

# Introduction

## **In pursuit of greater efficiencies and effectiveness**

Member agencies of the Coordination Group of Arab National and Regional Development Institutions concluded fiscal 2000 with a cumulative US\$61.9 billion to show for their combined efforts at development cooperation. In 2000, as in previous years, the agencies deployed grant aid, trade support and equity payments to back the development aspirations of beneficiary countries, spread around the globe.

The membership of eight includes five multilateral agencies: the Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa [BADEA]; the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development; the Arab Gulf Program for United Nations Development Organizations; the Islamic Development Bank and the OPEC Fund for International Development, and three bilateral agencies: the Abu Dhabi Fund for Development; the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development and the Saudi Fund for Development.

The objectives of the Group are to ensure pursuit of common goals and to establish a link between development assistance and other economic relations with recipient countries. There is a determination to forge a unified framework for action and to achieve greater policy coherence. The Group would like to see other international organizations improve upon their own aid performance.

The agencies have extended financing to various economic sectors of importance to the countries they work with. These, again in 2000, ranged from agriculture to transportation and from telecommunications to industry. Significant funding went to social sectors, such as health, education and water supply. Global trade also obtained considerable support in a year which saw many of the agencies and their owner-governments paying close attention to the work of the World Trade Organization (WTO). Some of the member states intensified their bids for membership in the WTO, while those that were already members sought to raise their profiles somewhat as the

Geneva-based organization stayed in the spotlight throughout the year. Trade financing is an important part of the portfolio of these agencies, as are lending and equity to the private sector enterprises that are expected to contribute to improving quality of life and alleviating poverty.

The Coordination Group, as a body, took shape in 1975, when member agencies decided to pull together for greater impact. It was decided that working together would create greater efficiencies and effectiveness, especially with regard to larger-scale projects and programs, which easily were beyond the capacity of a single institution. It was also agreed that working together, with pooled resources, would, to a great extent, eliminate duplication of effort.

The first meeting of the Group was in Safat, Kuwait in September 1975. Since then, member organizations have harmonized their approaches and practices, meeting regularly, usually twice a year, at the level of directors of operations. They share initiatives and synchronize programs of work. The Arab Fund houses a Coordination Secretariat for the Group and administers its joint business.

This publication presents an overview of the member institutions. It describes their structures, their objectives and activities. More detailed information is obtainable from each agency directly and also from the Coordination Secretariat itself:

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