan in both the civil public and private sector will take the following status:

- Provision of about 109235 new employment opportunities. This will raise the total labour force from about 703433 in 2000 to about 812668 workers in 2005 at an average annual growth rate of about (3%) during the plan period,.
- The majority of the additional employment opportunities will be provided by the private sector, which is expected to provide about (93.2) thousand additional employment opportunities. The growth rate of the total employment in private sector is estimated to be (3%).
- Through filling new employment opportunities and the Omanization process, the Omani labour force is expected to acquire about 99033 employment opportunities in the Plan. This will result in increasing its total volume from 180015 in 2000 to about 279048 in 2005. The total additional employment opportunities for the expatriate labour force are not expected to exceed 10202 opportunities. This will increase expatriate labour force total volume to 533620 in 2005 compared to 523418 in 2000.
- The public sector is expected to absorb a number of educational and health profession outputs to satisfy the necessary requirements of the sector. The total number of Omanis who will be employed is estimated to be about (24.6) thousand, of this number (16) thousand are additional employment opportunities while the remaining (8.6) thousand are opportunities created by the replacement (substitution). Thus, the civil public sector growth rate is expected to be about (2.7%) during the Plan period.
- Omani Labour force is expected to grow at an annual growth rate of (5.4%) in the civil public sector and at an average growth rate of (12%) in the private sector.
- A negative growth of (-6.8%) is expected in the expatriate labour force in the civil public sector due to the labour substitution in education and health sectors. However it is expected to increase in the private sector by (0.7%) due to Omanization and substitution policies.
- The Omanization in private sector is expected to increase from about (16.6%) in 2000 to (25%) by the end of the Plan. This is as a result of the policies and measures that will be implemented. In the civil public sector, the rates are expected to

increase from about (74%) to (84%) due to the expected substitution in the education and health sectors and particularly in the general education sector.

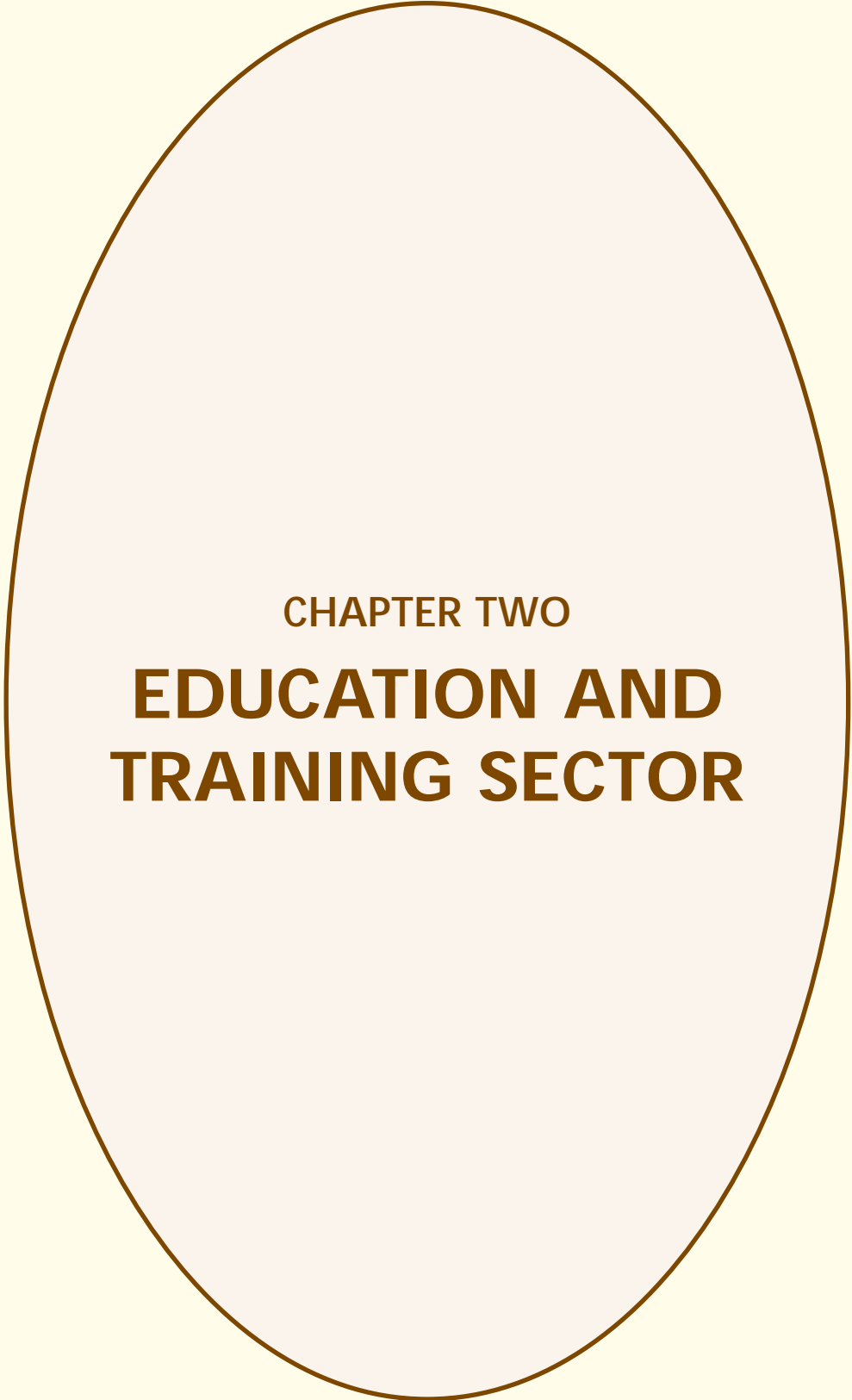
1-5: Policies and mechanisms for achieving the sector Objectives in the Sixth Five-Year Development Plan (2001-2005):

The Sixth Five-Year Development Plan (2001-2005) is adopting a set of policies and mechanisms to achieve the approved objectives of the sector in the Plan in the appropriate manner. The most important of these policies and mechanisms regarding the private sector are the following:

1. Promoting and broadening the private sector and government role in the training and employment areas to help in training and employment of Omanis.
2. Upgrading labour legislation to suit the domestic labour market status and its recent and future developments.
3. Establishing an integrated database for the Omani labour market and to work towards its upgrading through national information network.
4. Provision of occupational guidance and extension services.
5. Upgrading of employment systems in the Ministry of Social Affairs, Labour and Vocational Training and the private recruitment offices.
6. Increasing the enrollment capacity of higher, technical and vocational education so as to increase the admission of general education graduates.
7. To emphasize observance of the imposed policies and Omanization rates, their review and upgrading from time to time, according to the supply and demand for national labour. To work towards enforcing the Omanization decision in all sectors and economic activities.
8. To review the minimum wage rate, whenever necessary, to encourage employment of the Omani citizens in the private sector and consider the possibility of its application to all employees (Omanis and expatriates).
9. Broadening and upgrading the social insurance umbrella to include all Omanis employed in the private sector and those who are self-employed. Also, to unify the Pension and Social Insurance funds for employees in private and public sectors.
10. Increasing females participation in labour market.
11. Upgrading the technical education system in the technical industrial colleges by approving the high national diploma system (HND).
12. Completing the Omani Vocational Qualifications (OVO) system so as to prepare skilled and limited-skill labour force and implement the system in the government vocational training centres.
13. To conduct research and studies about the labour market to monitor its developments in terms of labour force structure, wage rates, employment and other factors and changes.
14. Formulation of a clear policy for adjustment conditions of Omani labour force affected by privatization processes.

The approved policies and mechanisms for the government sector involve the following:

1. To support the training and qualification programmes to increase performance efficiency of employees in the civil government sector.
2. Formulation of clear and well-studied Omanization plans by all government units.
3. To develop criteria for early retirement according to conditions and regulations that targets limited categories of employees, while retaining those who have qualifications, efficiency and experiences.
4. To increase chances of graduate studies scholarships for civil service employees in the required specialization in order to achieve Omanization of the jobs of experts, consultants and employees. These scholarships should be through approbations to be allocated from the human resources programmes.
5. To provide the necessary capacities for the Ministry of Civil Service to implement the project of labour force planning in the civil service sector.



CHAPTER TWO

**EDUCATION AND
TRAINING SECTOR**

CHAPTER TWO

Education and Training Sector

2-1: Introduction :

Education is considered one of the most important factors for building human capital and development. The improvement in education, leads to accelerating economic and social growth and promoting of living standards through increasing per capita income and activating people to work and production and encouraging their skills for creation and invention. A recent study, based on data of employee's production and educational level, conducted in (III) countries during (30) years (1960-1990), indicated that one additional year in the average education years for labour force increases the employee productivity between (5%-15%).

The first long term development strategy (1970-1995) awarded special care for the development of Omani human resources to enable it to assume its full role in the national economy. The development efforts during that period resulted in the spreading of education services which led to tangible increase in the rates of enrollment in the different education stages and equality of education opportunities for males and females.

Due to the economic and openness which is prevailing now, there is a strong perception and endurance of the importance of education and training for conversion to economics based on knowledge production and its utilization for production of high added value commodities to strengthen their competitiveness. This necessitates that the developing countries bridge the knowledges gap between them and the advanced countries.

The Vision for Oman's Economy" Oman 2020 pursues the building of an education system that will achieve equality of chances between citizens. This is accomplished by a system characterized by cost effectiveness and respond and conform to the labour market needs. A number of policies and strategies were formulated for upgrading of education levels through upgrading of basic education and building a university, technical and vocational training education on a strong base of basic and secondary education, which works towards satisfying the renewable needs of professions and technical skills for labour market.

2-2 : Evaluation of Education and Training Sector Performance during the Fifth Five-Year Development Plan (1996-2000):

2-2-1: Evaluation of Sector Performance related to the approved objectives in the Plan:

The Fifth Five-Year Development Plan pursued the broadening of education and training service and raising its efficiency. One of the main objectives of the Plan was offering special care for human resources development through provision of needed resources for starting the implementation of the approved directives.

The most prominent directives of the Plan related to the education and training are the following:

- a. Provision of free basic education for all students in basic education age and upgrading the education level in its stages.
- b. Raising the efficiency of provision of education services and promotion of its cost effectiveness in the different levels for these services.
- c. Special care for technical education and vocational training aiming for qualifying and training of Omanis interested in joining the labour market according to the best international levels available.

The performance of the education and training sector in the Plan was distinguished, whereas the data of the sector indicated a clear improvement in sector indicators. This upgrading in the education and training services in the Plan – to a great extent – is due to the observance of the government units of provision of the required resources for these services upgrading. The following sections reviews the evaluation of the sector performance related to enrollment in the education establishments, illiteracy, human resources available to the sector, Omanization public expenditure on the sector and the role of private sector in provision of education and training services. This is at the overall level of the sector and its different stages and levels.

1. Enrollment in education:

1. *Enrollment at the overall level of education and training sector:*

The total number of those enrolling in the different stages of education (general and higher education) increased noticeably during the Fifth Five-Year Development Plan. The total number of students – as shown in Table No. (2-1) the number increased from (514.4) thousand in 1995 to about (609.2) thousand in 2000 recording an average annual growth rate, for the Plan period, of about (3.4%). The ratio of females enrolling in education reached (48.6%) of the total enrollment during this period.

Table No. (2-1)
Students' Enrollment in the Different Stages of Education in the
Fifth Five-Year Development Plan (1996-2000)

(Thousand Students)

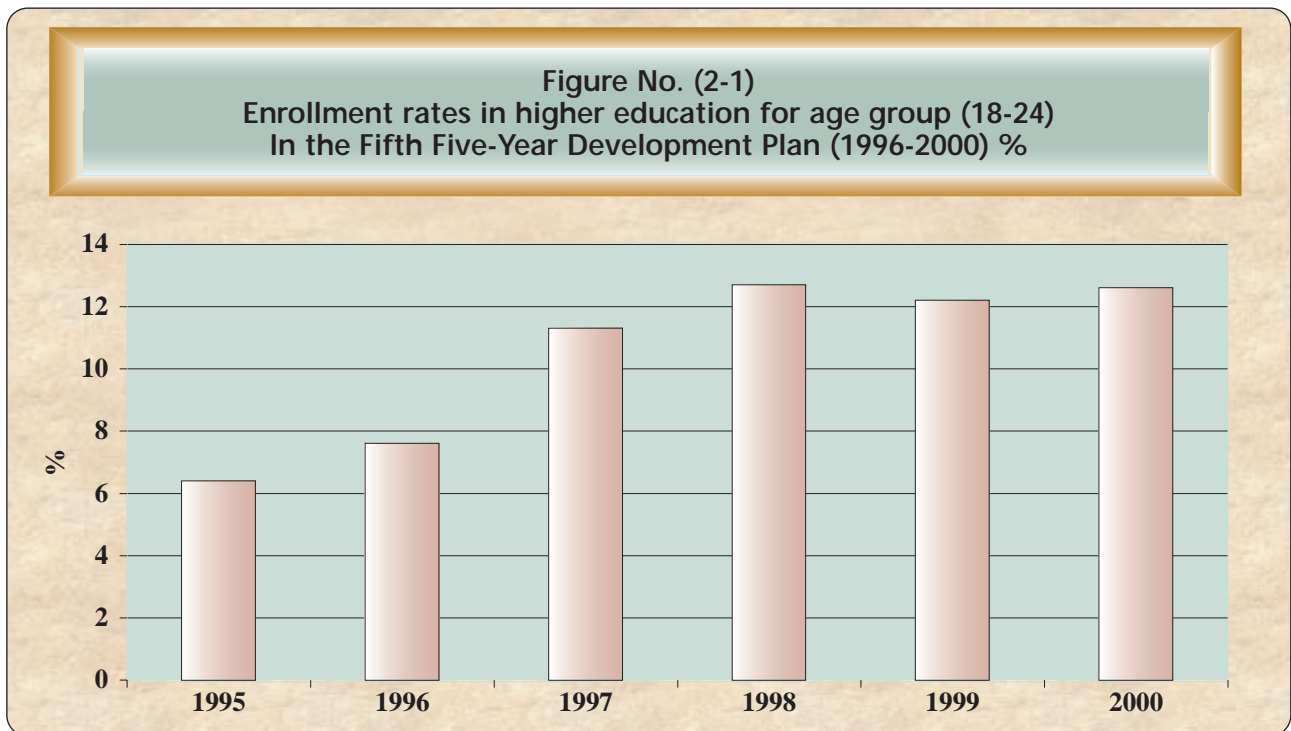
Stage	1995			2000		
	Males	females	Total	Males	Females	Total
General Education:	260.5	240.8	501.3	294.4	277.5	571.9
a. Primary	159.8	147.7	307.5	164.4	153.0	317.4
b. Preparatory	67.0	56.9	123.9	78.8	70.0	148.8
c. Secondary	33.7	36.2	69.9	51.2	54.5	105.7
HigherEducation*	6.8	6.3	13.1	18.1	19.2	37.3
Total **	267.3	247.1	514.4	312.5	296.7	609.2

Includes those enrolled in Private Institutes*

Total numbers excluding trainees in Vocational training centres**

As a result of the increased enrollment in the different stages of the education establishments, the total enrollment rates for the population, in the age group (6-23) years, were increased. They increased from (63.7%) in 1995 to (66.9%) in 2000. The increase in rates was close for both sexes whereas it increased, for males from (65%) in 1995 to (67.4%) in 2000 while for females, from (63%) to (66.4%) during the mentioned two years.

The expansion in enrollment in Sultanate Qaboos University, increased numbers of students abroad, completion of numbers of students in teachers' training colleges, in addition to the increasing numbers of females and males students of Industrial Technical Colleges and private colleges above secondary levels resulted in great improvement in the total enrollment rates in higher education during the period (1995-2000). The rate increased, during the academic year (2000/2001), - as shown in Figure No. (2-1) below - to about (12.6%) for the age group (18-24) compared to (6.4%) for (95/1996).



2. Enrollment in General Education:

Regarding the general education level, the total absorption rate for children at school age (6 years) in 1997/1998 totaled (94%); the rate for boys was (94%) and for girls (93%). The net absorption rate reached about (75%) and with equal absorption rates for boys (75%) and girls (74.7%) which reflects an indiscrimination against girls enrollment in schools. These indicators mean that there are (20%) of absorbed children who are above or below the minimum age for enrollment, about (25%) of children who are in enrollment age in first elementary class are of higher age and it is possible that a number of children who are in enrollment age are still in kindergarten.

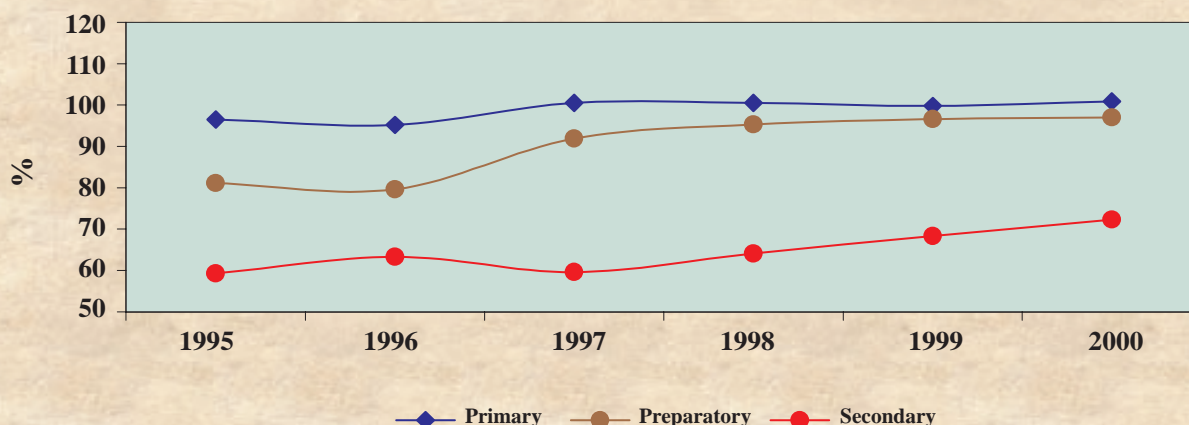
The number of students enrolling in elementary education increased as shown in Table (2-1) above – from (307.4) thousand in 1995 to about (316.8) thousand in 2000. Also, the number of students enrolling in preparatory education increased from (123.8) thousand in 1995 to about (148.8) thousand in 2000. This increased the number of students enrolled in elementary and preparatory education from (431.2) thousand in 1995 to (465.6) thousand in 2000. The female students ratio, in elementary and preparatory education, reached about (47.8%) of the total enrollment in 2000 compared to (52.7%) for males. The rate of total enrollment in elementary education increased as indicated in Table No. (2-2) and Figure No. (2-2) below from (96.5%) in 1995 to about (100.9%) in 2000. The rate of total enrollment in preparatory education increased from about (81.1) in 1995 to about (97%) in 2000.

Table No. (2-2)
Total Enrollment Rates in General Education According
To the stage in the Fifth Five-Year Development Plan (1996-2000)

(%)

Stage	1995			2000		
	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total
Primary	96.4	96.7	96.5	102.9	98.7	100.9
Preparatory	86.2	75.8	81.1	101.0	92.8	97.0
Secondary	58.3	60.4	59.3	68.7	76.2	72.

Figure No. (2-2)
Total Enrollment Rates in General Education According
To the stage in the Fifth Five-Year Development Plan (1996-2000)



The total enrollment in secondary education increased noticeably, from (69.9) thousand in 1995 to (105.7) thousand in 2000 i.e. an average annual growth rate

of (8.6%). The ratio of females, enrolled in this stage, exceeds that of males whereas it reached about (52%) and (51.5%) in 1995 and 2000 respectively. Regarding the total enrollment rates in secondary education increased from (59.3%) in 1995 to (72.3%) in 2000.

3. Enrollment in Higher Education :

The number of students absorbed in higher education and training, inside and outside the Sultanate, increased from (6.5) thousand student in 1995 to (11.3) thousand in 2000. The ratio of the enrolled to the total success in the general secondary reached (44%) and (42%) for these two years. The ratio of enrollment from total success in the general secondary in the government university education institutes (Sultan Qaboos University, teacher training Colleges, Sharia and Law College and Scholarships) reached about (16%) during this period. The numbers of those joining higher education increased by a large rate, reaching about (184.7) during the Fifth Five-Year Development Plan, whereas their numbers increased from about (13.1) thousand in 1995 to (37.3) thousand in 2000, and thus the number of students joining higher education for every (100) thousand of population, increased from (844) student to about (2096) student during the period 1995-2000. In spite of this, the rate of enrollment to the total population in age (18-24) is still low. The females comprised (48%) and (51%) of the total numbers enrolled in higher education during 1995 and 2000 respectively.

The number of students in Sultan Qaboos University increased from (4834) students in the academic year (95/1996) to (78821) students in (2000/2001) with an average annual growth rate of (10.3%). The female students comprised (48.2%) of the total students in the calendar year (2000/2001).

The number of students studying on state funding in Arab and foreign universities decreased, in the different specializations, to about (482) students in (2000/2001) compared to about (607) students in (95/1996). The numbers of those who are studying on at their expense (self financed), grants and scholarships increased in the Arab and foreign universities from (1541) student in (95/1996) to (8824) student in (2000/2001) by an increase rate of (473%).

The number of students enrolled in the teachers' training colleges, since their establishment in the academic year (1994/1995) till (2000/2001), reached about (13087) student. The females comprised (53%). The average annual enrollment in these colleges, during the Fifth Five Plan years reached about (2,000) students. Table No. (2-3) illustrates the improvement of enrollment in teachers' training colleges in the Plan.

Table No. (2-3)
Enrollment of Students in Teachers' Training Colleges
In the Fifth Five-Year Development Plan (1996-2000)

Year	Males		Females		Total
	Number	(%)	Number	(%)	
1995/94	335	57.8	245	42.2	580
1996/95	943	55.3	763	44.7	1706
1997/96	1237	58.8	868	41.2	2105
1998/97	833	38.2	1349	61.8	2182
1999/98	1348	53.4	1175	46.6	2523
2000/99	711	35.5	1294	64.5	2005
2001/00	723	36.4	1263	63.6	1986

The first batch of students, in the Sharia and Law College was accepted in the academic year (1997/1998). The total number of students, till (2000/2001), reached (474) students. This is a rate of increase of (120) students annually. Most of students in the universities inside the Sultanate are in the arts and humanities studies. About (41.4%) of students in Sultan Qaboos University were studying in Colleges of Arts, Islamic studies and arts in 2000, compared to about (31.4%) in the scientific colleges (Medicine, Sciences and Architecture). The College of Commerce and Economics comes in the third rank by a ratio of (19.5%) of the total students. The significant embarking upon humanity colleges is due to the weakness of the English language for those applying for higher education, compared to the scientific specializations requirements in addition to the guaranteed employment in the teaching professions.

The students enrolled in Commerce and Managerial Sciences represents about (27.6%) of the students on government funds in the Arab and foreign universities in 2000. About (38.3%) are studying architecture and computing. The studies of those on selffunding, grants and scholarships in the Arab Universities are concentrated in education and arts by a ratio of (47%), while these ratio did not exceed (15.2%) for students in architecture and computing, (4.8%) in medicine and pharmacology and (4.9) in sciences in 2000.

The number of students enrolled in higher studies (after the first university degree), inside and outside the Sultanate, increased from (43) students in 1995 (females comprised 20.4%) to (1090) in 2000 (23.8% are females). Those studying for Masters and PhD degrees comprised most of those in higher studies programmes whereas their rate reached (95.5%) of which (72.2%) for Masters and (23.3) for PhD, and this was during the period (1995/1996 – 2000/2001).

4. Enrollment in Technical Education and Vocational Training

The numbers of those enrolled in the government vocational training centres increased from (1043) trainees in 1995 to (1633) trainees in 2000 by an average annual growth rate of (8.4%). The enrollment rates in these centres relative to the total enrollment in

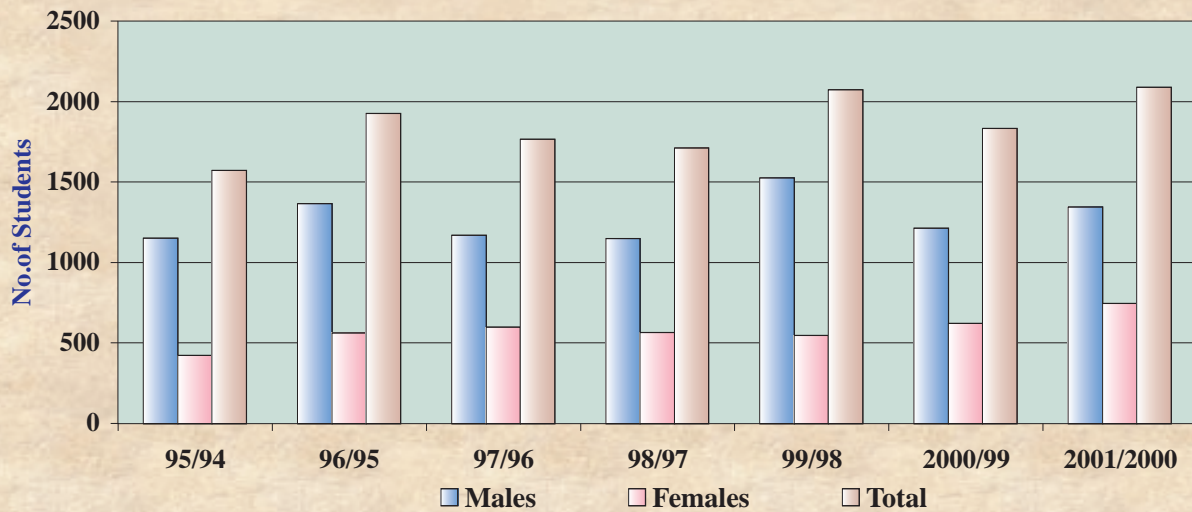
secondary education was about (2%) in (1996/1999). This rate, in the same year, was about (13%) in Bahrain, (23%) in Jordan, (28%) in Egypt and (20) in South Korea. The enrollment in a training programme according to the National Vocational Qualifications (NVQ), in Plan (1966/1997) was (4656). In adding these numbers to the (1259) trainees in the government vocational training centres, the total enrollment rate in these centres and private institutes was about (13%) of the total enrollment in secondary education in (1996/1997). The approved number of institutes for (NVQ) programmes was (38) institutes out of (164) institutes. Most of the approved centres are in Muscat Governorate (29). The rest was distributed in Al Batina Region (2), Dhofar Governorate (4), Ash Sharqiyah (1) and Ad Dakhliyah (2). The Ministry of Social Affairs, Labour and Vocational Training completed the compensation procedures for cost of training according the (NVQ) in the first and second stages for (6388) citizens during the period of first of June 1996 to the end of 1999 which totaled OR. (9.4) million and there were (2340) still under training.

In addition to the programmes conducted in the (NVQ) programme, agreements with private training institutes were accomplished to implement the national training projects programme outside (NVQ). The programmes which were implemented were industrial tailoring, vehicles and heavy equipments, filling stations, fibre glass and gas selling and distribution. (2170) trainees benefited from these training programmes since the beginning of 1998 till the end of October 2000, (45%) were males and (55%) were females.

The Fifth Five-Year Development Plan (1996-2000) witnessed an increased enrollment in the Five Technical Industrial Colleges. The number of students enrolled in the foundation year – as shown in Figure No. (2-3) below increased from (1569) students in the academic year 1994/1995 to (2088) students in the academic year 2000/2001. This increased the total number of students in these colleges to (4659) students. The female rate to the total number of students enrolled in the colleges was (27%) in the academic year (1994/1995 to (36%) in the academic year 2000/2001. Due to the increased numbers of students who succeeded in general secondary and the limited absorption capacity of the colleges, the ratio of general secondary graduates accepted in the colleges retracted from (13%) of the total general secondary graduates in the academic year 1994/1995 to (7.1%) of the total number of general secondary graduates of the academic year 2000/2001. The students enrolling in the technical industrial colleges in the academic year (99/2000) (excluding the foundation year) were distributed among the different specializations. The highest ratio being of the architecture (32%), commercial studies (30%), computer (27%), sciences laboratories (7%) and the least ratio was in constructions (4%).

The application of (GNVQ) system in the technical industrial colleges faced a group of problems and obstacles related to the examinations system and that they are unchanging from one year to another which affected the motivation for improving the students' performance, evaluation, internal and external auditing which was characterized by bureaucracy and different unit offering the examinations and those responsible for their approval. In addition to the weakness in the English language

Figure No. (2-3)
Improvement of numbers of students enrolled in Technical Industrial Colleges in the Fifth Five-Year Development Plan (1996-2000)



among the students, the lack of references, studying sources, opportunities for training and scientific application. The cancellation of the (QNVQ) system in Britain necessitated the adoption of an improved system for technical education in the technical industrial colleges by the application of the High National Diploma (HND) system.

The Sultanate witnessed a large expansion, during the last decade, in the health education and health training establishments. This involved the establishment of health institutes in the Ministry of Health. The numbers of these institutes jumped from one institute in 1982 to (15) institutes by the end of 1998. The average annual number of students enrolled in these institutes reached about (643) students between the academic years (1997/1998) and (2000/2001). The number of basic nursing students constituted about (70%) of the total number enrolled, while those studying in the basic education of technicians and health assistants sectors reached about (16%).

The total number of graduates from the education institutes under the Ministry of Health in the period (1984-2000) reached about (3.8) thousand graduate, of which about (2.6) thousand in the basic nursing area i.e. about (69%) of the total graduates. The remaining ratio of graduates were in the allied medical and technical professions. This resulted in satisfying the country needs from health supervisors, physiotherapy and health education and nutrition. Regarding the post-basic education, which includes nephrology and health management, the number of enrolled students increased after introduction of paediatric intensive care and Neonatology in 2000 – to reach (102) students. Table No. (2-4) below indicates the enrollment in the Health Training Institutes in the Plan.

Table No. (2-4)
Enrollment of Students in Health Institutes in the
Fifth Five-Year Development Plan (1996-2000)

Item	1998/1997		1999/1998		2000/1999		2001/2000	
	—	%	—	%	—	%	—	%
Basic Nursing	466	69.7	440	72.8	441	67.1	554	70.5
Basic Education other than nursing	154	23.0	114	18.9	130	19.8	130	16.5
Post-basic Education(specialized)	49	7.3	50	8.3	86	13.1	102	13.0
Total No. of Enrolled Sudents	669	100	604	100	657	100	786	100

In spite of the significant increase in the enrollment in the technical and vocational training institutions (Health institutes, private institutes) which followed the expansion in them, the ratio of enrollment in these institutions relative to the total enrollment in higher education was (29.2%) in 1995 and decreased to (20.1%) in 2000.

a Illiteracy :

The estimates, based on the population census results of 1993 indicated that the illiterate population for age group (15) year and above, reached about (41%). This ratio – and based on labour force survey – decreased to (32%) in 1996. The females represented most of illiterate population, whereas the ratio of illiteracy among females in the group (15) year and above was (54%) compared to (29%) for males in this age group in 1993. This ratio decreased to (43%) and (21%) in 1996 for females and males respectively.

b. Available human resources for education and training sector (Teachers)

The number of teachers, in the different stages of education, increased during the period (1995-2000) as shown in Table No. (2-5) below – from (24) thousand teacher to (29.7) thousand, by an increase rate of (23.8%). The annual growth rate of teachers' numbers in the general education in this period reached (3.8%) which is higher than the annual growth rate of enrollment. The teachers represent quarter of the civil government sector employees and (3.8%) of the total employees in the private and civil government sector. The ratio of teachers in higher education institutes to the total number of teachers was (4%) in 1995. This increased to (6.1%) in 2000 due to the increase in teachers numbers in the new education institutions such as teachers training colleges, technical industrial colleges and private colleges.

Table No. (2-5)
Teachers' numbers in the different stages of
education in the Fifth Five-Year Development Plan (1996-2000)

(Number)

Stage	1995	2000
General Education	23089	27919
a. Primary	11925	13394
b. Preparatory*	6671	8313
c. Secondary	4493	6212
Higher Education	972	1813
Total	24061	29732

*Including teachers in special education

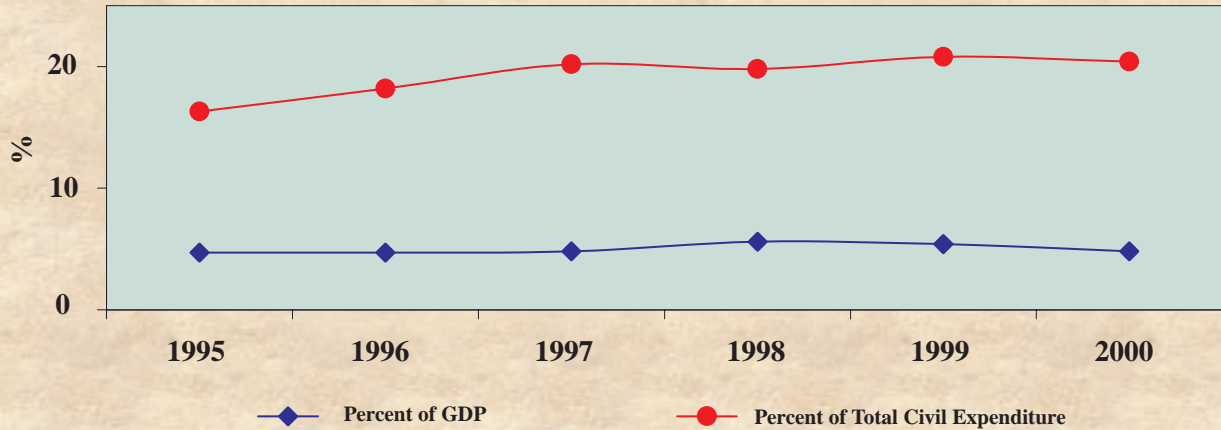
c. *Omanization :*

The Omanization ratio increased to (80.2%) in 2000 in the elementary education stage. The Omanization rates in the higher stages of education are still progressing, whereas it was (63%) in the preparatory education and (45%) in secondary education in the same year. The Omanization rates in Sultan Qaboos University increased largely for contain groups such as the technicians and administrators, whereas it was (93.2) for the administrators and (81.2) for the technicians. The ratio of Omanis in the academic staff reached (37.8%) from the total number. In the newly established colleges and institutes, such as private colleges, the Omanization ratio did not exceed (8%) of the academic staff and it was (10%) in the Health Institutes in 2000.

d. *Public expenditure on Education :*

The total public expenditure on education, increased from OR. (251.6) million in 1995 to about OR. (362.2) million in 2000, by an average annual growth rate of (7.6%). The current expenditures represented the major ratio of expenditure, whereas it represented about (89%) and (91.1%) of the total educational expenditure in 1995 and 2000 respectively. The public expenditure on education represents the main source for financing the different activities of the education sector, while the contribution of the private sector, in this area, was still limited. The public expenditure on education, as a percentage in the GDP in the ninety decades, ranged between (4%-5%) and it reached (5-6%) in 1998. The public expenditure in education as a percentage of the total Civil government expenditure was between (16%-20%) in the ninety decades (1990-2000) and it reached (20.8%) in 1998. The figure No. (2-4) below explains the improvement of expenditure rates on education sector in the Plan to the GDP and total civil expenditure.

Figure No. (2-4)
**Expenditure on Education in the Fifth Five-Year
 Development Plan**



The current expenditures on education, increased steadily during the 1990s period by an average annual growth rate which reached (8.1%) and exceeded the growth rate of the public current expenditure which did not exceeded (1%) during the period (1995-2000). Its ratio in the current government expenditure (civil) reached (21% - and 26%) in 1995 and 2000 respectively.

The public education share reached (73.3%) of the total recurrent expenditures in education in 1995 and the higher education received (24.7%) while the recurrent expenditure rate on public education decreased during the period (1995-2000), the higher education sector share increased from about (26.7%) to about (30.3%). If these shares of public expenditure were compared to enrollment rates in the general and higher education stages, the general education share from the total enrollment in 2000 reached about (94%), while the rate of enrollment in higher education was about (6%). Thus, the current expenditure on the general education for each student, as percentage of the GDP per capita, reached (13.3%) in 2000. The ratio was (10.5%) for elementary education, (15.2%) for preparatory and (18.5%) for secondary education. With respect to higher education current expenditure per head as proportion of per capita amounted to (82.8%).

Comparing the expenditure rates on the different higher education institutions to the enrollment rates in these institutions, it was clear that, Sultan Qaboos University, for example, received about (62.2%) of the total expenditure on the higher education while it absorbed about (32.5%) of the total enrollment. The expenditure rate on technical and vocational training reached about (10.4%) compared to (21.2%) of the enrollment. The higher education share (teachers' training colleges, Sharia and Law College and scholarships) reached about (25.2%) of the total expenditure compared to about (39.3%) of the total enrollment.

The current expenditure calculation for the student in the different education stages indicates a high cost average for the higher education (including the enrollment in private institutes) compared to average cost in the elementary education. It totalled OR. (2623) for higher education in 2000, compared to OR. (332) for the student in the elementary education, and (482) for the preparatory and (586) for the secondary, i.e. the average current expenditure for the student in higher education exceeded (8) times the average in elementary education. It is to be noticed, the decrease in expenditure on the student in higher education during the late years due to the increased enrollment whereas it reached OR. (5420) in 1995.

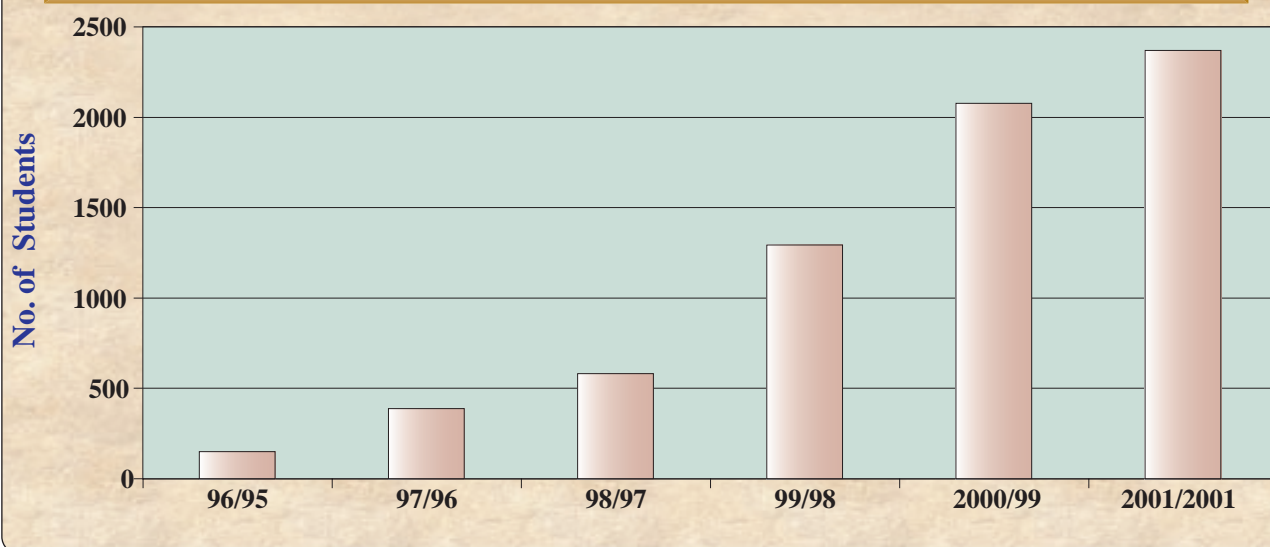
e. *Private Sector Role :*

The role of the private sector started to assume more importance during the recent years, whereas the number of general education students, in the private sector schools, increased from (10.7) thousand students in 1995 (excluding those in Kindergartens) to about (16.5) thousand in 2000, by an annual increase rate of (9%). The role of the private sector was still limited whereas, the rate of private education students (excluding those in Kindergartens) to the total students in public and private education, did not exceed about 3%) in 2000. The ratio of teachers in private sector schools to the total number of teachers in the private and public sectors did not exceed (5.1%) in 2000.

The contribution of private sector is concentrated on provision of elementary education, whereas the ratio of private sector students, in this stage to the total students was about (3.1%) in 1995 and (4.5%) in 2000. The teachers in the private sector schools represented about (5.3%) and (8.4%) of the teachers of this stage, during this period. The provision of pre-elementary education services was confined to the private sector. The total member of students listed in this stage reached (5.2) thousand in (95/96) and increased to (7.3) thousand in 2000.

Regarding the investment in higher education, the private sector established (7) colleges in Muscat Governorate and one college in each of Sohar and Salalah. The total numbers of students enrolled in these colleges – as shown in Figure No. (2-5) below – totalled (2368) students in the academic year (2000/2001) compared to about (150) students in the academic year (95/1996). The study period in these colleges range between two to three academic years, after which the student will be awarded a higher diploma. The student could join universities on higher institutes abroad to maintain the BSc. Degree. The total number of diploma graduates from these colleges, during the period (97/98-99/2000) totaled (144) students, in addition to (57) students continuing their study for the university degree abroad.

Figure No. (2-5)
Number students in the Private Colleges
in the Fifth Five-Year Development Plan (1996-2000)



2-2-2: Evaluation of the sector performance related to its approved policies and mechanisms in the Fifth Five-Year Development Plan (1996-2000):

During the Plan period there was observance, to a great extent, of the implementation of the policies and mechanisms approved for the sector. This helped significantly in achieving the sector objectives in the Plan. The following paragraphs review the action taken with regard to the policies and mechanisms approved for the sector in the Plan:

a. Basic education :

The most prominent policies regarding basic education in the Plan and what has been taken in this regard involved the following:

1. Abolition of the evening classes in the primary schools. The establishment of (53) new schools, to abolish the evening classes, has been started for the (97, 97, 98) categories. The Ministry of Education started the establishing of the schools, to abolish the evening classes, by implementing the categories of (99, 2000).
2. Teaching English language from the start of beginning of the basic education stage: The Ministry of Education sought the expertise of several experts of teaching English language. It also started preparing a summary of the subjects from the English language curriculum for classes (1-4). The Ministry has already completed the teaching units for classes (1-3) of the student activities book and the teacher's guide. The Ministry took the prompt actions for procurement of the required computer systems and equipment necessary for finalizing the production of books, preparation of teaching aids, and training programmes associated with the curriculum. The Ministry has also finished the preparation of the English language curricula for the years (5-12) and the preparation of courses for grades (1-5).

3. Reviewing the educational curricula so that more emphasis shall be on scientific specializations, such as Mathematics, Science, computing, principles of economics. The concerned people in the Ministry have already prepared a proposal that includes curriculum development for the Mathematics and Science subjects. Two experts have been contracted, one for each subject of Science and Mathematics. Procedures are being carried out to sign contracts with two experts in the fields of evaluation and examinations in addition to identifying the systems and equipment necessary for the development process. The curriculum has already been prepared for the first grade in both subjects.
4. The start of implementation of the senior teacher system for English language, Mathematics, Science, Arabic Language and Islamic studies subjects, as well as the training of those teachers. The Ministry of Education has concluded the preparation of the criteria and terms for selecting the senior teachers and specification of their functions and duties. The Ministry has also finished the preparation of the training plan for the senior teachers and started its implementation since July 1998. The Canadian company (ECS) has been approached to nominate a number of suitable training experts.
5. Efforts are being exerted to provide on-the-job training for those working in the educational field. The objective is to upgrade the educational performance and professional efficiency through different training courses and various workshops. A Training and Qualification Department has been established at the Directorate General of Curriculum and Training. This department has been entrusted with the task of training all those working in the educational field. The department has been provided with a training centre where several training courses and workshops are currently being organized for the technical cadres of the Ministry so as to acquaint them with the recent developments in the education field. Some training centres were established in the Regions of the Sultanate. Some cadres are being sent abroad to attend training courses and benefit from the experiences of other countries in the educational field. The Ministry has started upgrading the qualifications of the English language teachers, by signing an agreement with the University of Leeds; in Britain to enable the holders of intermediate college diploma pursue their studies and obtain a university degree in Educational Studies. Successful candidates shall specialize in Teaching for Non-English speakers through enrollment in on-the-job training programme that qualify them to obtain a Bachelor (Honours) degree, which will lead to upgrading their professional standards.
6. Encouraging the private sector to take a greater role in the education sector: The Royal Decree No. (18/97) was issued for private sector support in the areas of health, education and vocational training through Oman Development Bank. The sector activity in the education area started to increase noticeably during (1995-1998).

b. Higher Education :

The important policies and mechanisms, in the plan, for the higher education and the measures taken for their implementation are represented in the following :

b-1 : Sultan Qaboos University :

1. To continue the provision of free education at Sultan Qaboos University. However, the authorities concerned shall carry out a study and present their ideas regarding reconsideration of additional non-educational services such as (housing, meals, transport ...etc.) currently provided by the university . The objective of this review is to alleviate the burden on the public budget and achieving equality for all in this respect. The student in Sultan Qaboos University does not pay any study fees, since education is still free. In spite of this a reconsideration for housing and meals was conducted. Now, male students, living further than 100 km were given OR. (120) to cover housing costs and part of the meals cost whereas the University a free meal for those students.
2. To review the specialisations available at Sultan Qaboos University, including the Faculty of Agriculture, in order that priority shall be given to the specializations required by the national economy. The Ministry of higher education should prepare the necessary study by the end of 1996:

A study was completed by the end of 1996 about the University outputs and its relation to the Omani Labour Market. The study recommendations were presented to the council of Ministers who approved in its meeting No. (20/98) formation of a technical committee to study the University specialization in which the acceptance could be decreased or could be cancelled. The University introduced new specializations which are in conformity with the economic and social development. These include the biotechnology, environmental biology, geophysics, medical statistics, industrial engineering, petrochemicals, engineering, mineral engineers, public relations and environmental studies. New course of tourism, translation and French language were introduced.

3. Sultan Qaboos University is to consider providing opportunities for a number of technical education graduates to pursue their University study, subject to certain conditions to be set by the University.

The University shall provide opportunities to outstanding technical education graduates to pursue their University study according to defined conditions. This trial proved that a number of those graduates preferred to absent themselves or withdraw and the rest of them faces difficulties in continuing his University study which constitute a financial burden on the University.

4. Allow affiliation to Sultan Qaboos University: This will have a positive impact in reducing pressures on educational institutions and the labour market: The University is still studying the possibility of affiliation by using the technology of distance learning, parallel and continuous education in the different specializations. This is to be in response to the society needs. It requires formulation of an integrated system for dealing with the students, offering of certificates and scientific degrees.

b-2: Scholarships for Study abroad :

1. Upgrading the scholarships policy and complementing the public role through bearing part of the costs of scholarships in order to enable the maximum number of students to complete their University study. This should be on condition that the proposed specialization meets the requirements of national economy: This policy was not implemented of whereas the priority for available resources obtained from expatriate labour force fees, were allocated to :
 - Upgrading the basic education and improving the education quality.
 - Technical education and vocational training.
 - Upgrading of teacher training colleges.
 - Health training.

Permitting the private sector to establish private colleges to offer diploma and higher diploma within the measures and criteria presently under formulation by the Ministry of Higher Education: Nine private colleges were established offering the two diploma degrees within the required measures and criteria and some student were graduated from them.

Reconsidering the membership of the scholarship committee to include additional scientifically qualified members from the private sector. This will enrich the deliberations of the committee and achieve greater benefits: No measures were taken regarding this policy. There is a need for an additional member from the private sector, particularly there is increasing numbers of scholarship students who are self-financing.

b-3: Teachers' training colleges and the other colleges:

1. Meeting the national requirement for preparatory and secondary school male and female teachers through transforming the nine teachers' training colleges into six University Colleges. The objective is to meet the private and public sector demand for preparatory and secondary school teachers. The new colleges should provide admission opportunities for about (2000-2500) student each year. Admission, however, shall not be linked with the demand of the region hosting the college, and employment after graduation shall not be guaranteed: A total of OR. (40.8) million, in the additional programme for human resources development during the Fifth Five-Year Development Plan, were allocated to cover the current expenditures which were estimated at OR. (26.2) million and the developmental, estimated at OR. (26.2) million and the developmental, estimated at OR. (14.6) million to improve the University colleges for teachers. The development approbations for (1996-2000) totalled about OR. (13.8) million, and the commitment to it reached about OR. (12.9) million by a ratio of (93.5%) of the total approbations. The actual expenditure was about OR. (12.3) million by a ratio of (95.3%) of the total commitment. The average annual enrollment in these colleges was about (2000) students.
2. Students enrolled in these colleges shall bear part of the cost of study. Exemptions shall be made for those who prove their inability from the Ministry of Social

Affairs, Labour and Vocational Training (social security groups and their equivalent). However, a maximum limit shall be specified for the seats available for these categories: The decision of the Council of Ministers resolved that the government shall continue to bear the cost of study in these colleges together with providing the allowances allocated for students.

3. Establishment of the Sharia and Law College:

The college was established and the first enrollment was in the academic year (1997/1998). The present total number of students is (361) student.

d. Technical education and vocational training :

1. Adoption of an open training and educational system characterized by flexibility in vocational grading and helps in upgrading of the skills of Omani labour:

The implementation of the General National Vocational Qualifications (GNVQ) system adopted in U.K. was started in the Technical Industrial Colleges in Muscat, Salalah, Musana, Nizwa and Ibra. The vocational training centres started application of short training courses which include:

- Basic training courses for preparation of limited skill labour force.
- Advanced courses for preparation of skilled labour force.

This system is characterized by flexibility whereas the enrollment is not conditioned by a specified educational limit. It also allows the acceptance of trainees working in the private and public establishments. The National Vocational Qualifications (NVQ) system was applied in the private institutes aiming for preparation of skilled and limited-skill labour force in the commercial, technical and vocational occupations. The acceptance in these institutes was for the general secondary graduates of age not less than (16) years and not employed in the public and private sectors. The government presently bears the training cost in these private institutes within the approved financial resources for the additional programme of the human resources development.

2. Increasing and encouraging the woman participation to join the technical education and vocational training programmes in the suitable specializations:

The number of females in the technical industrial colleges increased from about (30%) to (31.8%) in the academic years 95/1996) and 1998/2000 respectively. The total number of females in the areas of management, technical and handicraft training and those in private training institutes, during (96-99) totalled about (2382) trainee by a ratio of (37.3%). Their ratio in the management area reached (56.8%).

3. To adopt the following systems for technical education and vocational training, which will provide the students with different skills, according to the needs of labour market (technicians, skilled labour and semi-skilled labour).

- General National Vocational Qualifications (GNVQs) for provision of technicians and skilled labour for the labour market.
- National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) for provision of skilled and semi-skilled labour for the labour market.
- Omani Vocational Qualifications (OVQs) for provision of skilled and semi-skilled labour for the labour market.

The adoption of the GNVQs and NVQs as training systems in the Technical Industrial Colleges and Private Training Institutes respectively was previously mentioned. The (OVQ) system was applied in the vocational training centres.

4. Conduction of follow-up and periodic evaluation of these programmes, in order to establish their conformity with the labour market needs, to make necessary amendments, and to benefit from international experience in this field:

The negative impacts and problems that faced the application of the (GVNQ) and (NVQ) system have been indicated previously. Based on these negative impacts and problems, the Ministry of Social Affairs, Labour and Vocational Training, planned to adopt an improved system for technical education in the technical industrial colleges through application of the High National Diploma (HND) system, starting from the academic year (2001/2002). The Ministry of Social Affairs, Labour and Vocational Training took over upgrading of short training courses system and application of the Omani National Vocational System (OVQ) in the first phase, starting from the academic year (99/200). The Arabic language was adopted for formulation of the training units and element since most of the students joining these programmes were droppers from the general education stages. Beside to this, it was decided that the teaching of the English language to be for eight hours weekly (by ratio of 21%) of overall time specified for training. Aiming for conformity of vocational training programmes outputs with the needs for skilled and limited-skilled labour force of the private sector, the Ministry in coordination with the specialists and technicians in the private sector establishments, prepared the professional criteria for the qualifications and defining its training units and elements. The total number of vocational qualifications, for the skilled and limited-skill labour level. For the presently implemented stage in the government centres, reached (28) vocational qualification, of which (19) are the skilled level and (9) for the limited-skilled levels.

5. The technical education and vocational training authorities should conduct an annual evaluation in order to determine the extent of public interest in enrollment in this type of education :

No annual studies were conducted to determine the extent of public interest for technical education and vocational training. As indicated previously, there is an indicator showing the interest for this education, from the decreased rates of droppers and increased numbers of applying for enrollment compared to the absorption capacities of these establishments.

6. Attention should be given to teachers training in order to raise efficiency and skills, through the educational institutions affiliated to the council concerned with implementation of (NVQs) and (GNVQs):

Training and qualification of the academic staff of the technical industrial colleges was conducted during the Plan years in order to raise their efficiency, as shown below:

- Sending (20) Omani employees in the Technical Industrial Colleges to U.K. to obtain the PhD and MS degrees.
- Training (86) employees for relatively short training periods inside the Sultanate and (25) employees for relatively long periods outside the Sultanate.
- Holding domestic training sessions for the academic staff in the Technical Industrial Colleges to raise their efficiency and promote their skills in teaching and evaluation according to the (GNVQs) system. This was achieved in coordination with the British donors.

7. Preparation and implementation of a national system of professional tests:

The (OVQ) system represents a base for vocational criteria and training programmes related to it, and provision of professional qualifications in the Sultanate. This is in preparation for establishing a national systems of professional tests in a way that guarantees the compatibility of vocational training levels with the actual requirements of development in the different activities.

8. Designing media programmes to enlighten people and reduce negative viewpoints regarding the importance of specialization and opportunities provided by the technical education and vocational training systems: The Ministry of Social Affairs, labour and vocational training, during the previous period and since the application of the new systems, conducted a number of media programmes, which were represented in:

- Open-day festivals in the five Technical Industrial Colleges which included illustrative exhibitions and seminars and arrangement of students visits to secondary stages, companies and establishments, in addition to local communities.
- Workshops, and seminars in which the training and employment policies, quality control measure, and the role of technical education and vocational training in developing the human resources were presented and explained.
- Preparation of pamphlets about the Sultanate achievements in technical education and vocational training.
- Broadcasting of a biweekly television and weekly radio programmes.

2-2-3: Evaluation of the Performance sector related to implementation of the sector investment programme in the Plan:

In accordance with the Plan objective for provision of resources to start implementation of its directives related to human resources development. During the plan period – inspite of

expenditure rationalization policy which was followed during 1998 and 1999 – a large amount of financial resources were allocated for education and training. This was one of the primary elements behind the positive improvement in the sector performance indicators in the Plan.

Regarding the investment programme, the ammended approbations for the sector in the Plan – as indicted in Table No. (2-6) below - totalled about OR. (99) million. The total actual expenditure reached about OR. (80) million b a rate of (90.8%).

Table No. (2-6)
The Investment Programme for the Education and Training Sector in the
Fifth Five-Year Development Plan (1996-2000)

I t e m	Amended Approbations O.R. Mn	Commitments O.R. Mn	Implemented O.R. Mn	Implementation (%)
On-goingProjects	21.0	21.0	20.8	99.0
New Projects	78.0	70.8	59.2	75.9
Total	99.0	91.8	80.0	80.8

The important projects which were implemented for the sector in the Plan Investment Programme were :

- Establishment of a number of schools, addition of classes and educational utilities in the different Sultanate regions.
- Completing implementation of Technical Industrial Colleges in the regions.
- Establishment of the nursing institute in Muscat Governorate.
- Provision of equipments and educational instruments for Sultan Qaboos University.

Regarding the additional programme for human resources development, the total amended approbation for the education and training sector in the Plan totaled about OR. (154.9) million – as indicated in Table No. (2-7). The actual expenditure reached OR. (81.1) million by a ratio of (52.4%). The important projects implemented within the framework of the programme were:

- Projects of cancellation of the evening classes for a number of schools in the different regions of the Sultanate by OR. (39.5) million.
- Preparation and furnishing the education colleges in the different educational regions by OR. (5.2) million.
- Establishing additional buildings in the education colleges of Ibri and Rustaq at a cost of OR. (5.3) million.
- Qualifying programme for Omani English language teachers by OR. (0.9) million.
- Implementation of the grants project for technical education and vocational training. The total expenditure, for this, during the Plan period totalled about OR. (13.5) million.

Table No. (2-7)
Human Resources Development Investments for the Education and Training Sector
in the Fifth Five-Year Development Plan (1996-2000)

I t e m	Amended Appropriations O.R. Mn	Commitments O.R. Mn	Implemented O.R. Mn	Implementation (%)
On-going Projects	-	-	-	-
New Projects	154.9	10.2	81.1	52.4
Total	154.9	10.2	81.1	52.4

In addition to this, the additional investment programme for human resources development included current appropriations allocated for expenditure on the sector which totaled about O.R. (54.8) million during the Plan period. Table No. (2-8) below shows the actual expenditure on the additional programme for human resources development during the Plan years.

Table No. (2-8)
Actual Development and Current Expenditure of the Additional Programme for Human
Resources Development During the Fifth Five-Year Development Plan (1996-2000)

(O.R. Million)

I t e m	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	Total
1. Development Expenditure	1.5	12.8	18.6	21.2	27.4	81.5
2. Current Expenditure	2.0	5.3	9.8	13.9	23.8	54.8
3. Total Development and Current Expenditure	3.5	18.1	28.4	35.1	51.2	136.3

2-3 : Challenges and Obstacles facing the Education and Training Sector in the Sixth Five-Year Development Plan (2001-2005):

In spite of the apparent improvement in the indicators of the education and training services in the Fifth Five-Year Development Plan, however, these services face a number of challenges and obstacles in the Sixth Five-Year Development Plan. Most of these challenges and obstacles are linked to the necessity of matching the education and training outputs with labour market needs, and the urgent need for rationalization of expenditure on these services in view of the increasing demand for these services. This should be through adopting systems of cost effectiveness. The challenge and obstacles facing the education and training services also include the inadequate role of the private sector in financing and providing education and training services. The most important challenges and obstacles facing the education and training services involve the following:

1. The increase in the rate of illiterate population. According to the 1996 labour force survey illiteracy rate reached (32%). The rate was higher among females (43%) compared to (21%) for males.
2. The increasing rate of general secondary outputs during the recent years. The total number of successful students increased to (24.8) thousand in 2000, while faced with limited opportunities for higher education, which absorbed only (42%) of general secondary outputs.
3. Poor standard of the English language of the different educational stages outputs which

affects the continuance in higher stages of academic and technical education and the joining labour market.

4. High population growth rates, with the need for better qualification of labour force, which exerts pressure on the financial resources in time that the Sultanate is directing towards the restructuring of its economy, control of its financial statuses, limiting its expenditure and reducing the public sector role in economic activity and trying to cope with fluctuating Oil prices.
5. The need for rationalization of expenditure on education sectO.R. The data shows that the public expenditure on education grew at an average annual rate of (7.6%) during the previous Plan years. The current expenditure constitutes most of the education expenditure, whereas it reached about (91.1%) of the total expenditure on education in 2000.
6. There is an urgent need for consideration of the efficiency of resource allocation among the different sectors of the education system and within each sector, provision of quality education and achieving external efficiency for education system. The public education received (71.5%) of the total expenditure on education. Enrollment in general education reached (95%) of the total enrollment, while the higher education share of expenditure reached about (23.5%) of allocations and (5%) of the total enrollment. This indicates that the higher education receives a relatively higher share of expenditure compared to the enrollment numbers.
7. Reallocation of resources among the different education stages through price adjustment to reflect the actual cost. This is by reducing the support and individuals participation in financing.
8. Reducing educational loss. The data, which reflect the internal efficiency of the system, indicate that the student in the Sultanate needs (12.6) years to complete a (9) years of education (up to the ninth grade).
9. Achieving the balance in expenditure inside the public education sectO.R. This is through directing resources towards the section linked to the educational process such as the teacher, education utilities, such as libraries and laboratories, upgrading the education systems, effective supervision, good school management, decentralization, participation of domestic communities and offering a greater role for fathers' councils.
10. There is a primary challenge in the area of technical education and vocational training which involves their upgrading and expansion in order to take an increasing role in the transference process to production sector of high value added and economic diversification.
11. The high rate of dropouts in the technical education of the technical industrial education that reached about (25%) in the base year.
12. One of the primary challenges for the technical education and training is the transfer from a system aiming for supply – Led system to the demand – Led system. Most of the recent training system reform concentrates on making it demand-Led i.e. to affect it to respond to employers' needs rather than to individual requirements.
13. The performance of the training system is largely affected by the economic and institutional framework within which it works and the contents and organization of the programmes. The demand for technical education and vocational training outputs is

influenced also by the macro-economic policies, labour market policies and economic growth. In the Sultanate. The availability of trained expatriate labour force at low wages influences the demand for such education. This is due to the low benefits expected from it in the labour market and the reluctance of employers to appoint workers with high wages.

14. Lack of indicators for evaluating the technical education and vocational training sector performance in order to judge the quality of its graduates due to the shortage in the tracer studies which enable identifying the numbers of graduates who work in occupations that conform with their specializations, those who work in the private sector, those who joined a higher training establishments, the unemployed, the employer statement about the capability and efficiency of employees. The usage of such indicators helps in transparency and clarity of the objective, and facilitates comparison and defining the best procedures for supporting the upgrading of technical education and its future planning.
15. Inadequate private sector contribution to providing and financing education. The data indicates that the percentage of those registered in private education comprised about (3%) of the total numbers of registered in primary education in 2000. The number of those in the private primary education schools was about (3.1%) in 1995 and (4.5%) in 2000 of the total registration in the primary education. In the higher education, however, the percentage of those in the private colleges did not exceed (9%) of the total numbers in the higher education. These colleges need to broaden their enrollment in order to reach their full enrollment capacity.
16. The private colleges face difficulties involving their high tuition cost, compared to the private colleges in the GCC where large numbers of Omani students are enrolled. These colleges need to reduce the tuition cost and diversify specializations to meet the demand for certain qualifications and improvement of the quality.
17. Due to the increasing expenditures on education and per unit-cost in higher education, it became of importance to study the best approaches for individual contribution to financing University education . These include methods such as recovering some non-educational services costs and directing them to maintain the capital assets, or provision of soft loans for education and repayment of these loans after graduation and employment.
18. The Omanization rates in the higher stages of general education, are still in the development stage. The rate in the preparatory stage reached about (63.6%) and in the secondary about (45.6%) in 2000.
19. The educational outputs, regarding males and females teachers, are expected to satisfy the Omanization demands of the general education in the Sultanate during the coming Plan years. This indicates the need for reconsidering the role of these colleges in future and utilizing them to provide the specializations needed in the labour market.
20. In order to increase the Omanization rate in the higher education, it is necessary to provide necessary resources for scholarships, study abroad, and introduction of graduate studies programmes to upgrade the national capacity to train employees.
21. There is a basic challenge, that the education system should face, which involves the need to change its forecasts regarding employment. It requires the appropriate policies

for labour market and wages within of these directives. This is to achieve the economic diversification strategy and encourage the private sector to take a leading role in the economic diversification process.

2-4 : Objectives of Education and Training Sector in the Sixth-Five Year Development Plan(2001-1005):

In view of the performance indicators of the sector, which were discussed previously, and in light of the performance secondary sectors of education and training, as well as the policies and mechanisms made to achieve the sector objects, and as per the challenges facing the sector, the Education and Training Sector objectives may be summarized as follows:

a: Ministry of Education objectives:

1. Increasing the enrollment rate for the first class of the primary education from (75.4%) to (85%) for males and from (74.7%) to (84%) for females.
2. Improving net enrollment rates in the general education stages in order to reach, by the end of the Plan period:
 - For the elementary stage – males from (91%) to (93%), females from (89%) to (91%).
 - For the preparatory stage – males from (65.3%) to (71%), females from (69.6%) to (72%).
 - Secondary stage – males from (39.6%) to (47%), females from (48.1%) to (57%).
3. Reducing the illiteracy rate among population for the age group (15 years and above) from (28.5%) in 2000 to (26.7%) in 2005. This is through enrolling (8100) illiterates in the literacy programme during the Plan period.
4. Upgrading the quality of education through:
 - Establishment of (100) schools during the Sixth Five-Year Development Plan in order to abolish the evening classes schools.
 - Increasing the number of first phase of the basic education schools to (300) schools.
 - Addition of (3389) class rooms to the established school buildings.
 - Increasing the private education schools by (6) schools by the end of the Plan.
 - Decreasing the rates of school dropout in the elementary stage:
 - From (1.2%) to (1%) for males, and for females from (1.3%) to (1%) by the end of the Plan.
 - Decreasing the repetition rates in the elementary stage:
 - * From (9.9%) to (7.5%) for males and from (6.6%) to (5%) for females by the end of the Plan.
 - Decreasing the dropout rates in the preparatory stage:
 - From (6%) to (3.5%) for males and from (4.7%) to (2.5) for females by the end of the period.
 - Decreasing the repetition rates in the preparatory stage:

- From (17.7%) to (15%) for males and from (7.2%) to (7%) for females by the end of the Plan.
 - Decreasing the dropout rates in secondary stage:
 - From (7.4%) to (3%) for males and from (4.4%) to (3%) for females by the end of the Plan.
 - Decreasing the repetition rates in secondary stage:
 - From (10.8%) to (10%) for males and from (4.8%) to (4%) for females by the end of the Plan.
5. Improving and accelerating the Omanization rates in the Ministry by the end of the Plan, through:
 - Increasing the Omanization rate among teachers in the general education from (62.4%) to (97%).
 - Increasing the Omanization rate for the administrative staff in the elementary, preparatory and secondary education from (98%), (64%) and (79%) to (100%) respectively.
 - Upgrading the academic and education levels of the male and female teachers in the different general education stages and improving their payment status.
 6. Encouraging and promoting the private sector to provide education through establishing educational institutions and increasing enrollment rates in basic and secondary private education from (4.5%) to (7.4%) for primary education, from (0.9%) to (2.2%) for preparatory education and from (0.7%) to (1.56%) for the secondary education.
 7. The citizen shall participate in bearing the costs that are indirectly linked to the educational process in the post-basic education stage.
 8. Upgrading the basic education quality and its outputs related to labour market , higher education and training institutions.
 9. Conduction of educational studies and research to improve the general education.

b. Objectives of the Ministry of Higher Education in the Plan:

1. To increase the rates of admission of general secondary outputs in the Higher Education institutions from (43.1%) to (52.4%). This is through the government support and provision of scholarships at the private education institutions and increasing enrollment in the government higher education institutions:
 - College of Sharia and Law: To increase annual intake from (120) student to (170).
 - Allocating (1000) annual scholarships for study in the private colleges. This policy has already been approved.
 - Gradual work towards provision of annual grants for general secondary graduates to study abroad. The grant is equivalent to (50%) of the study cost and with a maximum limit of O.R. (4200) per year, to attain (150) scholarships by the end of the Plan.

2. Improving the education Quality through:
 - Upgrading and modernizing the educational aids in the learning resources centres.
 - Upgrading and modernizing the laboratories of educational aids.
 - Upgrading and modernizing the science and computer laboratories.
 - Upgrading the higher education quality in the Universities and private colleges.
3. Upgrading and enhancing the Omanization rates in higher education institutions:
 - Increasing the Omanization rates for teaching staff in the teachers training colleges from (7.6%) to (40%) by the end of the Plan according to the designed Plan for development teachers training colleges.
 - Increasing the Omanization rates for the teaching staff in the Sharia and Law College from (50%) to (90%) by the end of the Plan.
 - Increasing the Omanization rates for the supporting academic occupations from (67.9%) to (90%).
4. Conduction of scientific studies and researches in the teacher training colleges and the Sharia and Law College.
5. Encouraging and motivating of private sector to invest in the Higher Education through establishment of specialized Universities and Colleges to meet the labour market needs.

c. Objectives of Sultan Qaboos University:

1. Increasing the numbers of registered students from (8) thousand to (11) thousand students by the end of the Sixth Five-Year Development Plan, and the admission of (500) student annually for the Accounting Diploma or any specialization to be defined in future as needed.
2. Upgrading the admission and graduation criteria.
3. Upgrading and enhancing the Omanization rates in the University by the end of the Plan through:
 - Increasing the Omanization rates among the teaching staff of PhD holders from (16%) to (43%).
 - Increasing the Omanization rates in administrative staff from (88%) to 95%).
 - Increasing the Omanization rates in technicians category from (69%) to (90%).
 - Increasing the Omanization rates in the nursing staff of the University Hospital from (4%) to (10%).
4. Provision of constancy and scientific research services against specified fees.
5. Improving external efficiency of the university education system through:
 - Supplying the labour market with training outputs in order to increase the Omanization rates in the scientific specialists groups. This shall be done through increasing the rates of the scientific colleges graduates from (9.7%) to (10%) for engineering and (5.1%) to (62%) for medicine and from (7.3%) to (15%) for science.

- Specializations consistency with labour market needs.
 - Securing cost effectiveness and feasibility.
6. Upgrading research and development mechanisms , organizing potentials and capacities, and carrying out studies and researches to support the comprehensive sustainable development needs.
 7. Upgrading the research, development and creative skills of University graduates.

d. Technical education and vocational training objectives:

- Upgrading and expanding the technical education and vocational training opportunities:
 - Increasing the numbers of those enrolled in the technical industrial colleges from (4500) to (6000) students.
 - Admission of (500) students annually from the general secondary graduates in the private colleges.
 - Increasing intake in vocational training centres from (1300) trainees to (2000).
2. Upgrading the technical and vocational efficiency of outputs of the technical education and vocational training institutions, increasing their productivity and contribution to national economy.
 3. Upgrading and accelerating rates of Omanization in technical education and vocational training institutions:
 - Raising the Omanization rate of teaching staff in the technical industrial colleges from (14%) to (28%) by the end of the Plan.
 - Raising the Omanization rate of the teaching staff in the vocational training centres from (33%) to (66%) by the end of the Plan.
 - Raising the Omanization rate for the administrative staff in the technical industrial colleges from (90%) to (95%) by the end of the Plan.
 4. Upgrading the productivity of the educational and training system and promotion of the expenditure efficiency:
 - Establishing institutes for preparation and training the labour force in the agriculture and fisheries sector, handicrafts occupations of women sector and English language skills.
 - Establishing specialized centres for industry, electricity, communications and roads, traditional industries and handicrafts sectors.
 - Conduction of evaluation studies for the technical education and vocational training system.
 6. Upgrading the external efficiency of the educational and training system:
 - Supplying the labour market with the training and educational outputs to contribute to increasing the Omanization rate in the private section from (20.8%) to (33.5%) by the end of the Plan.
 - Reducing the dropout rates from the technical education and vocational training establishments.

- Participation of the private sector in formulation of the training programmes, follow-up of its output, evaluation and improvement of curricula applied in the technical education and vocational training establishments.
- Conduction of studies and provision of consultancy services by the academic staff of the technical industrial colleges.

2-5: Policies and mechanisms for achieving the objectives of the education and training sector in the Sixth Five-Year Development Plan (2001-2005):

The Sixth Five-Year Development Plan (2001-2005) aiming to overcome the challenges facing the sector and achieving its approved objectives in an appropriate manner, adopts a group of policies and mechanisms represented in the following:

a. Approved policies and mechanisms of the Ministry of Education in the Plan:

1. Continuance of spreading of education and its accessibility for each citizen and to work towards the activating and broadening the present programmes of illiteracy.
2. Raising the standard of the educational services offered to children with special needs quantitatively and qualitatively.
3. Expansion of basic education and improvement of the secondary education and increasing its efficiency.
4. Upgrading of the evaluation and assessments systems
5. Development of education programmes and curriculum to comply with the development demands.
6. Continuance of Omanization policy and support of labour market with education outputs in order to raise its rates.
7. Involvement of local communities in the management of educational institutions through increased decentralization and activation of Parents Councils.
8. Increasing the numbers of the private schools for preparatory and secondary stages through provision of incentives to attract the private sector investments in education.
9. Upgrading the internal efficiency for the basic and preparatory education system.
10. Furthering the compatibility of basic education with the educational needs defined by the labour market demands.
11. Creation of the appropriate environment for conduction of researches and studies through provision of necessary resources and incentives.
12. Finding the suitable mechanism for teaching English language and computer technologies so as to prepare general secondary graduates to enroll in university, technical and higher education institutions and the labour market..
13. Restructuring and strengthening the management system of the general education through decentralization.

b. Approved policies and mechanisms for the Ministry of Higher Education in the Plan:

1. Revision of intake policy of teacher training colleges according to the present intake rates and in consideration of the results of the study conducted by the Ministry of Higher Education regarding the future of these colleges.

2. Continuance and broadening the abroad scholarship policy and working towards obtaining more grants and scholarships offered by brotherly and friendly countries.
3. Adopting facilities for enrollment of students in the private education institutions.
4. Introduction of postgraduate studies system in the government and private education institutions and broadening its domain.
5. Upgrading the Higher education institutions under the jurisdiction of the Ministry in a manner which serves the development needs and in accordance with the community demands and working towards formulating a new proposal for upgrading the colleges of education.
6. Supervision and continuous follow-up of the private universities, colleges and institutes to ensure their abidance by the standards, bases and criteria formulated for this matter.
7. Continuance of the Omanization policy included in the Ministry Plan within the future proposal for the education colleges.
8. Provision of incentives to attract the private sector to invest in the higher education.
9. Establishing of (3) new (private) universities with at least 3 colleges in each University. The government should provide a support for each University amounting to (50%) of the establishment cost and with maximum limit of O.R. (3) million. This is policy that has been approved recently.
10. Involving the private sector in planning , management and supervision of the higher education.
11. Encouraging and promoting private sector to finance higher education.
12. Increasing the government financial approbations to overcome the challenges that face higher education regarding the intake of general secondary outputs.
13. Reconsidering the operational efficiency of presently approved capital for governmental higher education institutions.
14. Creating appropriate climate for conduction of researches and studies through provision of the necessary resources and incentives.
15. Considering the conduction of a feasibility study for establishing another public university.
16. Encouraging the establishment of private Universities and providing support for them.

c. *Approved policies and mechanisms in the Plan for Sultan Qaboos University:*

1. Increasing the number of intake at the university level, post graduates, diploma and special studies in accordance with the present and future expansion projects.
2. Upgrading the training and teaching programmes so as to cope with the national and global requirements.
3. To carryout regular assessment of the academic performance effectiveness, calculation of internal efficiency of the university system and its output.
4. Encouraging private sector to contribute to financing some programmes in the university.

5. Improving the admission and graduation criteria, upgrading university specializations and matching the same with labour market requirements.
6. Developing mechanisms for close cooperation between the university and the various general and higher education institutions so as to achieve the comprehensive view of education sector objectives.
7. Creating a suitable climate for conducting research and studies, through providing the necessary resources and incentives, and achieving partnership with private sector establishments and the industrial sector so as to upgrade the university role in scientific research.
8. To coordinate with the rest of the higher education institutions the efforts of scientific research and funding.
9. To give more attention to educational research and developing the "Educational Research Centre" at Sultan Qaboos University so as to enhance its role in this vital field.

d. Policies and mechanisms approved for technical education and vocational training in the Plan:

1. To accommodate more of education output through increasing technical education and vocational training opportunities, upgrading and encouraging the women participation and enrollment in the technical education and vocational training programmes
2. Establishing five technical industrial colleges, at the rate of one college every year. This is through conversion of the presently established four vocational training centres and establishing a new college with intake capacity of (200) male and female students for each college.
3. Adopting an open training and educational system and diversification its paths in a way that is flexible in career development. It should be able to help in upgrading the skills of Omani labour to enable him/her to conform with the market demands and the new developments in the labour world.
4. Encouraging the students of the technical colleges and vocational training to benefit from the educational and cultural services provided by the information network.
5. Improvement of system and measures of supervision and follow-up for vocational training programmes.
6. Provision of training opportunities in higher studies for technical education graduates and training of trainers in the vocational training centres.
7. Provision of occupational grades and financial requirements for Omanization of occupations in the colleges and centres.
8. Broadening and encouraging the private sector contribution to vocational training and training programmes that conform with the private establishments needs, the different economic activities and the skilled and semi-skilled labour force.
9. To expand in the educational and training specializations, in the technical education and vocational training sector, in the technical and vocational fields characterized by scarcity of supply of local labour force.

10. Conduction of periodic follow-up and evaluation for the approved programmes efficiency in the colleges, centres and institutes to ensure the conformity of its products with the needs of the labour market for labour force and encouraging citizens to enroll in them.
11. Creation of an appropriate environment for conduction of researches and studies through provision of necessary resources and incentives.
12. Upgrading the training quality system.

2-6: Education and Training Sector investment Programme in the Sixth Five-Year Development plan (2001-20050

Further to the Sultanate's direction with regard to the importance of the education and training sector and its priority relative to the economic and social sectors in the country, the Sixth Five-Year Development Plan gave it priority in allocation of the available resources. More emphasis were given to increasing the rate of admission of general secondary outputs in the higher education institutions and upgrading the basic education.

In accordance with this direction, it is expected that the total appropriations for the education and training sector from the developmental programme and the human resources development programme, in the Sixth Five-Year Development Plan, to total about O.R. (39.5) million. These appropriations are directed toward implementation of the Plan directives and objectives linked to increasing the intake of general secondary outputs into the higher and technical education institutions and upgrading the basic education, in addition to meeting the inevitable growth in demand for education services.

On the investment programme side, the sector appropriations in the Plan totaled about O.R. (271.2) million. Of this amount O.R. (33.3) million for ongoing projects and about O.R. (237.9) million for new projects. It is expected that (31.8%) of the new projects appropriations will be allocated for intake of general secondary outputs in the higher and technical education institutions. About (68.2%) will be for improving the basic education and meeting the inevitable growth in demand for its services. The important new projects that will be implemented in the framework of the sector appropriations in the investment programme of the Plan are the following:

- Adding class rooms and educational utilities in the different regions at a cost of O.R. (43.7) million
- Preparing and furnishing schools and rooms of education aids and computer in the different region by O.R. (21) million.
- Building and preparation of the central library and Omani studies centre in Sultan Qaboos University by O.R. (6.2) million.
- Financial support for vocational training in the private institutes by O.R. (31.4) million.
- Upgrading the vocational training centres and establishing additional technological colleges in Wilayats Ibri and Shinas by O.R. (12) million.
- Technical education and vocational training grants project (fourth phase) at a cost of O.R. (5.6) million.

The total appropriations for the education and training sector in the human resources development programme in the Plan are about O.R. (268.3) million. Of this amount about O.R. (253.6) million are appropriations for new projects. The expected expenditure on these projects is about O.R. (175) million. The distribution of these appropriations on the new projects of the sector shall be (63.9%) for increasing intake of general secondary outputs in the higher and technical education establishments and (36.1) for improvement of basic education and facing the definite demand for its services.

The main projects to be implemented, using the appropriations for the human resources development programme for the sector, in the Plan are:

- Upgrading the basic education by abolishing evening classes and adopting others measures.
- Sending (150) students for abroad study (30 student annually).
- Financing the current costs of education colleges.
- Supporting the private Universities.
- Supporting the Accounting diploma programme in Sultan Qaboos University.
- Support for the grants programme in the private colleges.
- Transforming the vocational training centres into technical colleges.
- Support for national training projects.
- Financing the current costs for the health institutes.

CHAPTER THREE

HEALTH SECTOR

CHAPTER THREE

Health Sector

3-1: Introduction:

The modern concept of health and health care developed from a services sector to a production sector, that reflects its influence on the economic and social development of any community. As much as disease burden, resulting from health disorders, constitutes a humanitarian problem for its involvement of human suffering, however, the economic dimension of such burden started to gain an increasing attention. This came as a result of studies that proved its impact on revenues and returns on investment in health areas. The modern concept for health, is no longer limited to the treatment of disease only. Instead it broadened to include promotion of the positive health standard, disease control and early diagnosis of disease cases and their treatment during the early stage when they are curable. It also broadened to include physical, mental, social and occupational rehabilitation of disabled. Due to these concepts the health sector assumed increasing responsibilities and more challenges to be faced.

Within the view of awarding more attention to human resources development, the first long term development strategy 1970-1995 gave a special attention to health sector. During that period the Sultanate witnessed a noticeable progress in the health condition of the Omani society due to the improvement of health services, as the health indicators such as life expectancy at birth and death rates and other indicators have improved.

The health sector vision aimed at provision of health care for all citizens through a system characterized by cost effectiveness, efficiency, encouragement of disease-prevention, public safety, spreading of health services throughout the country and adoption of a policy of decentralization. The vision, also sought the adoption of a family planning programme in order to decrease the population growth rate to less than (3%). This shall be in accordance with a population policy working towards striking a balance between economic growth and population increase and raising the living standard. Beside this, the health sector vision aimed at reducing mortality rates, infectious and parasitic diseases to be equivalent to their levels in developed countries. It also aimed at implementing control measures, eradicating infectious and parasitic diseases, and their complications, increasing the numbers of outputs of the different professions and specializations and increase self dependence to meet the needs in some specializations.

3-2: Evaluation of health sector performance during the Fifth Five-Year Development Plan (1996-2000):

3-2-1: Evaluation of the sector performance related to the approved objectives in the plan:-

The ultimate goal of the health sector in the Fifth Five-Year Development Plan involves improving and upgrading the health conditions for the Omani Citizens so as to increase the life expectancy at birth. The plan adopted a set of subsidiary objectives to achieve the ultimate objective for the health sector. These subsidiary objectives are as follows :

1. Provision of primary health care to all population

2. Reducing infant motility rate, immunizing all children against the six childhood diseases and increasing birth events at hospitals and motherhood and childhood centers to (100%).
3. Increasing the omanization rates in the allied medical professions.

The health data-shown in Table No. (3-1) and Figure No. (3-1) below –indicates a noticeable improvement in health indicators whereas, the life expectance at birth increased from (71) in 1995 to about (73.4) in 2000. The infant motility rates (per 1000 live birth) decreased in 2000 to about (16.7) compared to about (20) in 1995. The immunization for children coverage rate as shown in Figure No. (3-2) below- was close to complete coverage i.e. (100%) which led – as illustrated in the data in Table No. (3-2), to eradication of OPV and near-eradication of Measles and the Rubella.

Table No. (3-1)
Some main health indicators in the Fifth Five-Year Development Plan (1996-2000)

(O.R. Million)

D e t a i l	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Life expectancy at birth (year)	71	71.6	72	72.2	72.5	73.38
Crude deaths rates (per 1000 population)	6.1	4.4	3.8	3.7	3.6	3.65
Infants death rates (per 1000 Live birth)	20	18.3	18	18	17.6	16.7
Death rates less that Five Years (per 1000 live birth)	27	29	27.5	24.5	21.5	21.7
Still births (per 1000 birth)	11.8	10	13	10.5	10.5	10
Mother death rates (per 100000 live birth)	22	21	_ . _	18.5	14	16.1
Crude births rates (per 1000 population)	34	30	29	29	30	32.58
Total fertility rate (birth/woman 15-49)	6	5.2	4.8	4.8	4.6	4.7

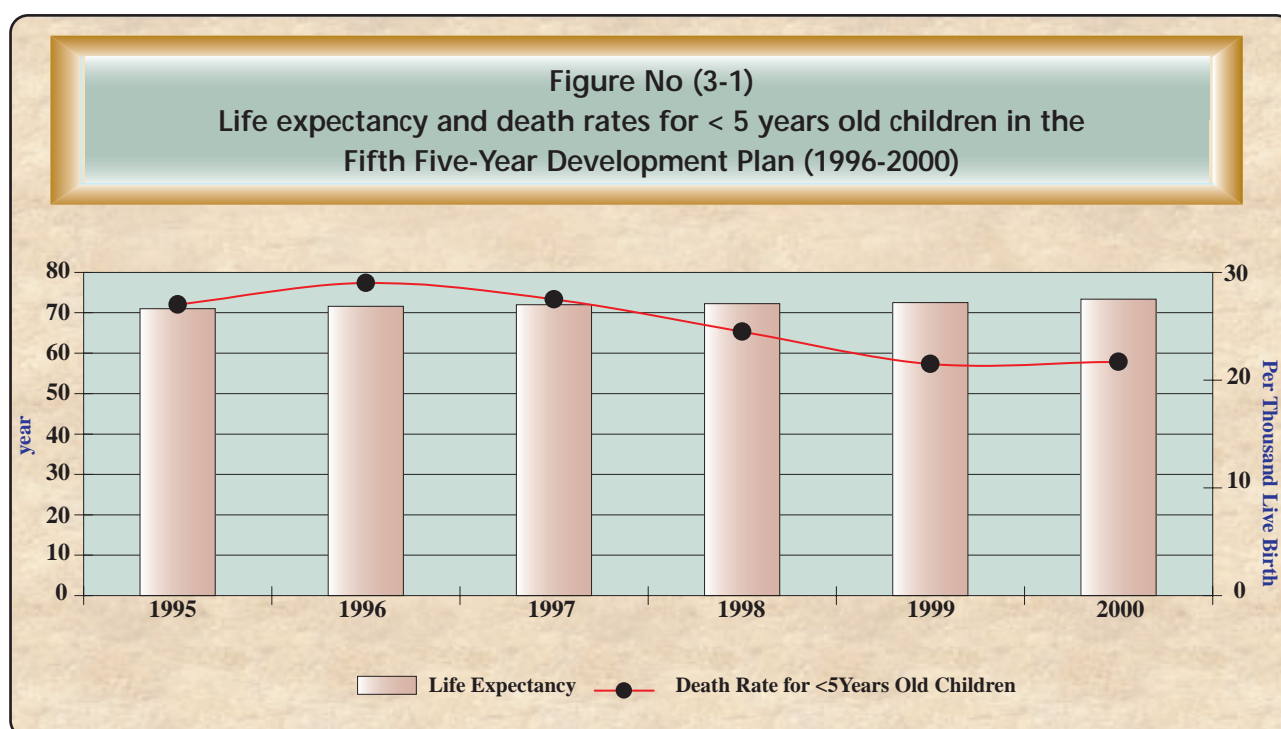


Figure No (3-2)
Vaccination coverage rates for less than one year old children
in the Fifth Five-Year Development Plan (1996-2000)

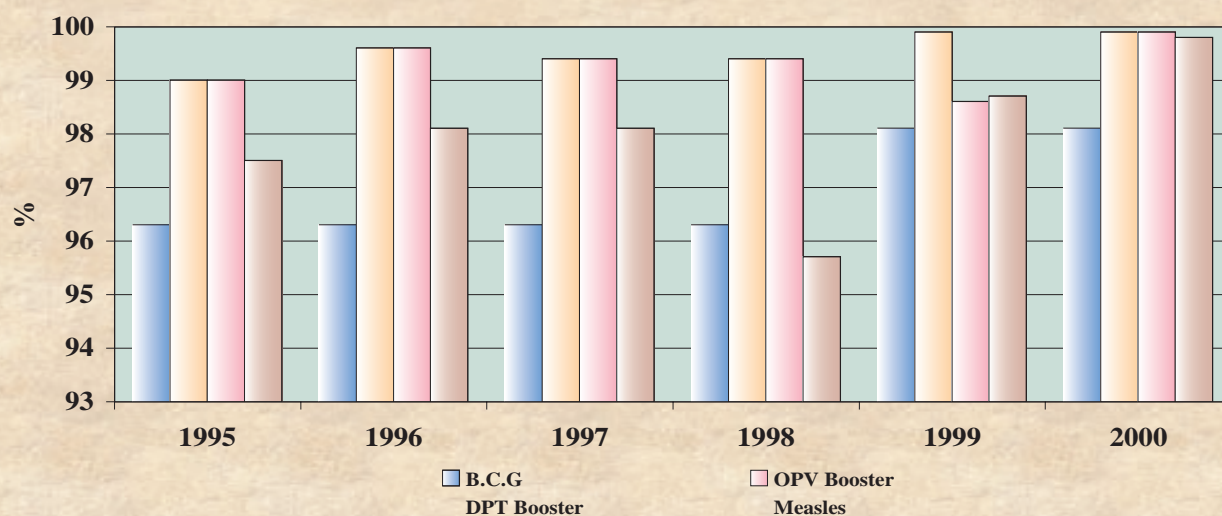
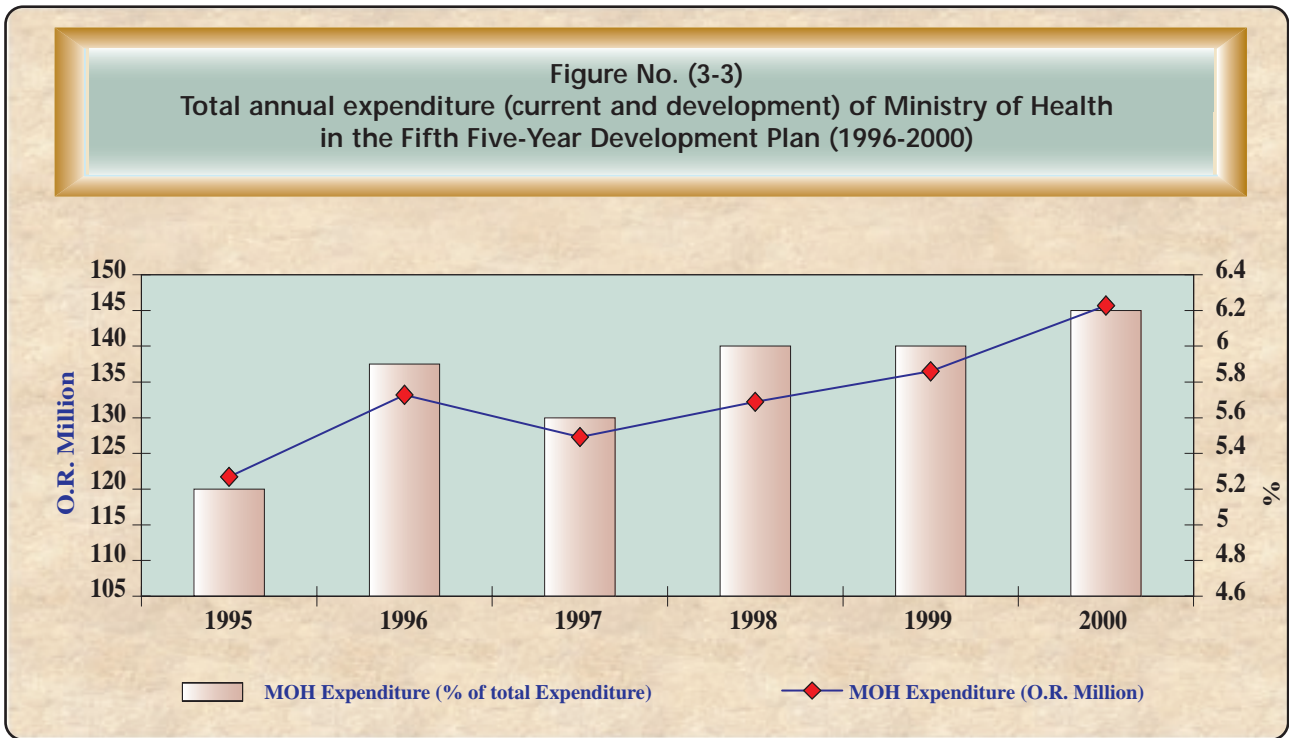


Table No (3-2)
The Most Significant achievements of the Health Sector During the Fifth Five-Year
Development Plan (1996-2000)

D e t a i l	1999	2000
Malnutrition rates for children less than (5) years due to PEM deficiency.	32%	15%
Birth rate (per 1000 population)	34	32.6
Anemia prevalence rate among pregnant women	35.70%	36.5
Number of polio cases	-	Erradication
Number of measles cases	68	Reduction
Number of Rubella cases	46	Reduction
Rate of diarrhea infection among less than (5) years old children	49.70%	34.50%
Rate of acute respiratory system infection for less than (5) years old children	253.10%	150%
Rate of Viral Hepatitis infection (A,B and others) per 1000 population	12.6	6
Rate of diabetes cases, per 1000 population	7.3*	9.7
Rate of blood pressure diseases occurrence, per 1000 population	16	
Number of Kidney transplant operations conducted in Oman	12	21
Rate of Trachoma spreading	17.10%	13%
Rate of spreading of intestinal parasites among school children	1.50%	reduction
Number of Malaria cases due to domestic infection	1164	6
Ratio of domestic Malaria cases to total Malaria cases	64.60%	0.9
Number of deaths due to Malaria	2	
Percentage of injuries due to road accidents per 1000 population	34.3	24.2
Number of roads accidents	11025	
Number of injuries due to roads accidents including deaths	7164	
Number of deaths due to roads accidents	479	
Rate of HIV cases among patients of sexually transferred diseases(STD)	0.57%	2%
Rate of HIV among blood donors	0.04%	
Rate of Venereal diseases, per 1000 population	92	120

Regarding the provision of primary health care for all population, the health services, during the plan period, have witnessed remarkable progress in terms of its financial and human resources aspects. The health expenditure has been continuously increasing in spite of the government expenditure rationalization policies approved during 1998-1999. The total annual current and development expenditure -as shown in Figure No. (3-3) below – increased from about O.R. (121.7) million in 1995 to about O.R. (145.7) million in 2000. The relative share of the Ministry in the total government expenditure increased from (5.2%) in 1995 to about (6.2%) in 2000. The per capita Omani share in total expenditure of the Ministry of Health increased from O.R (58.2) in 1995 to about O.R. (60.7) in 2000.



The World Bank study on the cost effectiveness of the health sector indicated that the total domestic expenditure on health in 1998 as indicated in Table No. (3-3) below, were about O.R. (192.9) million and that the per capita share of the total expenditure on health was about O.R. (84.33). The study showed that the rate of total expenditure on health was about (3.54%) of GDP. The study also indicated that the relative share of private expenditure on health -as shown in Figure No. (3-4) below – did not exceed (18.9%) of the total expenditure on health.

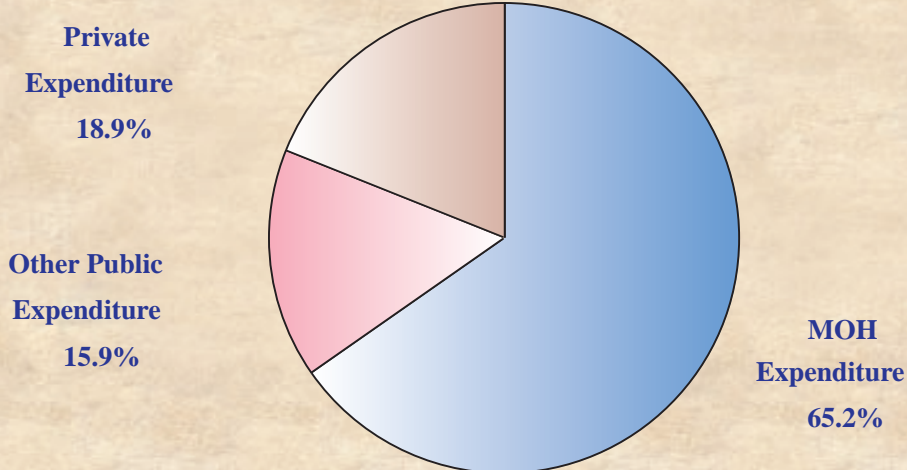
Table No. (3-3)

Major Achievements in Health Sector in the Fifth Five-Year Development plan (1996-2000)

Detail	MOH Expenditure	Other Public Expenditure	Total Public Expenditure	Private Sector Expenditure	Total Expenditure on Health
Expenditur on Health (O.R.Mn)	125.73	30.78	156.51	36.36	192.87
Per capita Expenditure on Health (O.R.)	54.98	13.46	68.44	15.90	84.34
Percapita Expenditure on Health (US\$)	144.67	35.42	180.09	41.84	221.93
Expenditur on Health as per equivalent purchasing power(US\$)	222.57	54.49	277.06	64.37	341.43
Govrnment Expenditure on Helath as percent of total Government Expenditure(%)	5.70	1.40	7.10		
Government Expenditure onHealth as percent of GDP (%)	2.31	0.57	2.88	0.67	3.55

Source: World Bank Study on Cost Effectiveness of Expenditure on Health Sector

Figure No (3-4)
Financing Pattern of Expenditure on Health in 1998
% of total expenditure on health



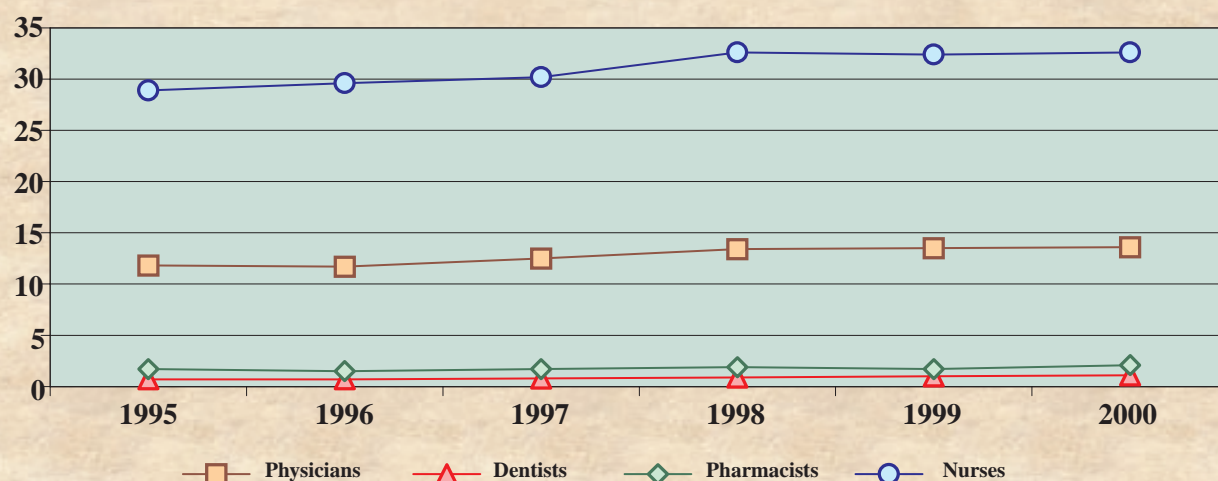
The resources available for the sector, such as health establishments and medical requirements, and human resources – as shown in data of Table No. (3-4) below- have been continuously increasing. The number of hospitals increased form about (53) in 1995 to about (55) in 2000. The number of beds increased form (4.6) thousand in 1995 to about (5.2) thousand in 2000. The number of doctors per (10) thousand population increased from about (11.8) in 1995 to about (13.6) in 2000. Figure No. (3-5) shows the improvement of the available human resources indicators for the sector in the Fifth Five-Year Development Plan.

Table No (3-4)
Progress of health services in the Fifth Five-Year Development Plan (1996-2000)

Detail	1995	2000
Number of hospitals	53	55
Number of hospitals beds	4564	5190
Hospital beds per 1000 population	2.2	2.2
Beds per Doctor	1.7	1.6
Ratio of beds to nurses	0.7	0.7
Number of health centers, clinics, government polyclinics	163	161
Population per health centre, clinic or polyclinic	12800	14900
Number of private clinics	471	560
Number of private pharmacies	254	321
Number of doctors*	2477	3258
Number of doctors per 10 thousand population*	11.8	13.6
Number of Specialists per 10 thousand population	3.7	4.5
Ratio of General Practitioners GPs to Specialist doctors*	2.2	2
Number of nurses*	6036	7829
Number of nurses per 10 thousand population*	28.9	32.6
Number of dentists*	143	262
Number of dentists per 10 thousand population*	0.7	1.1
Number of pharmacists*	356	495
Number of pharmacists per 10 thousand population*	1.7	2.1

* Excluding data for military medical services.

Figure No. (3-5)
Human Resources Indicators Available for Health Sector in the
Fifth Five-Year Development Plan (1996-2000)
 (per 10 thousand population)



As for Omanization rate in the sector, it increased in 2000 for health administrators, doctors, nurses, health assistants, to about (92%, 19%, 36% and 76%) respectively. In 2000 the Omanization rate for technicians ranged between (37%) for laboratory technicians and (72%) for physical therapy technicians.

3-2-2: Evaluation of sector performance related to the approved policies and mechanisms in the plan:

The plan adopted a set of policies and mechanisms to appropriately achieve the sector objectives. The important achievements accomplished for implementation of these policies and mechanisms are the following:-

1. *Provision of the preliminary health care services for population:*
 - The Ministry of Health provides the preliminary health care services for all the population through an umbrella of health services that spread throughout the country through (118) health centers and (47) hospitals containing (4534) beds.
 - Government units, other than Ministry of Health provide (5) hospitals and (43) health centers.
 - The private sector provides (3) hospitals and (560) private clinics.
2. *Increasing the number of hospital beds to be within the limits of (3) beds per thousand population, promoting health utilities and upgrading referral services:*
 - The number of hospital beds increased to reach (2.2) bed per 1000 population (Ministry of Health provides 1.9)
 - Beds occupancy rate, in some hospitals, is low. It is suggested that the present policy should be changed to maintain the present rates and substituting the old hospitals by new ones.
3. *Improving of efficiency and limiting the abuse of health services:-*
 - Referral system has been designed and applied among the levels of health care and its implementation and support should be followed-up.
 - Closing a number of unnecessary health centres.
 - Reducing working hours in a number of health centres where there is no need for its 24 hours work.
 - Establishing a cost effectiveness unit in most of the hospitals and many health centers, under the Ministry of Health, in order to monitor expenditure and compare it to outputs.
4. *Imposing nominal fees in order to rationalize consumption of services:*
 - The imposing of nominal fees on a number of health services led to limit the abuse of outpatient clinics. The number of visits to the clinics of the Ministry of Health establishment decreased from (12.3) million visits in 1997 to (9.9) million visits in 2000 i.e. at a rate of (19.5%)

5. *Furthering and promoting community partnership in planning, implementing and following up procedures through bearing some expenditures of health services :*
 - Community support groups were established from community volunteers. They were trained in different areas of the health programme. The number of volunteers exceeded (2500) in 1998.
 - The Ministry took an initiative to mobilize the private sector to contribute to establishing some projects. This led to the establishment of Sur new hospital and a number of health centres.

6. *Conduction of a study by the Ministry of Health to identify the procedures followed in other countries for import of drugs by the private sector and its availability for the public. A special consideration has been given to the imported drug quality and its conformity with the defined specifications and its maintenance by citizens at suitable price.*
 - Registration of licensed drugs is conducted according to strictly formulated standards.

7. *Public contribution to the medical services cost (treatments) by charging fees on some of these medical treatments. This done in a gradual way covering a ratio of (2%) of cost and expected to increase annually in order to reach (10%) by the end of the plan. The increase in fees is expected to continue to reach (50%) by 2020. This is through application of the health insurance system and collection of the full cost of medical treatments from expatriates Labour in private sector,, legalization of health insurance for expatriates in public sector and imposing on for the private rooms in government hospitals for all population without any exceptions :*
 - Fees were imposed (200 Baisa per out-patient visit) since 1st January 1998.
 - An annual fee on health cards (1 Rial) since the first of January 1998.
 - Review of expatriate medical treatment fees was done in accordance with the actual cost of the services.
 - Medication costs due to road accidents were recovered form insurance companies.
 - Increasing the fees for private rooms and the inclusion of those previously exempted.
 - The Ministry has conducted studies on health insurance system and provided alternatives for health services financing.
 - Due to application and revision of the medication regulations, the Ministry of Health revenues increased, relative to recurrent expenditure, from (33.3%) in 1995 to (7.1%) in 1999.

3-2-3: Evaluation of the performance related to the implementation of the sector investment programme in the plan:

The total amended approbations for the sector in the development programme for the Fifth Five-Year Development Plan, as indicated in Table No. (3-5) below, reached about

O.R. (89.3) million. Of this amount about O.R. (61.3) million were appropriations for new projects. The actual expenditure from these appropriations totaled about O.R. (67.4) million i.e. an implementation rate of (75.5%). The main projects implemented for the sector during the plan period were: -

- Establishment of Sur hospital by O.R. (14) million.
- Purchasing medical and non-medical equipment for Sohar hospital by O.R. (4) million.
- Completion of Nizwa hospital by O.R. (2.2) million.
- Purchasing medical and non-medical equipment for Nizwa hospital by O.R. (3.5) million.
- Operations rooms and wards for Khawla hospital by O.R. (2.6) million.
- Completion of Sultan Qaboos hospital in Salalah by O.R. (1) million.

Table No. (3-5)

Health sector investment programme in the Fifth Five-Year Development Plan (1996-2000)

Item	Amended Appropriations O.R. Mn	Commitments O.R. Mn	Implemented O.R. Mn	Implementation (%)
On-going Projects	28.0	27.9	27.9	99.6
New Projects	61.3	48.6	39.5	64.4
Total	89.3	76.5	67.4	75.5

3-3 : Challenges and difficulties facing the health sector :

The health sector faces a number of problems and challenges, the most important of which are:

1. Health indicators, which measure the health status, are still low in the Sultanate than in the neighboring countries, let alone those in the developed countries which the health sector vision aspire to reach by 2020. The UNICEF report for the joint cooperation programme with the sultanate indicated the areas that should receive more attention in order to improve the sultanate health status. These were:
 - A greater decrease of infant mortalities. The total infants death rate in the Sultanate reached (16.7) per 1000 live birth, and the death rate for less than 5 years old children was (21.7) in 2000. These rates are (8 and 11) respectively in Bahrain, (9 and 11) in UAE, (12 and 15) in Qatar and (13-and 16) in Kuwait. The infant deaths per 1000 live birth reached (4) in Finland, (7) in U.S.A. The reduction of these rates depends primarily on the efforts for decreasing deaths during birth and among newly born infants. This is because most of infants mortality take place during this period.
 - Deformity represent the second cause of deaths among newly born infants and the forth cause of deaths among children less than 5 years. It also represents (6.3%) and (4%) of Ministry of Health hospitals patients for those age groups respectively. The most significant cause for those deformities is the marriage among close relatives, which is estimated to be about (54%) of marriages in Oman according to the results of Household Health Survey in 1995

- The rates of certain health problems, that affect mother and child health, were still high in the Sultanate. These include malnutrition of children and pregnant women. The malnutrition rate (weight relative to age) was estimated at about (23%) of children less than five years during the Household Health Survey in 1995 and about (18.3%) for the preliminary results of the 1999 survey. It was also estimated that about (40%) of pregnant women suffer form some degree of anemia.
2. In spite of the clear improvement in the patients' indicators regarding infectious diseases, other health problems appeared recently. Those problems are related to the modern life style due to the increase in the average age. This is what is called (the dual burden on health systems). This requires an advanced type of health services to address the new problems in addition to the requirements of facing other kinds of patients. The reasons for this are due to:
- Some infectious diseases are still representing a health problem for certain community groups such as trachoma and parasitic diseases among children in spite of their decreasing rates.
 - Due to the adoption of the new life style, the associated changes in nutrition habits and the low physical activity and smoking, some chronic diseases started to appear such as cardio-vascular diseases, diabetes, and geriatrics and others. These are chronic diseases that need special medical care.
 - With the progress achieved during this era and due to the change in the population age structure, as youths represent a high percentage of population, some negative behaviors surfaced recently, which the health system bear their effects, such as road accidents and the resulting injuries that mostly lead to permanent disability.
 - The social phenomena, imposed by life hardships and pressures, started to leave their marks on the community individuals, resulting in increased cases of psychological and neural disturbances. It also led to mental and behavioural disturbances due to illegal use of materials that affect the brain.
 - The increasing travel and movement were associated by the spread of some dangerous infectious diseases in the Sultanate. Most of the Malaria and HIV cases registered in the health establishments were cases from countries where the disease is prevalent.
3. In spite of that achievements on the health resources side , the difficulties in this area are as follows:
- The health service infrastructure still needs completion or quality improvement due to the increasing demand emanating from increased population growth.
 - The geographical nature of the country and the wide spread distribution of population all over the country imposes a difficulty for the provision of health services.
 - Lack of prepared equipment for transporting patients (ambulances). This situation restricts the provision of such service in the different Sultanate regions in spite of its importance.

- Continuous increasing of costs for health services due to the development in medical care technology and the continuous need for it to conform to the new system and science improvement of the health domain. This represents a challenge with the limited resources
- Some indicators concerning the availability of health Labour force compared to the number of population are still lower than some of the neighboring countries. This is also true for dentists and pharmacists.

4. Weak role of private and other sectors in relation to upgrading the health sector:

4-1 : The private sector role :

The role of the private sector in the health field is still limited and is restricted to the provision of health care at the primary level by private clinics. It does not exceed this to include provide these services at the level of specialized hospitals as in other and neighbor countries. The presently adopted approaches and systems in the Sultanate to further the private sector role, and which were suggested by the Ministry of Health for pursuing alternatives to government financing or for diversification of resources for provision of health services and related services, are as follows :

a. Financing :

The Ministry of Health adopted several procedures to provide non-government finance for the offered health services, such as :

- Treatment fees: include nominal fees for medical consultation and registration cards in the out-patient clinics, special rooms occupancy in hospitals, birth and age estimation certificates
- Recovering the total cost of treatment of expatriates through the regulation of medical services fees for expatriates which is currently being reviewed for the possibility of increasing these fees.
- Recovering the treatment cost of roads accidents from the insurance companies
- The Ministry of Health proposed legislation on the financial support in the health domain. The proposed law has been adopted two years ago.

b. In the field of health services provision:

1. Assigning private sector to undertake the health related services. These services were previously conducted by the Ministry. Such as :
 - Hospital catering for patients
 - Cleaning and laundry services in hospital.
 - Maintenance works in health organizaions.
 - Provision of transport services for a large number of employees either in the form of allowance or special transport (rent of cars instead of purchasing them).
 - Tailoring works and cars maintenance.
 - administrative and residential buildings in many cases
 - Security services for Ministry buildings.

2. Transferring some dental services that are not basic services, and some other clinical services to the private sector.
3. Special treatment that is supposed to be provided by the companies where the number of employees exceeds 100 employees. This is in the domain of the Omani Labour Law.
4. Facilitation of procedures in the Ministry so that the private sector may establish health institutions and provide support and supervision for them.

This requires taking further steps , in the next phase, to increase the private sector contribution to investment in the health filed. These steps include:

- The need for attracting the private sector to invest in the regions outside Muscat governorate.
- The concerned authorities in the Ministry of Commerce and Industry should promote foreign investment in health area in the Sultanate after the approval of the law that provides equal treatment of the investment in the health sector to those investments in other industrial areas.
- Completion of the current procedures taken by the Ministry of Health regarding drug pricing in the private sector.
- To allow consultant physicians in the different specialization and those employed by government hospitals to work in the private sector hospitals after the official working hours. This is to enable private hospitals to broaden their specialization base, reduce the pressure on the government health system and provide the opportunity to those able to bear their treatment costs through utilizing the private hospitals services.
- Completion of the health information system pertaining to the private sector, so as to determine the sector contribution to health and understanding the obstacles facing it and ways for its support.

4-2: The other sectors role related to health sector:

The cooperation among other health related sectors, for achieving the health development objectives, is one of the important dimensions of the health strategy which were included in "Al Mata' declaration issued by the international conference on Primary Health in 1978. The Sultanate ratified this declaration and pledged to fulfill its commitments. The developed countries succeeded in controlling causes of deaths resulting from infectious diseases. This achievement wasn't merely not by treatment and drugs (which were not yet discovered). Rather the achievement was due to the contribution of other sectors (such as education, housing, provision of pure drinking water proper nutrition...etc) to the improvement of living standard that led to the promotion of nutrition status, environmental hygiene and health behavior.

There is an urgent need for better understanding the nature of the relationship between the health sector and the other development sectors. The upgrading of health standards requires the joint contribution of other sectors related to health

in several fields and taking the appropriate steps in its regards. Such steps involve the following :

a. Income levels and Health :

The income levels are considered important determinants of health due to their direct relation to the quality of living and nutrition. This is due to that any decrease in per capita share in the national income, and the increase in the rate of dependency will lead to negative impact on health, particularly due to the government directive calling for the participation of people in bearing part of the burden, even a small one , of treatment cost. Due to the increasing role of the private sector, and its provision of distinguished health services at rates relatively higher costs a large group of the society may not be able, in the future, to bear such costs of treatment.

b. Environmental hygiene and health :

The environmental hygiene is considered the second important dimension-after the appropriate individual health behavior – for protection against diseases and maintenance of health. Hence it is more important than the health services, which treat diseases after their occurrence. In spite of the significant contribution of the different sectors to environment, which was reflected in the improvement of public health, there are still some aspects of environmental hygiene that need to be improved in order to achieve more positive effect on population health

c. Control of infectious disease that transfer from animals to humans, such as Brucellosis, the rates of which increased during the recent period. They reached (19.2%) in 1999 compared to (9.6%) in 1997.

d. Provision of social welfare for the elderly people. This is due to the fact that a number of the elderly stay in hospitals for long periods unnecessarily, taking into consideration the high cost of hospital bed.

e. Provision of social welfare in the post-treatment period to ensure avoidance of circumstances and factors that led to addiction and thus increasing chances of recovery.

f. Adoption of an effective system for treatment of diseases and accidents that are expected to be continuously increasing, such as those profession-related diseases, and particularly in the industrial sector. These diseases and accidents require joint cooperation of health sector and the other units for recording and identifying them in order to furnish the protection and treatment requirements.

g. Provision of suitable mechanisms to spur further the cooperation between the Ministry of Health and other related sectors. This is in order to overcome the health problems linked to environment.

5. Increased cost of health services and the available financing alternatives:

With the increasing attention of the countries to the provision of health care to their population due to the significant effect of population health on ability to work and increase of production, still the countries find themselves with time, unable to finance the costs of health care by relying only on government financing. Due to the technological advances in the health care area, its diversification, and the population increase at high rates there is a need for continuous improvement and addition of new health resources – despite their high costs- to prevent the deterioration of standards of health services provision.

The problem of striking a balance between the provision of health care and its means of financing have become the main problem for both developing and undeveloped countries. In the Sultanate, the problem is becoming more acute due to the high population growth rates. As results of these rates, it is expected that the Ministry of Health budget will increase from about O.R. (137) million in 2000 to about O.R. (302) million in 2020, taking into consideration the inflation rates.

The financing strategy, health insurance patterns and health services provision systems in the different countries, whether conducted by government or the private sector are confined to the following patterns:

Comprehensive or semi-comprehensive government finance: -

According to this model the finance of health care is almost provided freely for beneficiaries. These services are financed either by government own resources or public tax imposed on the people. The cost for this alternative appears to be high for the government. With this alternative it will be difficult to maintain the sustainability of providing the health services in terms of comprehensiveness and quality in the future.

- Collection of fees from beneficiaries:

This is the model which many countries resort to as a partial solution for financing their health care systems. In case of the Sultanates the world bank indicated the importance of imposing realistic fees to achieve a better balance between costs and benefits from one the one hand and containment of the loses on the other hand.

- Decreasing the coverage of services provision:

This is the alternative, to which some governments resort to reduce their commitments due to their inability to finance a health system characterized by comprehensive health services. According to this alternative, the programmes and health services of higher returns on public health, such as infectious diseases and children and maternity diseases, are defined and selected as priorities for financing in favor of other programmes and services which are restated to personal health such as cancer, diabetes, cardiac diseases and others.

Health Insurance:

The health insurance comes on top of the models to which most countries, whether rich

and poor, resort to as a type of social welfare to reduce the probability of paying large amounts of money, in lump sum, for treatment of diseases and accidents through distributing the payments over long periods on a large group of individuals.

3-4 : Objectives of health sector in the Sixth Five-Year Development Plan (2001-2005).

The sixth Five-Year Development Plan strives to achieve the following objectives of the health sector :

1. Adoption of clear population policy in accordance with the directives that aim at achieving sustainable development.
2. Limiting health problems of children and mothers through:
 - Reducing the infant mortality rate from (17.6) to (14) per thousand live births.
 - Reducing the rate of deaths of children less than five years old from (21.5) to (17) per thousand live births.
 - Reducing birth rate from (30) to (26) per thousand population.
 - Reducing malnutrition rate among children less than (5) years from (18.3) to (14%).
 - Reducing anemia among pregnant women from (39%) to (30%)
3. Limiting infectious diseases among children through eradication of Polio, Measles, Rubella and respiratory infections.
4. Limiting chronic diseases and their effects by following the modern procedures
5. Eradication of domestic Malaria and reducing deaths caused by it to zero.
6. Limiting problems from accidents and supporting safety through reduction of road accidents from (37.1) to (26) per (10) thousand population and deaths due to road accident from (604) to (450).
7. Increasing the Omanization rate in the sector as a whole from (24.4%) in 1999 to (42.4%) by the end of the plan in the different professions as follow:-
 - Increasing Omanization rate in the Ministry of Health for nursing profession from (31%) to (62%- 71%) by 2006.
 - Increasing Omanization rate in nursing profession in the other government sectors from (14%) to (36%-41%) by 2006.
 - Increasing Omanization rate in specialized nursing from (zero%) to (32%) by the end of the plan years.
 - Increasing Omanization rate in the health statisticians group in the Ministry of Health from (8%) to (50%) by the end of the plan.
 - Increasing Omanization rate for medical records employees from (22%) to (87%) by the end of the plan years.
 - Increasing Omanization rate of X-ray technicians from (44%) to (95%)
 - Increasing omanization rate in medical laboratory technicians profession from (35%) and (54.9%)
 - Increasing Omanization rate in the assistant pharmacists profession from (44%) to (88%).

8. Furthering the health sector productivity and improving the efficiency of expenditure on the sector.
9. Strengthening the private sector contribution to the provision of health services and increasing population participation in bearing part of the secondary and tertiary health services cost.

3-5 : Policies and mechanisms for achieving the health sector objectives in the Sixth Five-Year Development Plan (2001-2005) :

For achieving the health sector objectives, the plan adopts the following policies :-

1. Completing procedures for supporting decentralization at Wilayat levels
2. Giving more care to the priority health problems through formulating an integrated Plan for the health development programme at the national and regional levels.
3. Promoting the role of research and studies in contributing to improving the cost effectiveness of health services.
4. To support the capacities of the cost accounting section, as well as to complete the accounting systems for all the health institutions.
5. Limiting the abuse of health services in general, and referral services in particular. Some fees should be imposed on services so as to rationalize consumption.
6. Promoting the procedures and mechanisms currently implemented in the field of quality assurance of health services.
7. Selecting the appropriate alternative among the proposals for involving the beneficiaries in the finance of primary, secondary and tertiary health services.
8. Completing the health information system for the private sector. The objective here is to determine the sector's contribution to the expenditure on health, and identify obstacles and means for support.
9. All efforts in all fields relevant to health, such as environmental hygiene, control of infections diseases that is transmitted from animals to humans, provision of care for the elderly, and post treatment care for drug dependence cases, disposal of medical wastes and expired drugs.

3-6: The health sector investment programme in the Sixth Five-Year Development Plan (2001-2005):

To achieve the approved policies for health sector in the appropriate manner, create the targeted improvements in health indicators in the plan and increase the efficiency of health services performance, about O.R. (57.5) million were allocated as appropriations for the health sector in the plan investment programme. Of this amount about O.R (35.5) million were marked as approbation for new projects. The important new projects, which will be implemented in the sector during the plan, are the following:

- Ibra hospital (200 be) by O.R. (15) million
- Rehabilitation of Khowla hospital by O.R. (2.5) million
- Salalah polyclinic by O.R. (1.5) million.
- Mirbat hospital (18 beds) by O.R. (1-5) million
- Rehabilitation of Samail hospital by O.R. (1.3) million

CHAPTER FOUR

**SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH
AND DEVELOPMENT
SECTOR**

CHAPTER FOUR

Scientific Research and Development Sector

4-1 : Introduction :

The scientific research and development is one of the elements of the science and technology system. It includes education, sustainable development, production and services, publication and media, information, consultancy services and technology marketing and standardization. The scientific research and development can be defined as a creative intellectual process that is designed for establishing novel solutions for existing or expected problems or inventing new processes to produce commodities and services that may be utilized to increase the productivity. The scientific research contributes significantly, to the solution of the problems facing countries and communities in its different scientific, economic and social aspects. This is through provision of innovations and inventions that assist in improving the quality of life. As a result of this resulted the scientific research became the basis for societies progress and development through innovations, formulation of solutions for the scientific, health and environmental problems, upgrading the available natural resources and increasing the scientific, human and material capacities and improving the efficiency of their utilization.

Each country that award significant importance to science and technology, has a system consisting of a number of compounds and elements,. On the one hand , each one of the sectors has its subsidiary systems of science and technology, such as human resources development, scientific research and technological development, technology transfer and production and marketing. On the other hand the science and technology system, could be viewed as a control system with inputs (composed of objectives, resources, imported technologies, domestic development beside the cultural and social elements) and outputs (involving knowledge, advanced processing techniques, modern equipment, skills and advanced services) and with a feed back mechanism.

The results of many studies proved the existence of a close link between the country's per capita expenditure on research and development and the per capita income. It is very clear that per capita income increases in the countries where the per capita expenditure on research and development increases. In addition to this, there is a positive correlation between the number of scientists and engineers working in the scientific research area and the per capita income.

Since the dawn of its blessed renaissance the Sultanate has been able to recognize the importance of scientific research and development for accelerating the economic and social development and improvement of quality of life for the population. The vision for Oman's Economy: Oman 2020 gave a special attention to scientific research and development as a primary support for creation and sustainability of development. The scientific research and development is considered a primary element in the strategies adopted for economic diversification in the vision, as the strategies of the high value added and technology transfer

and settlement depend on it. The vision seeks intensification of the efforts aiming for upgrading the scientific research and development and supporting it through increased expenditure on it. This attention appeared in the Royal Directives of His Majesty Sultan Qaboos Bin Said, Sultan of Oman, in His Majesty's speech in the Twenty Ninth National Day celebration, as H.M. emphasized the importance of depending on research and development for promotion of the Omani Society.

4-2 : Evaluation of the current status of the scientific research and development sector in the Sultanate :

The scientific research and development activity in the sultanate is limited, as the percentage of expenditures on it in the Sultanate is low not exceeding (0.08%) of GDP in 1996, compared to about (0.15%) in the Arab Countries and about (2%-3%) in the developed countries. The UNESCO proposed that the developing countries allocate about (1%) of their GDP for expenditure on scientific research and development. In addition to this, the indicator for the number of full time researchers per thousand of labour force in the sultanate is very low compared to other countries. This indicator did not exceed (0.09%) compared to (16) researchers per thousand of labour force in the industrial counties and the member countries of the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), and about (8) researchers per thousand labour force in North America and about (8.5) in the European Union.

The achievements in the scientific research and development varied among the concerned institutions. Some research institutions contributed directly to the development, other institutions conducted routine surveys that can not be classified as scientific research and development, as per the scientific definition of this concept, yet they can be considered as a humble nucleus in this domain. The significant achievements of some research institutions are the following:-

a. Sultan Qaboos University (SQU):

The university conducted a number of research projects in the areas of basic and applied research, field studies on health, agriculture, fisheries, environment, education, sciences, economics and human and social studies etc. The university, and for the first time allocated an annual budget for scientific research totaling O.R. (500) thousand for financing advanced research projects carried out by the academic staff.

The university, in the recent years, took measures to improve and regulate the scientific research in the university. These measures involved establishing of Graduate Studies and Scientific Research Deanship and an office for innovation services, in addition to appointing Assistant Deans for Graduate Studies and Scientific Research Affairs in the different colleges of the University.

b. Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries :

Through the agricultural research centers activities, the Ministry has been able to achieve\ increase in production per unit area, expansion of agriculture by increasing areas under cultivation, conversion of marginal lands into productive lands and good results have been obtained in animal nutrition, pests control and irrigation systems. The scientific

research, also contributed to the development of fisheries sector. This was through the conduction of studies on fisheries varieties and their main reservoirs in order to understand the biological nature and dynamics of these reservoirs, domestic pisciculture and studies on the chemical components of some fish and their processing.

c. *Ministry of Health:*

The health research was concentrated on identifying and understanding the health problems, improvement of health resources, increasing their utilization and upgrading their efficiency.

d. *Ministry of National Economy :*

The Ministry of National Economy is formulating a national programme for information that includes the economic and social database and details of the development plans, general census for population and housing, the social and economic indicators system .. etc...

e. *Ministry of Commerce and Industry :*

The Ministry of Commerce and Industry considers research and development as one of the elements which will positively contribute to the building of national technical capabilities and solving the industrial development problems in order to develop the products , production and improve production systems. The Ministry has established an industrial applied research centre that started operation under the umbrella of the Public Establishment of Industrial Estates (PEIE). The centre will help Omani factories in improving their technical performance and upgrading their technological standard.

f. *Petroleum Development Oman (PDO) company :*

The company contributes to scientific research through financing consultancy services, research and creative activities. The company depends on its research and development on the research unit for exploration and production of shell company. In addition to this, other international companies provide research and development services, beside some projects which were jointly implemented with other oil companies.

g. *Ministry of Higher Education:*

In spite of the absence of a specific structure for scientific research in the Ministry, the academic staff of the education colleges published a number of individual researches in well known periodicals. These researches included areas of interest for Oman, such as (Oman Strategy for Environmental Conservation) and (the Vision for Education in the GCC States). The Ministry has recently formed a main committee for studies and research which formed subsidiary committees in the different education colleges for the same purpose.

h. *The Private Sector:*

The Omani private sector contribution to the scientific research and development was confined to the research related to the identification of the market directions. Some

modest efforts were done to improve certain commodities that were designed outside the Sultanate in order to suit the domestic market needs, and the financial support for fisheries research such as the Abalone project in Dhofar Governorate.

4-3 : Challenges and obstacles facing the scientific research and development in the Sixth Five-Year Development Plan (2001-2005):

Based on the evaluation and analysis of the current status of the scientific research and development sector, and in spite of the efforts on the different studies and research, it is clear that the sector faces a number of challenges that need to be addressed in order to enable the sector to perform its role as one of the primary dimensions in the development policies for the coming period. The major challenges that the sector will face are the following :

1. Challenges imposed by the Vision for Oman's Economy, that involve the diversification of the production base, development of human resources, and promoting the private sector capacities that require the upgrading the production systems and technology transfer and settlement.
2. The challenges which are imposed by the global and regional changes such as the high competition due to joining the World Trade Organization(WTO) and the drive towards the knowledge based economy and its associated tendency for increased innovation and creativity.
3. Reduced rate of expenditure on scientific research and lack of sufficient integrated infrastructure for scientific research and development such as research centres, information networks and national laboratories.
4. Poor coordination between the state institutions and the private sector in the scientific research domain.
5. Lack of regulatory framework that assists in combing and integrating the efforts of the scientific research organizations.
6. Absence of clear strategy for the sector development. This has which resulted in lack of clear policies and objectives of the scientific research institutions.
7. Scarcity of national researchers, which does not exceed (9) researches per (100) thousand labour force compared to (900) researchers per (100) thousand labour force in the developed countries, according to the UNESCO data in 1996.
8. Absence of the scientific environment and research culture that motivate researchers toward more innovation and creativity and help in providing the appropriate climate for scientific research and development.
9. Furthering the private sector contribution to upgrade the scientific research and development sector.
10. The mechanism of attracting foreign investments to the scientific research and development area

4-4 : Objectives of the scientific research sector in the Sixth Five-Year Development Plan (2001-2005)

4-4-1 : Main objectives of the sector in the plan:

In recognition of the scientific research and development sector role in solving the economic and technological problems, and maximizing the contribution of national economic sectors and in accordance with the special attention of the Vision for Oman's Economy for the scientific research and development as it is a primary support for achieving the strategic objectives related to the economic diversification and sustainable development, the plan shall strive to achieve the following objectives of the scientific research and development sector :

1. Establishing national capacities in the scientific research and development area by increasing the capabilities of employees and providing the infrastructure needed.
2. Creation of an effective and flexible regulatory framework for the sector to organize the work of the research establishments and their different activities to ensure that the national economic sectors benefit from the research and development outputs and achieving the development objectives.
3. Provision of the necessary funding for research and development.
4. Identifying the priorities for the different scientific research and development areas in a manner that best serve the economic and social development objectives.
5. Private sector is to take part in provision of financing and conduction of research and development works for furthering its role in development and strengthening its competitiveness.
6. To undertake technology transfer and settlement of technology in the Sultanate, award more attention to the information technology industry as it is a new industry that attracts many of the Omani youths and has a high value added.
7. To coordinate and cooperate with regional and international research centers.
8. To provide a database for the available resources and identify the appropriate limits for use of these resources.

4-4-2 : Scientific research and development priorities in the coming phase:

The Sixth Five-Year Development Plan gives a special attention to establishing priorities for the scientific research and development sector in order to further the sector's efficiency and increases its returns to the National Economy. In accordance with this directive the sector priorities have been formulated based on the Vision, its strategic objectives and a set of basis and criteria. The most important of these bases and criteria may be summarized as follows:

1. The Sultanate's comparative advantage in the sector
2. The high relative importance of the sector to the national economy.
3. The social and environmental conditions in the Sultanate .
4. The sector significance for the Sultanate
5. The global environment.
6. Diversification of the economy through introducing the promising sectors with high growth rates.

Based on these basis and criteria, a conclusion was reached which indicated that the priorities of the scientific research and development, for the coming phase, should give attention to the following issues:

1. Generation of Industries branching from the basic Omani Industries (Oil Petrochemicals and minerals)
2. Desalination of water, as well as processing and export of fisheries, agriculture and animal wealth.
3. Developing the plants and animals that tolerate drought conditions.
4. To concentrate on software's and telecommunication.
5. Rationalizing the use of available power and natural resources and their alternatives.
6. Focusing on health economics.
7. To concentrate on economic problems such as diversification, upgrading the quality of local industries and creating linkages between the sectors.

4-5 : Policies and mechanisms for achieving the objectives of the scientific research and development sector in the Sixth Five-Year Development Plan (2001-2005) :

To achieve the approved sector objectives in the plan appropriately, the plan adopted a set of policies and mechanisms. The elements of these policies and mechanisms are as follows:

a. Policies and mechanisms:

1. Setting up a ministerial committee, chaired by H.E. the President of Sultan Qaboos University, with membership that include their excellencies the Ministers of the concerned authorities, to formulate an integrated strategy for scientific research and innovation. Special attention shall be given to the areas of information technology, telecommunications and knowledge based economy, taking in consideration the domestic endowments , international developments and linking the scientific research strategy with the development plans.
2. Conducting studies and research by Sultan Qaboos University in order to support the comprehensive and sustainable development requirements.
3. Upgrading the organizations in-charge of standards and measurements, quality control, and establishing new laboratories as well as providing support for the established ones.
4. To increase the enrollment of students in scientific and technological specializations and qualify the necessary cadres for scientific research and development
5. Cooperating with other countries in scientific research and development fields through conducting joint research and coordinating with regional and international research centres.
6. To facilitate the private sector's acquisition of technology and information available in the national research centers and foreign resources. Also, encouraging the foreign investment that involves technology transfer and settlement and

negotiating with foreign investor to include research and development units within the projects established in the Sultanate.

7. Applying the legal and procedural system for protection of property and patent rights .
8. Provision of incentives, and exempting scientific research inputs from taxes and custom duties.
9. Providing scientific infrastructure services and central services such as computerized designing services and technical consultation.
10. Creating an appropriate mechanism to provide the necessary finance for the scientific research and innovation in public and private sectors.

b. The main dimensions of the scientific research and development policies :

The implementing of the approved policies and mechanisms for the sector in the plan requires a specific definitions of the roles of the different activities. In order to activate the sector it would appropriate to distribute the roles related to this sector between the main contributors, i.e. the government, private sector and the academic sector, as follow:

1. Government:

- Establishing the infrastructure and regulatory structure for research and development
- Formulation of a defined strategy.
- Supporting the research, development and innovation activity.
- Encouraging technology transfer
- Encouraging investments in scientific research and development.

2. Private Sector:

- Taking part in strategy formulation
- Conduction of individual or joint research with the government.
- Participate in financing.

3. Academic Sector:

- Provision of the research environment in terms of human resources and laboratory equipment.
- Qualifying the research cadres.
- Provision of information sources and references
- Provision of the suitable climate for information and exchange of regional and international experiences.

CHAPTER FIVE

**SOCIAL AFFAIRS
SECTOR**

CHAPTER FIVE

Social Affairs Sector

5-1 : Introduction :

In view of the necessity of achieving social balance and based on the concept that the human is the dimension and the goal of the development process, the first long term development strategy (1970-1995) strived to accomplish a qualitative change in the life of individuals and their welfare,. Therefore the said strategy awarded a broad attention to education, training and health sectors. It also worked towards achieving a suitable income for population and protecting the low income groups against poverty through broadening the social welfare umbrella and extending assistance to a number of families. It also worked, through its economic and fiscal policies, to decrease the income distribution differentials and securing that all population benefit from development and maintain the achievements realized , specially those accomplished in the basic services area.

The Vision sought upgrading of the community, enhancing the popular participation in the development of local communities. It also aimed at supporting training in the social field, upgrading the women status and facilitating their integration into the social development. The Vision also strived to improve the Omani child status through provision of education and meeting the child needs. In addition the Vision sought supporting the social security system and the coordination between its establishments and adoption of protected production workshop for handicapped and raising awareness of the disability issues.

The important objectives of the vision for the social affairs sector are the following :

- Accomplishing social security and limiting the spread of negative phenomena such as beggary and delinquencies.
- Upgrading the small-scale income generating projects.
- Broadening the base of beneficiaries from the handicapped programmes and services and ensure upgrading the quality of these services and integrating the handicapped into services and activities of the community.
- Continuance of the gradual expanding of the local communities development programme to reach the rural and desert areas.
- Establishing information and statistics database for women and children.
- Broadening the base of the women volunteer social work in terms numbers and geographical spread and provide material and technical support to it .
- Upgrading the women societies performance.
- Establishing bases for cooperation and coordination among government and private sector units and the women societies.
- Increasing the efficiency of the employees in the social field.
- Encouraging private sector to establish nursery schools in the different Sultanate areas

5-2 : Evaluation of the Social affairs sector performance in the Fifth Five-Year Development Plan (1996-2000) :

5-2-1: Evaluation of the sector performance related to the approved objectives in the plan:

In accordance with the vision for Oman's Economy and its ultimate goals of improving the quality of life for the Omani individual and furthering his/her welfare and the sector vision emanating from this, the Fifth Five-Year Development Plan has given a special attention to the social affairs sector. The following sections review the performance evaluation related to the implementation of the main sector objectives in the plan according to the three areas of the sector, i.e. social welfare, social development and women and children.

a. *Social Welfare field :*

The social welfare field includes an integrated group of social services and establishments that aim at helping individuals and groups to achieve suitable living standards. It also aims at establishing social relations that allows the development of individuals abilities and improvement of human quality of life, so that individuals and communities could be adjusted. The social security system is considered one of the basic dimensions for poor Omani citizens policies and welfare and for the provision of suitable life for them. The main objectives in the social welfare field are:

- Increasing standards of living for those in needs so as to be able to obtain their basic needs under the prevailing living conditions.
- Providing means for supporting the social security system in order to achieve its overall objectives.
- Broadening the base of beneficiaries from the handicapped programmes and services and upgrading the quality of these services.
- To promote volunteer work spirit and support it in the handicapped welfare field.
- Integrating the handicapped in the community and its services and activities and removal of all obstacles so as to achieve complete participation and equality.
- Upgrading the field off income generating projects so that it could be an effective method for helping the needy families to generate their income independently and make use of the capacities of their members in productive works to reduce the complete dependence on the social security payments.
- The most important achievements of the social welfare sector related to the approved objectives, as shown in the data of Table No. (5-1) below, are the following :

1. The number of beneficiary families from the social security system increased from about (41880) in 1995 to about (45454) in 2000, and thus the amounts disbursed to those families increased from about O.R. (21.2) million in 1995 to about O.R. (23.3) million in 2000.
2. The cases receiving disasters aids increased from about (255)cases in 1995 to about (5141) in 2000.Thus the volume of these aids increased from about O.R (57.4) thousand in 1995 to about O.R. (841.8) thousand in 2000.

Table No. (5-1)
The social welfare achievements in the Fifth Five-Year Development Plan (1996-2000)

Year	Social Security		Disasters Aids		Emergency and Personal Aids		Number of Equipment Offerd	Leprosy Patients Home in Ar-Rustaq		Al-Wafa Social Centres		Handicapped Rehabilitation Centre	
	Number of Cases	Total Amounts (O.R.Mn)	Number of Cases	Total Amounts O.R. (000)	Number of Cases	Total Amounts O.R. (000)		Number of Cases	Total Amount	Number of Centres	Number of Children	Number of members Enrolled	Number of Graduates
1995	42055	21.2	255	57	6259	164	167	11	9	8	384	97	41
1996	42056	21.3	940	84	4520	48	78	10	9	8	398	99	31
1997	44830	21.9	1433	258	4505	179	195	10	8	11	453	110	57
1998	44830	22.7	151	25	2792	102	392	10	8	11	565	108	69
1999	44774	23.4	2272	214	5886	163	536	N/A	N/A	11	759	144	N.A
2000	45452	23.3	5141	842	11836	397	2021	9	11	12	989	111	51

3. However, emergency aids increased from about (6259) cases in 1995 to about (11826) in 2000 and the volume of these aids, in 2000, totaled O.R (397) thousand.
4. Compensatory equipment handed to people with different handicaps totaled about (2021) in 2000 compared to about (167) in 1995.
5. The average annual number of residents of Leprosy Nursing Home in Ar-Rustaq during the period (1996-1998) reached about (10) and the average annual expenditure was about O.R. (11) thousand.
6. The number of Al- Wafa Social Centers increased from about (8) centers in 1995 to about (12) in 2000. The intake capacity of these centres also increased. The number of enrolled children increased from about (384) to about (989) in 2000.
7. The number of students enrolled in the Handicapped Rehabilitation Centre in Al Khud increased from about (97) student in 1995 to (111) in 2000, while the number of its graduates increased from about (41) to about (51) during the same period.
8. The government established income sources projects, that aim at providing income generating projects to the social security families who have the experience, desire and capacity, so that they can change and improve their living status by themselves. The number of implemented projects, as illustrated in Table No. (54-2) below, increased from (141) projects in 1995 to about (173) and by the end of 2000, about (17) projects were handed over, while about (107) projects were withdrawn and thus the number of outstanding projects was (44).

In general, the allocations for these projects are considered to be low, as the average allocation per implemented project did not exceed O.R. (1.4) thousand.

Table No. (5-2)
Income generating projects according to the status in the Fifth Five-Year Development Plan (1996-2000)

Outstanding Projects		Withdrawn Projects		Delivered Projects		Implemented Projects		Detail
Amount O.R	Number	Amount O.R	Number	Amount O.R	Number	Amount O.R.	Number	
105	57	72	77	13	7	189	141	1995
119	66	74	72	13	12	206	150	1996
108	61	97	84	21	15	226	160	1997
88	51	123	95	24	18	236	164	1998
78	41	133	105	24	18	236	164	1999
73	44	138	107	24	17	247	173	2000

b. The Social development field:

According to the social affairs sector functions, social development is concerned with furthering volunteer work related to formation and operating social societies and clubs , conduction of social research and studies in order to address the social phenomena, needs and problems , development of social environment, enlightenment and social guidance to enable individual to adopt or change a certain and its impact on the society will be reflected on the community, encouraging the establishment of service projects

through local efforts and increasing the per capita income. The main objectives of the social development in the plan are:-

- Broadening the scope of work for social societies and clubs and facilitating their management of volunteer role in the social welfare and development.
- Upgrading the general enlightenment standard of women to ensure their effective participation in household and community affairs.
- Strengthening the public awareness of the characteristics and needs of childhood and the effect of normal family life on the appropriate social upbringing processes.
- Developing work mechanisms for local communities development in a way that respond to the changes, challenges and needs of the Fifth Plan period.
- Improving the currently used production tools in the national handicraft industries and upgrading the products in a way that commensurate with the present needs without negatively affecting heritage style of the product.
- Increasing the income of handicraftsmen and their products, encouraging the acquisition of the product and providing a local product that conform with tourism development.

The most important achievements in the social development area that are related to the approved objectives of the plan are :

1. Increased number of social societies and clubs from (3) societies and a single club in 1995 to (15) societies and clubs in 2000
2. The number of studies and researches conducted in the social development area reached (36)
3. The activities conducted in the area of social enlightenment campaigns, seminars and discussions were about (84) activities. The number of training courses for local leaders increased to (1631) , involving seminars, lectures, while the number of films and video shows increased to (267) shows.
4. Implementation of (344) self –help projects. The Ministry contribution totaled about O.R (366,2) thousand while the community contribution was about (77.6%)
5. On the side of household income improvement programme, about (1400) trainees received training in tailoring and dress making, of which about (92.8%) were females. In addition to this, about (14) tailoring shops were opened of which about (98) were for females.

c. *Women and children*

The women and children sector is concerned with the improvement and broadening the woman participation in all economic, social, political and cultural areas, and providing care and protection for children. The main objectives of the sector in the plan :-

- Development of production skills of population, specially for women and achieving a more advanced stage in integrating the woman in the local development programmes.

- To establish information and statistics database on woman and children to form a reference for planning and formulation of policies and programmes
- To protect children against the negative impact of foreign cultures or modern media and promoting their knowledge ,psychological and social development.
- To work toward improving Kids Corners administratively and technically due to the importance of early childhood on the formation of personality and demarking its characteristics.
- Encouraging private sector to establish nurseries (day-care) in the different regions of Sultanate.
- Broadening the social work base, in terms of numbers and geographically and provide it with material and technical support.
- Upgrading the women societies performance and enabling them to obtain sustainable resources for the implementation of their programmes.

Establishing the basis for coordination and cooperation among government units and private sector and women societies .

The most important achievements of the woman and children sector in relation to the approved objectives in the plan are :

1. Reducing the number of woman qualification centres from (12) centres in 1995 to (6) in 2000, as about (8) centres has been transferred to the Omani Women Association.
2. About (725) training sessions workshops and lectures were conducted.
3. Rural children development houses increased to (43) houses in 2000 compared to (38) in 1995. However, the numbers of enrolled children decreased from about (3012) in 1995 to (253) children in 2000
4. The Kids Corners numbers increased noticeably from (15) in 1995 to (38) in 2000. The nurseries numbers have also increased in 2000 to about (31) compared to (24) in 1995 and the number of Omani Women Associations increased from (17) in 1995 to about (25) in 2000.

5-2-2: Evaluation of the sector performance related to approved policies and mechanisms in the Fifth Five-Year Development Plan (1996-2000) :

Serious steps were taken to implement the approved policies and mechanisms, the most important of which are :

a: Social welfare sector:

1. Formulation of a new version of the Social Insurance Law that takes into consideration the difficulties encountered in its enforcement and involves a support for the social system process. However, the system has not been approved yet.
2. Effective steps were taken for disbursement of social insurance payments through the banks so as to reduce the social workers burdens and maximize their efforts in their actual work.

b. Social Development Sector:

1. Insurance of the Royal Decree No (14/2000) on the new law for popular societies and which broadened their works spheres to include orphans welfare and childhood and motherhood welfare
2. The social development works were entrusted to a directorate that is specialized in (social development) . Accordingly the self – support projects were included under its jurisdiction, in coordination with the regional (decentralized) directorates. This will help in implementation of such projects and maximizing their feasibility and significance.
3. Coordination with AGNEFDA organization to implement a project for upgrading the pottery industry in Wadi Hibbi (Sohar).

c. Women and Children Sector:

1. A preliminary study was prepared in 1999 to identify the status of woman societies. The study enabled to identify the reasons for the reluctance of Omani women to participate in social organizations.
2. Coordination with concerned units to extend children services to the rest of the Wilayats of the Sultanate.
3. Enactment of children rights agreements
4. Encouraging the opening of more nurseries in all regions of the country.
5. To encourage popular and volunteer sectors to establish the rural children development house and Corners.
6. Facilitating the procedures for opening Kids Corners at the women associations.
7. Coordination with concerned units in order to intensify efforts for opening nurseries in the Sultanate regions.
8. Coordination and cooperation with concerned international organizations in designing pre-school children development programmes.
9. To contribute to upgrading the performance of women associations through continuous follow-up.
10. To contribute to promoting further coordination and cooperation among government units , private sector and the women associations.

5-2-3: Evaluation of the Performance related to Implementation of the Sector Investment Programme in the Plan:

The total amount of amended appropriations for the sector in the investment programme of the Fifth Five-Year Development Plan was OR. (0.7) million. Of this amount about OR. (0.6) million was used , i.e. (90.4%). The implemented projects were related to women and children development programmes, handicapped rehabilitation centers and rural development centers in the regions.

5-3: Challenges and obstacles facing the social affairs sector in the Sixth Five-Year Development Plan (2001-2005):

In view of the lessons learnt from the sector's experience in the Fifth Five-Year Development Plan and the new developments in the economic and social domains and the impact it might shed on the coming Plan, the most prominent obstacles and challenges which will face the sector in the Sixth Five-Year Development Plan involve the following :

1. Limited financial resources available for the sector.
2. Poor coordination with other units and problems associated with the sector specific fields.

The following sections summarize the most significant obstacles and challenges that will face each field of the sector in the Sixth Five-Year Development Plan:

a. Social Welfare Section :

- Insufficiency of social insurance allocations, in the budget, to meet the population demands.
- Negative effects on social stability in terms of their comprehensiveness and diversity, due to shortage in the social welfare services.
- The negative impact of additional burdens on the social worker and his/her efficiency.
- The financial appropriations are not sufficient to face the impacts of disasters in the appropriate time.
- Scarcity of opportunities for vocation and social qualifications.
- Lack of commitment, on the side of companies and establishments, in enforcing the ratios defined by the labour law for handicapped employment.
- Gradual increase of ages levels and increased numbers and consequent increase of old ages in the population pyramid (particularly of those with no relatives).
- Lack of effective regulations and legislations that protect the social security families against expatriates labour force.
- Low level of experience in the field of income generating projects and lack of training programmes for productive families.

b. Social development field:

- Relatively low level of awareness of volunteer work importance, its working systems and lack of coordination mechanisms among the popular societies.
- Insufficient experience in research methodology and social research steps and in statistics area and the dispersion of research and studies over the directorates of the sector and insufficiency of available potentialities.
- Emergence of social phenomena resulting from the information openness and cultural interaction which led to negative effects on individuals, families and community.

- Lack of experience in local communities development. This could be attributed to incomplete benefiting from UN agreements , according to which expert were brought , because no local counterparts were appointed to work with those experts.
- Lack of legislations for protection systems for household income improvement programmes from competition of expatriate labour force.

c. *Woman and Children Section:*

- A category of Omani women who suffer from family problems and they lack the knowledge of units concerned with solving their problems and providing counseling.
- A high percentage of housewives rely upon domestic workers in carrying out all the house and family affairs and upbringing of children.
- Low level of awareness of high percentage of women, especially in rural regions.
- Children lack the programmes that develop mental capacities and broaden awareness of the surrounding environment.
- Few numbers of recreational and educational institutions for children, specially orphans, such as permanent clubs for hobbies and spending their times, houses for welfare of orphans and support of the family role in the upbringing of children.
- Absence of means (specially written) that address children mental capacities and encourage inquisitiveness and natural interest in knowledge.
- Absence of nurseries annexed to government units or private sector establishments.
- Need to activate the private sector for establishment of nurseries (specially outside Muscat).
- Inadequate community awareness of the importance of women voluntary social work and its role in development. There is, also a low participation of educated women in the associations' activities. This is evident from the their membership numbers and the low number of who nominate themselves.
- Absence of suitable buildings for the activities of some women associations and other women centres.
- The database on women activities has not been completed due to insufficient funding.
- Entrepreneurs of traditional handicrafts abandoned those professions as they prefer fixed income employments either in government or private sector.

5-4: Objectives of the social affairs sector in the Sixth Five-Year Development Plan (2001-2005):

In accordance with the vision, the approved objectives of the social affairs sector in the Plan are as follows:

1. Upgrading the living standards of needy families.
2. Encouraging social and volunteer work and accentuating the spirit of social solidarity among the citizens.
3. Development of local communities through paying attention to handicrafts and professions and improving the quality of life in these communities and promoting involvement of the citizens in this area.
4. To continue the policies of raising the general awareness of women and upgrading their educational, cultural and economic standard to enable women to effectively participate in her family and community affairs.
5. Special attention should be given to those with special needs and improve and develop programmes for improving the status of children, elderly and handicapped.

5-5: Policies and mechanisms to achieve the objectives of social affairs sector in the Sixth Five-Year Development Plan (2001-20005):

To achieve the approved objectives of the sector, the Plan adopts the following policies and mechanisms:

1. To continue establishing an administratively and financially independent investment fund (Social Solidarity Fund). The return of the fund to be directed for covering the social security expenditures
2. Formation of a ministerial committee, from the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor and the Ministry of National Economy and other concerned units to study the increase in numbers of social security families. The committee shall submit a report on the results of its work to the Council of Ministers.
3. Helping the social security families in solving their social problems and improving their life conditions related to children education, medical treatments, vocational training ...etc. This help should include provision of employment opportunities and suitable work areas and encouraging their self-reliance.
4. Identification of the numbers of those with special needs, and to determine their characteristics, problems and needs.
5. To intensify enlightenment about voluntary work.
6. Formulation of a Plan for conduction of studies about the most important combined elements of the rural communities characteristics , the prevailing phenomena and needs in order to guide the designing of any planning of enlightenment programmes.
7. Provision of the appropriate training and qualification to maintain handicraft and traditional professions which will provide greater opportunities for Omani youths.
8. Enlightenment of women, specially in the least developed regions about cultural, social, health and legal fields and benefiting from agreements related to women and children rights which do not contradict with Islamic Sharia, customs and traditions of Oman.

5-6: The investment programme of social affairs sector in the Sixth Five-Year Development Plan (2001-2005):

In order to facilitate the implementation of the sector approved policies and mechanisms and thus achieving the sector objective appropriately, about OR. (3.9) million have been allocated as approbations for the social affairs sector in the Plan investment programme. About OR. (3.2) million were approbations for new projects. The important new projects expected to be implemented for the sector in the Plan is the general maintenance works, variations and additions for the social development projects by OR. (2) million.



CHAPTER SIX

**CULTURE
SECTOR**

CHAPTER SIX

Culture Sector

6-1: Introduction:

Culture is a basic planning element for human resources development at its different levels. The efficiency and extent of productivity of individuals in any society are measured according to the extent of available cultural awareness and enlightenment for individuals and groups of the society. They are also measured by the ability of the societies to maintain their achievements and develop them through science and knowledge. The efficiency and productivity of the societies are also measured by their cultural sense to emphasize the awareness of the origination of these achievements from an ancient heritage and their ability to live in a rapidly changing present time. In addition, an important part of these achievements may be extended to a future, in which every civil society strives to contribute to the formation of its features according to its cultural awareness.

Culture receives a great attention from all countries and international organizations working in this area. The top of these organizations is the United Nations Education, Sciences and Culture Organization (UNESCO). This has allowed reaching a consensus on the formulation of some ideas related to culture in its role in development. Some of these ideas are as follows:

- Sustainable development and cultural resurgence are two linked issues.
- One of the main objectives of human development is the social and cultural revival of the individual.
- The cultural creativity is the source of human progress. The cultural diversity, which is one of the treasures of humanity, is one of the necessary elements for development.
- The new trends, and specially globalization, will lead to establishment of cultural links that are stronger than in the past and enrich their interaction. However, these links may result in damage to the creative diversity and cultural multiplicity.
- The creative skill in our societies helps in innovation, which is an individual commitment. Such commitment is indispensable for generating our future wealth. The conditions of this creativity should be maintained and encouraged, particularly the freedom of creativity within any society.

6-2 Evaluation of the culture sector performance during the Fifth Five-Year Development plan (1996-2000).

The sector has been able to record several significant achievements during the Fifth Five-Year Development Plan (1996-2000) period. The following paragraphs review a brief summary of the most significant of those achievements:

In view of the rich heritage of the Sultanate, which is rich with various forms of folklores, dances and traditional music that reflect the traditions of the Omani people and emphasize the Omani understanding of art as manifestation of the nation's civilization and a style of

living and celebrating its festivities. All these have made such art one of the most important of this nation's heritage. The Ministry of National Heritage and Culture is striving to upgrade, maintain, gather, document and develop this heritage, The total number of folklore and traditional arts bands registered with the Ministry were about 18 folklore bands and (27) music bands until November 1999. These bands are spreading allover Muscat Governorate , Al Batinah, Ash Shariqiyah, and Ad. Dakhliyah regions.

The total number or private theatrical bands registered with the Ministry until November 1999 were (10) theatrical bands in Muscat Governorate, Al Batinah Region, Dhofar Governorate and Ad Dakhliyah region. The Ministry participated successfully in the Gulf theatrical festival for private groups, held in Kuwait in 1997.

The Ministry has been successfully able to host the sixth theatrical festival for private groups in the GCC states in may 1999. The groups representing the Sultanate in this festival won 3 out of the 10 awards of the festival this clearly illustrates the advanced level of the Omani theatre. The private groups of Oman have been encouraged to participate in theatrical festivals through facilitating the possible procedures for the participation process.

The Ministry has given a special attention to books in general and the Omani book in particular. This attention is reflected in the following fields:

The total number of private libraries registered with the Ministry until November 1999 was 10 libraries distributed over Ad Dakhliyah, Al Batinah, AshShariqiyah, and Adh Dhahirah regions. The Ministry has been able to publish 30 new titles during the period between 1996 and 1999, to be added to the Ministry's 600 published titles. In addition, the Ministry sought to support the publications produced by the youth through purchasing appropriate quantities of their publication, which totaled 38 publications during the same period, to be added to the total of 130 publications already been supported by the Ministry.

In view of the Ministry's belief in the importance of publishing the Omani book at the local and international levels, the Third Muscat International Book Exhibition was held in 1997. About 177 publishers participated in the exhibition. They represented 17 Arabian and foreign countries. The fourth Exhibition was held in 1999. About 215 publishing houses from 17 Arabian and foreign countries participated in the event. The Ministry has also participated in some exhibitions in Gulf, Arabian and international book exhibitions.

The Ministry was able to organized two highly successful Omani songs festivals during this plan period. Those were the Third Omani Song Festival in March 1997 and the Fourth Omani Song Festival in March 1999.

The Ministry gives great attention to arts, classical and traditional poems, as well as the fine arts. Its services in this field are provided through organizing arts exhibitions, critique evenings and readings, cultural seminars, symposia and poems festivals. The most prominent is the First Omani Poems Festival held in Wilayat of Nizwa in December 1998. About a hundred Omani poets took part in the festival. The Ministry is aiming at making such festival a new formulation for rejuvenating the spirit of the old art Souks in Oman in a regular pattern, and

also to motivate the creative skills and capacities of Omani poets and emphasize their role in serving the issues of their society and country.

The Ministry has also sought to encourage both male and female Omani poets to participate in the poetic festivals held in the GCC states and some Arabian countries.

Dar Al Makhtotat (Manuscripts House) is one of the most famous libraries. It includes a rare collection of manuscripts in the Sultanate. The contents of the library gained the attention of Omani and foreign researchers and students. The library was able during the previous period to collect 4300 manuscripts in addition to documents and old and rare Omani Publications. The library has recently completed the indexing of some manuscripts .

After issuing the first volume of the manuscripts index in Arabic language in 1995 , the library issued its second volume of the art manuscripts index in 1996. The third volume of history, oceanography, astrology, and mathematics was published in 1999. Work is currently underway to publish the forth volume in medicine and chemistry, in addition to the Islamic Science Manuscripts Index.

In order to benefit from the available intellectual wealth the Ministry completed editing and publishing 600 publications in the various fields of knowledge in jurisprudence, history, arts and other. The Ministry made copies of the documents from international documentation houses, such as the Bureau of the Government of India, the public registers in the United Kingdoms, and the documents centre in the United States of America (USA), and the French Documents Centre, the Portuguese Documents Centre, and the Documents Achieves in Zanzibar. The Ministry is in the process of obtaining copies of the documents available in India, Pakistan, China and other international documents centers wherever financial capacities are available.

The total number of visits by researchers and interested people to these centers was 1320 during the period 1996 through 1999. The total number of manuscripts restored by the library were 210 documents.

The intellectual renaissance witnessed by the Sultanate necessitated awarding special attention and encouragement for artists and poets. The generous Royal donation by His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said, Sultan of Oman, of establishing the Literary Forum, to be a forum for the poets and writers, where they can practice their creativity, so as to form the nucleolus that we aspire for toward activating the literary structure in the Sultanate. Such activation shall be in the form that is consistent with the current era, at a time when some concepts and issues have changed, and some issues have emerged. All this shall be based on sound literary basis that distinguish the Omanis throughout the stages of history. About 121 symposia and seminars have been held, while (15) publications were published. These covered readings from the thoughts of many writers, authors as well as various activities.

In order to utilize modern information technology in serving the objectives of spreading cultural awareness, and introducing the distinguished Omani cultural items to the outside world, the Ministry exerted considerable efforts to launch its Internet website. The objective here is to provide access to the local and foreign public to know the Ministry's activities, its

various systems, and establish contact channels with those concerned with the Omani culture. The website is expected to be launched in the next phase.

In order to organize and activate the cultural work, the Ministry issued the following legislations during the period 1996 and 1997:

The Artistic Items Control Law, the regulation for organizing and licensing private theatres, The regulations for organizing popular folklore bands, and the regulation for licensing private libraries.

After the promulgation of the Artistic Items control Law, as per the Royal Decree No. 65/97 on 5th October 1997, the Ministry started the enforcement of the provisions of the intellectual property rights Law, in cooperation with the concerned authorities. This enforcement is due to the importance of protecting the property rights of artistic items, conform with the international laws and in preparation for joining the World Trade Organization (WTO). As for the performance related to the investment programme of the sector, the total amended approbations for the sector in the development programme, of the Fifth Five-Year Development Plan, were about OR 1.5 million. Of this amount about O.R. 0.8 million have been implemented, i.e. (53.4%). Some of the most important projects that have been implemented are the following:

- Cultural and technical cooperation protocol between the Sultanate and Morocco, at total amount of OR. (0.2) Million.
- The project for publishing the books, purchase and restoration of manuscripts and documents, at a cost of OR. (0.2) Million.

6-3: The challenges and obstacles facing the culture sector in the Sixth Five-Year Development Plan (2001-2005):

The cultural sector process has always been and still is facing a set of obstacles that can not be ignored, as the addressing of these obstacles represents a necessary condition for the development of the culture so as to assume its position as an effective element in creating enlightened generations that are aware of their surroundings. Such culture can benefit from international developments in the cultural, social and scientific fields without losing its own identify, and intellectual and cultural characteristics, and prove its credibility on the global cultural map. The most important of these obstacles and challenges are the following:

1. Absence of unified cultural strategy in terms of supervision, guidance and implementation, which has led to duplication and repetition of some cultural activities and at the level of the concerned organizations and ministries.
2. Poor infrastructure of the sector and absence of the cultural and modern facilities for promoting the sector's items (theatre, libraries, exhibition halls etc.)
3. Lack of qualified and trained administrative and technical cadre of the cultural sector, and the limited number of those working in this field.
4. The limited role of private sector in the cultural sector investment due to lack of awareness of investment importance in this sector on the one hand, and private sector inclination to achieve quick profits from investments on the other hand.

5. The low capacity of local publishing houses which restricted the development of the Omani author and book and accordingly led to delay in coping with the cultural progress.
6. Lack of attention to the cinema sector in general, and movie production in particular, despite the fact that it constitutes one of the important cultural resources.
7. Lack of an information and studies centre that would help in obtaining the information that explains the bright side of the dimensions of the cultural and intellectual image. This would help activate the modern scientific studies regarding the cultural and intellectual resources in the Sultanate to further facilitate formulation of strategic programmes, current and future cultural Plans, and set the appropriate studies for the scientifically, culturally and intellectually prepared economic development.
8. Limited participation of Omani intellectuals in the cultural planning process and the cultural vision.
9. Lack of non-governmental (popular) cultural organizations, which is considered a honest and competitive source of production by the government organizations (for example the associations and unions of authors, artists, and cinema producers and staff etc.)
10. Lack of specialized bulletins and periodicals in all fields that deal with the cultural activity aspects.

6-4: Objectives of the Culture Sector in the Sixth Five-Year Development Plan (2001-2005):

The culture is an element of highly significant impact on the spiritual, social and economic aspects of individuals and societies. Based on this understanding the culture sector receives great attention in the Sixth Five-Year Development Plan, and emerges as one of the sectors of high priority.

The Culture sector objectives in the Plan may be summarized in the following:

1. To formulate a cultural strategy that takes into consideration the constants and variables, precisely determines the cultural requirements, emphasize the cultural identity and specialty, and provide venues for the cultural creativity.
2. To prepare a cultural strategy so as to promote the role of Private (non-governmental) participation in the cultural development and enable it to perform its cultural activity through licensed cultural organizations (such as private libraries, theatrical groups, various associations and artistic groups, etc.) within the cultural strategy framework.
3. Liaising culture with development as the latter is considered the prime mover of development within the context that takes into account the rapid processes of social, economic and technological changes.
4. Completion of the infrastructure for the cultural work in all parts of the Sultanate (Cultural centres, public libraries, theatres, public galleries, ...etc.)
5. Supporting the Cultural sector in the Ministry of National Heritage and Culture by providing financial subsidy and cadres.
6. Openness toward and interaction with other cultures and emphasizing the pillars of the Arabian cultural unity that ensures achievement of joint aspirations and hopes.

6-5: Policies and mechanisms for achieving the sector's objectives in the Sixth Five-Year Development Plan (2001-2005):

In order to achieve the approved objectives for the sector the Plan adopts the following policies and mechanisms:

1. To start establishing Oman Cultural Complex project in Muscat Governorate, as it constitutes an important infrastructure that will contribute to enhancing the cultural activity in the local community.
2. Strengthening the administrative and technical system working in the cultural sector, so as to be able of good follow- up of cultural and scientific developments, and formulation of appropriate programmes for the children.
3. To fully utilize available different cultural tools in terms of theatre, book, cinema, fine arts, music and other.
4. To provide adequate attention to the children culture, identify their cultural requirements, development of their creative skills and broaden the general scopes of their knowledge.
5. Encouragement of private sector to assume a more active role in the fields of cinematic, theatrical, publications and other production.
6. To care for creative people, work toward encouraging them through various means and upgrade their products.
7. To benefit, as much as possible, from modern telecommunications technologies in order to disseminate culture and establish fruitful cultural dialogue with all people of the world, work toward strengthening the cultural relations, and exchange of expertise.
8. Promulgation and development of the necessary legislations so as to protect the cultural production and producers.

6-6 : The investment Programme of the Culture Sector in the Sixth Development Plan (2001-2005):

In accordance with the attention given by the Sixth Five-Year Development Plan (2001-2005) to the culture sector, the sector's approbations in the Plan's investment Programme are expected to increase to about OR 16.7 million. Approbations for new projects shall constitute OR. 16.0 million. The most important new project that is expected to be implemented in the sector during the Plan is Oman Cultural Complex project at a cost of OR. 15 million.

CHAPTER SEVEN

**INFORMATION
SECTOR PLAN**

CHAPTER SEVEN

Information Sector Plan

7-1: Introduction:

Information plays an important role in furthering the religious, social cultural and economic awareness of the public through the mass media and recently through the Internet. The state seeks to raise the public awareness through mass media in order to accentuate the traditional principles and values and link the citizens with their heritage. This linkage is to provide an incentive for establishing the present and looking forward into the future. The other private (non-governmental) sectors seek to broaden the awareness scope of the various community categories as well as the wider scope of monitors and concerned people at regional and global levels. The private sector also seeks to illustrate the characteristics of the Omani experience and details that have been experienced by the country since the dawn of the blessed renaissance. The enhancement of information apparatus with its different systems (using a proper mechanism together with providing it with the best skills and capacities according to a flexible sectoral Plan that ensures appropriate investment of resources) shall upgrade the sector performance at a rate consistent with the modern era and commensurate with the developments witnessed in this vital field of knowledge activity. The vision for the information sector is based on provision of advanced in terms of form and substance so as to cope with the economic and social development process witnessed internally by the country. The vision shall enable the sector to enter into the new millennium filled with confidence and capacity while depending on the national inputs and trained and qualified Omani workforce. The sector also strives to acquire the advanced information technology, as the world became a small village because of the satellites technology and the expansion of the Internet which crossed the borders of time and geography and posed new challenges.

7-2: Evaluation of the information sector performance in the Fifth Five-Year Development Plan (1996-2000):

1. Public Sector Performance:

The Fifth Five-Year Development Plan period witnessed several achievements and shifts in the information sector process, the most important of which are the following:

- a. The maximum broad casting hours of radio and television increased to 24 hours per day. The television broad casting hours increased from (5674) hours in 1996 to (8784) hours in 2000, at annual growth rate of about (11.5%). The radio broadcasting hours, however, increased at annual average rate of about 3% during the period (1996-1999).

When considering the quality of the programmes presented by the television and Radio, it is evident that entertainment and artistic programmes took about (23.5%) of total television broadcasting hours in 2000. The developmental programmes constituted (15%), while new programmes constituted (15.2%), cultural

programmes (27.0%). As for the radio broadcasting the entertainment programmes were (18.7%) of total hours of broadcasting, while new programmes were (17.5%), and cultural programmes formed (38.1%).

- b. Establishing permanent television teams in each of Musandam Governorate, Ad-Dakhliya, Ash-Sharqiyah, Adh-Dhahirah and Al-Batinah regions. The teams have been established to cover the different events and activities in these regions so as to promote the national participation and increase the scope of television and radio broadcasting by increasing the hours of local programmes broadcasting at the expense of imported programmes. This step is considered as a preliminary phase of establishing information offices in these regions in future during the Six-Five Year Plan when financial approbations are available.
- c. To increase the scope of television broadcasting through (Nile Sat) satellite channel that cover the Arabian region as well as Southern Europe, and (Hot Bird) satellite channel that covers Western Europe, as well as parts of Eastern Europe, and (Arab Sat) satellite channel that covers the Arabian regions and some parts of Europe.
- d. Establishment of Omani information network section that works to promote media publication and broadcasting. The concerned Ministry is working on upgrading the standard of this network to be consistent with the required efficiency standard.
- e. The libraries of the Television and Radio stations have been modernized through introduction of a computer system. These technical libraries in Muscat and Salalah have been connected by a single network. Such network will ensure increasing their efficiency and facilitate retrieval, storage and provision of information.
- f. The new departments have been modernized through introducing a computerized system and linked with many international and Arabian news agencies. This achievement shall raise the capacity, efficiency and contents of the news broad casts and will reduce the burden of paper work and saving folders that were commonly in the station.
- g. The satellite broadcasting has been studied. The Ministry has prepared a study on the reception means of the Sultanate of Oman television broadcasting in all regions of the Sultanate (s survey by phone). The Ministry is currently conducting a field study on (Returns and types of viewership in Oman Television and Radio), which is expected to be concluded shortly.
- h. Information sector had a strong presence in all local, Arabian and international arenas. The Ministry, as a representative of the information sector, participates in the Councils of Information Ministers in the GCC states, as well as of the Arabian and Islamic countries. The Ministry also participates in the specialized councils enchanting from the General Secretariat of each of the GCC States, the Arab league, and the Islamic Conference Organization.
- i. The Ministry sends television and Journalistic delegations and teams to cover the different activities of governmental authorities. The Ministry usually hosts about 300-500 journalists visiting the Sultanate from various Arabian and international information organizations. There are information attachee's in each of watching, Cairo as well as several information bureaus and information representatives abroad.

- j. Muscat Securities Market (MSM) has been linked with the Television broadcasting and accordingly the viewer is able to follow up to date news concerning the trading of shares from office or home.
- k. The number of newspapers and magazines published locally stands at 30 (daily, weekly, monthly and seasonal) publications per thousand population. The number of radios per thousand population is (646). While TV sets are (136) per thousand population. The number of telephone lines reached (59) per thousands population.

Table No. (7-1) below illustrates some of the developments in the circulation of the different publications within a year, in addition to the increasing numbers of private print presses and book shops.

Table No. (7-1)
Indicators of Publications and their Circulation in the
Fifth Five-Year Development Plan (1996-2000)

Detail	Number
Books that received deposition number	135
Arabic and foreign newspapers and magazines controlled during 1998 (publications)	79286
Books supervised (Books)	440000
Printpresses in the Sultanate (printpress)	48
Bookstores in the Sultanate (Bookstore)	492
Advertisement Agencies (Agency)	22
Journalistic establishments (establishment)	8
Publicatioons in circulation (daily, weekly, monthy and quarterly) (publication)	1077

The Sultanate exceeds the GCC States and some Arabian countries (Jordan, Egypt and Sudan) in the number of radios per thousand population. The other GCC states exceeds the Sultanate in terms of number of Television sets per thousand population, except in Saudi Arabia. The Sultanate comes in the last place among the GCC states in terms of daily news papers circulation and number of telephones per thousand populations.

3. Private Sector Role

- a. Private sector role in the information field is still limited to the publishing of some news papers, magazines, books and different publications. The state has provided financial and moral support to the local press as well as many facilities.

The subsidy provided between 1990 and 1998 for example was one million Omani Rials. The amounts of subsidy prior to 1990 were by for more than that. It is hoped that Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry will undertake coordination of information and the efforts of the private sector in this field in order to rationalize and improve performance.

- b. Private Sector participation in the production of radio and television programmes is still limited, despite the encouragement from the concerned Ministry and the incentives and facilities it provided to the producers by purchasing their product at higher price than their competitors. In order to reduce the cost the Television is trying to encourage the executed production. The television series "Faces without Features" was a successful experience where the private sector participated in its production.
- c. The Ministry took some significant measures during the Fifth-Year Plan to encourage the private sector role. The following are some of the measures taken in this regard.
 - Allocation of a Press Club: The Royal Decree No. 88/98 stipulated the allocation of the club in order to assume its neutral role and as an important source of the Omani information. The operation, responsibility and management of the Press Club was assigned to the Private sector working in the press field.
 - Oman Establishment for Press, News, Publication and Advertisement was established by the merger of Oman News Paper House, Al-Omania Advertising and Public Relations, Nizwa Cultural Magazine, and Oman News Agency in one establishment that work on commercial basis. The establishment that work on commercial basis. The establishment is self dependent away from the government financial allocations.

3. Labour force and Omanization:

The number of employees of the Ministry of Information decreased from (1291) employees in 1995 to (1129) employees in 2000. Omanis constitute 1059 of the employees, while expatriates were to employees, i.e. the Omanization ratio is about (94%). This reduction is attributable to several factors. Including the early retirement of a large number of employees. As for the distribution of employees according to their scientific qualifications, about (261) are holders of University degrees. The remaining employees (786) are holders of General Secondary School Certificate or less. About 1008 employees received training during the period 1996-1999. Most of the categories covered by the training include engineers, programmes hosts and anchors, followed by administrative and financial staff.

The total number of staff in the publishing, private and government press sector is (362) worker. Omanis constitute the highest percentage of these workers, they include the distributors of the five daily newspapers Oman, Al Watan, Oman Daily Observer, Al-Shabeeba, Times of Oman, as well as the different magazines official information authorities, and the correspondents of the Arabian and foreign mass media.

4. The performance related to the implementation of the investment programme of the information sector in the Plan:

The total amended approbations for the information sector in the development programme of the Fifth Five-Year Development Plan were about OR. 12.5 million. About

OR 7.6 million of which have been implemented i.e. (60.6%) implementation rate of the most important projects implemented in this sector included in the following:

- Replacement and upgrading the studios equipment in Muscat at cost of OR 1.2 million.
- Replacement and upgrading the Studios equipment in Salalah at a cost of OR. 0.3 million.

7-3: Challenges and obstacles facing the Information Sector in the Sixth Five-Year Development Plan (2001-2005):

The information sector faces several challenges and obstacles that can be challenges and obstacles that can be summarized in the following:

1. Lack of qualified cadres that received high professional training.
2. The spread of the population over a wide area of the country.
3. The high cost of producing the local programmes composed with imported programmes.
4. The rapid change in the information systems and the necessity of their planning and updating.
5. The Omani Society is characterized by being a young society where the youth constitute the majority of the population. This necessitates renovation, interaction and addressing the issues of the youth in a transparent and non-conventional approach.
6. The severe competition among the satellite television channels
7. Accentuating the importance of commercial advertisement and raising the level of awareness of local producers and consumers

7-4: Objectives of Information sector in the Sixth Five-Year Development Plan (2001-2005):

The approved objectives for the information sector in the Plan involve the following:

1. To emphasize and disseminate national awareness and explain the meaning of the ideal citizenship, in all its dimensions. To develop national capacities and induce enlightenment of citizens, regarding their basic role in the building and development process.
2. To contribute to the cultural and educational structure of the society through accentuating the pillars of its identity, national unity and its role in maintaining these achievements.
3. Deepening the non-governmental participation in the public affairs through utilization the mass media and guidance.
4. To provide information about the rich history and present time of Oman, and explain its developmental basis for building the humans, investment in natural resources, and explain the political dimension of its regional and international activities.
5. To upgrade the information work through utilising telecommunications technologies of modern information, and qualification of national cadres.

7-5: Policies and mechanisms for achieving the information sector objectives in the Sixth Five-Year Development Plan (2001-2005):


In order to achieve the sector objectives the Plan adopts the following policies and mechanisms:

1. Enhancement of development information through directing information activity toward serving the comprehensive development process, working to spread thinking and culture, increasing the awareness of the citizens about the surrounding events in the fields of political, economic events inside the country and abroad. To work toward upgrading the substance of the information message in order to cope with the global developments and changes.
2. To setup a national committee for enhancing and spreading the national awareness.
3. To establish and organize mass media that is consistent with the spirit of the era and the advancement in mass media, and dependent on the national cadre in performing its tasks.
4. To expand the Radio and television broadcasting to all parts of the country, and cover the Arabic world. To utilize modern technologies so as to cover the European and American continent and East Asia region.
5. To launch a second television channel as a qualitative step in upgrading and diversifying the television.
6. To establish new studios that use digital system.
7. To develop the Omani electronic information network as response to the spread of the electronic information revolution and its impact on the information field.
8. Upgrading the Omani press through support and guidance, facilitation of legal procedures to improve the contents of the journalists and information production and work toward delivering the Omani newspapers across the borders.
9. Formulating effective criteria for the information work based on the International standards, currently being enforced, so as to ensure success of the information project.

7-6: The Investment Programme for the Information Sector in the Sixth Five-Year Development Plan (2001-2005):

The Plan allocated O.R. 16.9 million in order to achieve the approved objectives of the information sector. The appropriations for new projects constitute about OR. 12.0 million. Some of the most important projects that are due to be implemented in the sector in the Plan are the following:

- Replacement and upgrading the equipment of studios in Muscat and Salalah, at a cost of OR. 6.5 million.
- The digital studios project, at a cost of OR. 3.5 million.
- Replacement and upgrading equipment in the Wilayats at a cost of OR. 2.0 million.



CHAPTER EIGHT

**HERITAGE
SECTOR PLAN**

CHAPTER EIGHT

Heritage Sector Plan

8-1: Introduction:

The prudent government of His Majesty the Sultan Qaboos bin Said, has recognized that our view on our heritage requires that we should not establish barriers between one heritage trend and another. We should be certain that what characterizes our cultural direction is the presentation of originality. Thereby we would have been able of striking a difficult balance between a modern culture and a rich cultural resource. This would enable us to establish the desired cultural continuance through linking the originality of the past and its deep-rootedness to the requirements and modernity of the present time.

8-2: Evaluation of Heritage sector performance during the Fifth Five-Year Development Plan (1996-2000):

During the Fifth Five-Year Development Plan the Heritage sector has made several achievements, those may be summarized as follows:

- 1 The castles and forts in the Sultanate attracted about one million visitors during the Plan period.
- 2 A significant effort has been made in the field of restoration archeological mosques. Restoration has been carried out for the following mosques. Al-Bayadha, Al-Alaya, Al-Mukkabbir, Al-Aqaba, Manal, Manah (Grand Mosque), Saal, Soor Al-Ballah, Al-Ghareed, Al Mazaraáh, and Bukha.
- 3 Restoration works are still going in Bahla Fort through the Plan period. Work is going in a sustained pace and awarding to the prepared Plans by the UNESCO carpets, since the site is registered in the world heritage register.
- 4 Restoration of Al-Ballah Fort, in Wilayat of Al-Buraimi, and Al-Hazm Fort in the Wilayat of Ar-Rustaq have been completed and both forts are now open for the public visits.
- 5 Regarding the maintenance of historical buildings that have been restored in the previous Plans, several fortresses have been maintained, those included the following: Al Maghabsha fence, and the fortresses of Shinas, Nakha, Al-Rawdha, Bait Al-Yahmadi, Al-Suwaiq, Ar-Rustaq, Bait Al-Radeeda, Al-Tharmad.
- 6 The role of the castles and fortresses has been emphasized and they have been formulated as centres of cultural and civilization radiation through providing them with different kinds of cultural, religious and art books. A full-fledged section in Nizwa Castle has been transformed into a public library for the castle visitors and all those concerned with historical and artistic studies. Nizwa Castle was honoured by hosting the first Omani poems festival in December 1998.
- 7 Some castles and forts have been enhanced through hosting some specialized exhibitions, and temporary Heritage villages, as part of the process of revitalizing the originality of the past with its flavour and eternal influence.

- 8 A comprehensive inventory has been conducted for all Castles, Forts, Towers, and Fences spreading all over the Sultanate from the North and up to the South. All this information have been collected in a book entitled "The Omani Defences"
- 9 Specialized museums (such as the National History Museum) have been able to shift their role from the limited location to the limitless scope to reach the general public. This is through the active participation in the international festivals that are held in the Sultanate (e.g. Muscat Festival) and reflecting their substance of Heritage and cultural content, together with introducing such civilization to the public.
- 10 The Natural History Museum made an important achievement in the scientific research field. About 850 plant samples have been recorded in the computer database through the National Registry of Omani Herbs and Plants. About 207 Plant samples that were donated to the Museum by the College of Science of Sultan Qaboos University have been subjected for treatment. The unclassified botanical samples, estimated to be 1702 samples, have been arranged according to the collector name and collection date, prior to sending them gradually to botanical scientists abroad within the framework of scientific exchange with international institutions.
- 11 The Natural History Museum has completed the preparation of lists of samples that include reptiles, rodents, and amphibians that need special preservation instead of the current method of preservation through cooling (according to the recommendation made by Bon scientists).

On the side of the investment programme for the sector in the Plan, the total amended approbations for heritage sector in the development programme of the Fifth Five-Year Development Plan reached about OR. 6.6 million. About Or 4.4 million have already been committed, i.e. 60.2%. Some of the most important projects that have been implemented within this sector of the Plan are the following:

- Restoration of Bahla Fort (Phase II) at the cost of OR. 1.3 million.
- Periodic maintenance of restored archeological buildings, costing OR. 0.6 million.

8-3: Challenges and obstacles facing the Heritage sector in the Sixth Five-Year Development Plan (2001-2005):

Despite the achievements made, however the sector is still facing some challenges and obstacles. The most important of these are the following:

a. Fork and Castles:

The Omani Heritage components have not been fully utilized, to serve the tourism and recreation sector, up to a level consistent with the significant progress witnessed by tourism sector in the Sultanate, and relative expansion in establishing hotels infrastructure and the rise in tourist flows into the country. The most important challenges and obstacles in this field are the following:

1. Lack of service facilities near ancient and historical buildings
2. Expansion in restoration of Forts and Castles to increase tourism attraction elements to the country and broaden the geographical base for tourism traffic and revenues.

3. Lack of cadres in some locations (e.g. guides and guards) has lead to lack of statistical data on the tourism traffic in these locations (e.g. "Al-Hilla" and "Al-Khandaq" forts in the Wilayat of Al-Buraimi, and "Bukha" in Musandam Governorate, and "Al-Yahmadi" in the Wilayat of Ibra).
4. The preparation and furnishing of some restored Forts, such as Al-Hazm, Al-Khandaq, Al-Hilla, and Ibri Forts, have not been completed. This was due to the fact that the Ministry lacks technical cadre specialized in these. In addition, the Ministry as n't been able to provide adequate care to the restored sites in order to ensure the continuity of keeping these sites open for visitors, due to lack of capacities appropriate for establishing a national task force to undertake the emergency and regular maintenance works for those sites.

b. *The Museum Field:*

Salalah Museum project has not been completed. This project would have made important addition to the tourism industry in Dhofar Governorate. The Governorate is witnessing a major tourism traffic flow during Autumn season (Al-Khareet). However it lacks a national museum of a standard that contribute to providing the historical information for the visitors. The other museums also still need to be renovated and improved. The exhibits need to be changed to ensure continuity of attraction to visitors from citizens and tourists.

c. *Archeology Field:*

There is a need for maintaining and restoring the main archeological sites in addition to providing necessary services to them. The archeological exploration activity, through cooperation with foreign exploration expeditions , is also slow.

d. *The field of handicrafts and traditional industries;*

Postponing the establishment of the Handicrafts and Traditional Industries Development Centre, which is considered a core of a national strategy for upgrading the Handicrafts and traditional industries. The decreasing rates of production from the two porcelain factories in Bahla, and the textile factory in Samail, due to scarcity of funding sources and lack of training and qualification for staff and the workers. The absence of the appropriate legal and administrative framework for the traditional handicrafts sector has lead to lack of sufficient guidance for encouragement of the Omani Youths to perform handicraft industries, although there are new channels for provision of easy term loans through Oman Development Bank and the Financial support committee.

e. *The Training Fields:*

Training has paramount importance and positive impact on upgrading administrative and technical cadres in various fields. It affects the standard of production and quality in the business assigned to those cadres. The training during this Plan was limited to the English language courses only and for one stage. The benefit from this training was very limited. There is a need for specialized training in the various areas supervised by the Heritage sector.

f. The private sector role in the development of the Heritage sector:

There has not been a clear and tangible role by the private sector during the Plan. No leading role was evident for the private sector in promoting this sector except that some companies allocated some pages in their brochures to provide information about castles, forts, museums and archeological sites. The private sector is still directing its attention and investments toward the production sector that generate fast profits.

8-4: The Objectives of the Heritage Sector in the Sixth Five-Year Development Plan (2001-2005).

In line with the attention given by the Sultanate to Heritage, and the Plan's direction toward upgrading the tourism sector, and promoting the private sector role, the Plan seeks to achieve the following objectives in the Heritage sector:

1. To continue the efforts of maintaining the Omani heritage components and collect them, facilitate their utilization, and protection against damage, as they are civilization heritage that need to be maintained inside the country.
2. To direct all components of the national heritage to serve the national economy in general and the tourism sector in particular.
3. Promoting the private sector participation in maintaining the Omani heritage and to benefit culturally and financially from it.

8-5: Policies and mechanisms to achieve the sector Objectives in the Sixth Five Year Development Plan (2001-2005):

The Plan adopts a package of policies and mechanisms in order to achieve the objectives of the sector; the elements of these are the following:

1. To continue the programmes of restoration of castles, forts and ancient and historical buildings spreading in the different regions of the Sultanate, in addition to maximizing the benefit from it in order to increase the tourism attraction elements, renovate and upgrade the existing areas.
2. To provide the necessary constituents of the historical land marks in terms of guides, guards, information brochures, historical booklets and other means of extension guides.
3. To enrich the historical buildings and archeological sites with specialized research with the objective of documenting these buildings and sites and benefit the researches in this field.
4. To implement Salalah Museum project for which the designs and maps have already been prepared, in order to contribute to the diversification of the tourism products in the Governorate of Dhofar.
5. To establish the Handicraft and Traditional Industries Development Centre, so as to provide the require care for the handicrafts and artisans sector, as they are of the most important mechanisms for development of artisan and traditional industries.
6. To provide adequate training and qualification for human cadres in order to undertake the designated role in the best way.
7. Updating and developing the legislations in order to provide protection for the national heritage items.

8. To prepare an integrated Plan for enlightenment of the citizens and residents about the importance of the cultural and civilization heritage (Castles, Forts, Museums, Archeological sites, and traditional handicrafts) so as to be presented.
9. To draw new government plans in order to define the role to be played by the private sector through investment in restoration and utilization of historical sites.

8-6: The Investment Programme of the Heritage Sector in the Sixth Five-Year Development Plan (2001-2005):

Approbations for Heritage sector in the development programme of the Sixth Five-Year Development Plan are estimated to be about OR 13.3 million. Of this amount about OR 10.7 million are for new projects. Some of the most important new projects proposed for the sector include the following:

- Restoration of the house of Imam Ahmed bin Said in the Wilayat of Adam, which will cost OR 3.5 million/
- Regular maintenance of restored archeological buildings, at the cost of OR. 0.5 million.

CHAPTER NINE

YOUTH SECTOR PLAN

CHAPTER NINE

Youth Sector Plan

9-1: Introduction :

All countries attach significant importance to the youth, as they form half the society. Their importance, however, increases in the young Omani society where the Youths constitute more than (60%) of total population.

In view of its importance the successive development Plans have given special attention to and sought development of the Youth Sector. This has been reflected on the clear attention to the Fourth Five-Year Development Plan (1991-1995) adopted social policies. Those policies focused on diverting a special attention to the Youths Sector, provision of necessary youth facilities, such as sports complexes, in order to cope with the Youth renaissance in the sports field. The policies also involved provision of necessary support to the youths so as to depend on themselves and undertake independent businesses and projects in the form of small -scale projects. The policies also involved provision of access to appropriate easy term funding and necessary services through provision of structures for commercial centres built in the industrial estates so as to provide offices for producing the youths own free business.

9-2: Evaluation of Youth Sector Performance during the Fifth Five-Year Development Plan (1996-2000):

The Youth Sector has made several achievements during the Plan period, the most significant of which are the following:

1. In the field of sports activities:

- 38 clubs have been built by the end of the Fifth Five-Year Development Plan
- The first phase of Nizwa Youth Complex have been completed. This phase involved the main stadium with 15 thousands person capacity and grass covered play ground, together with tartan race track, illumination suitable for live television broadcasting, as well as a Royal compartment and seats for VIPs with 2000 persons capacity. The phase included halls and several facilities in the sub-level , a separate administrative building, a tartan court, illumination and hostel for teams made from prefabricated materials, in addition to external works, gardening, artesian well etc...
- The first phase of Sur Youth Complex was also completed. It included a 15 thousands capacity main stadium with grass court and asphalt running track as well as illumination suitable for live television broadcasting, a Royal compartment, and seats for VIPs with 2000 capacity, with illumination and a hostel for teams, additional facilities at the sub-level, external works, and gardening etc...
- Completion of the first phase of Ibri youth complex. This phase included a 15 thousands capacity main stadium, grass court, running track, a Royal Compartment, seats for VIPs with more than 2000 persons capacity, a tartan court, illumination, hostel for teams, and facilities at the sub-level, external works, gardening, and two artesian wells.

- Completion of the first phase of Salalah Youth Complex. It included a main stadium with 7.5 thousands persons capacity, grass court, running track, illumination for live TV broadcasting, changing and locker rooms, a reception hall for VIPs
- Sultan Qaboos Sports Complex in Bawshar is considered a national landmark in the Sultanate. It won an international award in the field of attention to Youth's and sport. Most of the sport facilities are available in this complex.
- The youth centre in Khasab was established in two phases. It included a grass court for football with simple illumination, but not suitable for television broadcasting, small wooden/Iron amphitheatre, administrative offices, small theatre, a swimming pool, sports hall with Tartan, and facilities below. These facilities included a gallery, library, and a triple court for basketball, volleyball and handball. The court is covered by Tartan and provided with illumination and some external works and gardening.
- The youth theatre, the main premises of the scientific club, and youth gallery have been made through some savings realized in the development projects.
- The Authority conducts annual maintenance for the buildings of about 3 clubs.
- The authority is carrying out maintenance and operation of youth complete through specialized companies and according to approbation allocated for each complex.

2. Youth Activities:

GOYSCA publishes regular reports on the activities of the authority and its achievements, as a reflection of its keenness to record all the activities and achievements realized. Those reports indicate that sports activity achieved tangible progress during the Plan period. This is reflected on the numbers of beneficiaries from the youth complexes and sport clubs indicated in table No. (9-1) below:

Table No. (9-1)
Rates of benefit from Youth complexes and Sport Clubs in 1997

I t e m	No. of beneficiaries
a. Youth Complexes:	
1. Sultan Qaboos Sports Complex	75129
2. Nizwa Youth Complex	4550
3. Sur Youth Complex	5200
4. Salalah Youth Complex	1120
5. Sohar Youth Complex	11500
6. Musandam Youth Complex	13500
Total	98849

3. Sport Clubs :

Item	No. of beneficiaries
1. Muscat Clubs	5978
2. Al Batinah Clubs	8500
3. Ash-Sharqiyah Clubs	6333
4. Ad-Dakhliyah Clubs	9363
5. Adh-Dhahirah Clubs	1575
6. Dhofar Clubs	3126
7. Musandam Clubs	2756
Total	37631

4. The Invest Programme for the Sector in the Fifth Five-Year Development Plan (1996-2000):

Total amended appropriations for the youth sector in the Development Programme for the Fifth Five-Year Development Plan, as illustrated in Table No. (9-2) below, were about OR. 20.8 million. Of this amount about .R. 16.7 million, i.e. (79.8%) have already been implemented. Some of the most significant projects implemented during this Plan include the following:

- Sur Youth Complex, at a cost of OR 5.6 million.
- Ibri Youth Complex, together with the consulting studios, at a cost of OR 5.6 million.

Table No. (9-2)
The Investment Programme for Youth Sector
In The Fifth Five-Year Development Plan (1996-2000)

Item	Amended Appropriations O.R. Mn	Commitments O.R. Mn	Implemented O.R. Mn	Implementation (%)
On-going Projects	2	1.9	1.4	70
New Projects	18.8	18.2	15.2	80.9
Total	20.8	20.1	16.6	79.8

9-3: Challenges and obstacles facing the Youth Sector in the Sixth Five-Year Development Plan (2001-2005):

Sport clubs and youth centres are experiencing several problems, the most important of these are the following:

1. The insufficient financial support provided annually to the clubs.
2. Lack of maintenance for the clubs implemented by the government during the previous Five-Year Development Plans, and the inability of the clubs to bear the financial burden related with maintenance.
3. The facilities implemented during the previous Five-Year Development Plans,, particularly in the 1970s, lack the basic structures necessary for the clubs. The premises, for example,

may either be very small, and sport facilities may be lacking or those existing might have been implemented by the clubs' own resources and in simple ways that don't satisfy the modern standards.

4. Lack of wide opportunities for the clubs in the commercial investment field.
5. Despite the fact that clubs are private organizations (i.e. non-governmental), yet most of them depend on the annual subsidy provided by the Government. Popular sources are not capable of providing the requested subsidy and the private sector is not supporting the clubs because it does not obtain any gain from that.
6. The management boards of the clubs are on voluntary basis. Most of these boards donate from their own financial resources to support the club, which leads to youth reluctance in joining the management boards of the clubs.

9-4: Youth Sector Objectives in the Sixth Five-Year Development Plan (2001-2005):

In order to upgrade the youth sector, the Plan aims at fulfilling the following objectives in the sector:

1. To promote patriotism and emphasize the noble Arabian and Islamic values, develop the spirit of loyalty to the country and His Majesty the Sultan.
2. To upgrade the sport and cultural standard of the Youths in the clubs and educational institutions, in coordination with the concerned authorities.
3. To support the programmes that aim at increasing the activities of the youth sector as they represent a corner store in the building process of the society.
4. To upgrade the level of participation in the sport and cultural activities.
5. To strengthen the financial resources for sport and cultural activities.
6. To emphasize the role of scientific research in the sport and cultural fields.

9-5: Policies and Mechanisms for achieving the objectives of the sector in the Sixth Five-Year Development Plan (2001-2005):

The Plan adopts the following policies and mechanisms so as to achieve the objectives of the sector in the proper way:

1. Keenness on the positive, renewable and effective participation in the youth and sport activities during the national occasions. Development and promotion of the programmes. And youth and artistic activities that emphasize the principles pertaining to loyalty to His Majesty the Sultan of Oman.
2. The cultural, social, and artistic programmes should include knowledge and information that aim at accentuating the Arabian culture and Islamic values as well as the noble Omani traditions.
3. Completing the infrastructure for the youth and sport sector through provision of subsidy to the clubs.
4. To upgrade the theatrical and musical activities programmes, the Omani folklores programmes and providing a new generation of young artists, together with providing musical instruments as well as the requirements of those arts in general and complete the facilities necessary for their work.

5. To provide the requirements of theatrical work, and artistic and musical activity in terms of theatres, halls and specialized institutes.
6. Promoting the participation of popular and private sectors in the support of the sport and cultural programmes.
7. Formulation of a special system that would allow the Authority to invest in some fields and utilize the returns of such projects.
8. To establish a centre for sports and cultural Research at the authority.
9. To give special attention to the search for talented people in the sports, cultural, and artistic fields in order to sponsor them and upgrade their skills. Such upgrade may be done through establishing special schools for talented people in the sports fields as well as through scientific and cultural clubs all over the governorates and regions, and to formulate the regulations concerning social securities and rewards to encourage them.

9-6: The Investment programme for the Youths sector in the Sixth Five-Year Development Plan:

The appropriations for youth sector in the investment programme of the Sixth Five-Year Development Plan are estimated to be O.R. 11.7 million. About OR 7.5 million of these appropriations are for new projects. Of the most important new projects expected to be implemented in the sector during the Plan are the following

- Establishing the alternate youths centre of Bait Al-Falaj at a cost of OR. 1.3 million.
- Improvements in Salalah Youth complexes at a cost of OR. 1.0 million.

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APPENDIX

Names of the members of the Committee for preparation of the Sixth Five-Year Development Plan (2001-2005) for Labour and Human resources

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President of Sultan Qaboos University
Chairman of the Committee

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Minister of Social Affairs, Labour and Vocational Training,
Deputy Chairman of the Committee

H.E. Yahya bin Mahfoudh Al Manthari

Minister of Higher Education

H.E. Sayyid Saud bin Ibrahim Al Busaidy

Minister of Education

H.E. Sheikh Mohamed bin Marhon Al Ma'mari

President of the General Organization for Youth,
Sports and Cultural activities (GOYAC)

H.E. Sheikh Aflah bin Hamad bin Salim Al Rawahi

Representative of the Majlis A'ddawla

H.E. Amor bin Mohamed bin shamis Al Hijri

Representative of the Majlis Ash'Shura

H.E. Murtadha bin Hassan Ali

Representative of the Majlis Ash'Shura

H.E. Salim bin Nasser Al Maskari

Secretary General of the Higher Education Council

H.E. Rajiha bint Abdul Ameer bin Ali

The Undersecretary for Development Affairs,
Ministry of National Economy

H.E. Mohamed bin Hassan bin Ali

The Undersecretary of the Ministry of Health for Planning Affairs

H.E. Sayyid Khalid bin Hilal bin Saud Al Busaidy

Deputy Secretary General of the Council of Ministers

H.E. Sheikh Abdul Rahman bin Ibrahim Al Abri

Undersecretary of the Ministry of Civil Service

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Mr. Ahmed bin Abdullah Al Ghazali
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Names of Labour and Omanization team members

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