

I W S A W's ACTIVITIES IN THE ARAB WORLD

The Director of the Institute, Dr. Abu Nasr, visited four Arab countries last year to facilitate communication, and to exchange information and research findings among scholars, students, institutions, social agencies, and others interested in the study of women and children in the Arab World.

The four countries that were visited are :

1. Iraq, where the Director met the representatives of the National Women's Union, officials of the ministry of social affairs, and professors of social sciences of the universities of Bagdad and Al-Mustansiria. With all those met in Iraq, means of evaluating the evolving needs of women were discussed and ways of coordination with the Institute were examined.
2. Syria. A meeting was held with the

General Union of Syrian Women. Visits to girls schools and women centers took place. Possibilities of cooperation and coordination were discussed in Syria also.

3. Saudi Arabia. The trip to Riad included visits, discussions, tours, and meetings with women in education, social affairs, social welfare projects, and with government and United Nations officials. Potential contacts were made and negotiations concerning the training of girls at BUC's Nursery School. Responses were favorable.
4. Egypt. The visit to Egypt which lasted for two months was a valuable experience. The visit had many objectives :
 - a. To locate information on projects about Egyptian women,
 - b. To get a better understanding of projects being conducted by women
 - c. To spot local leaders and potential researchers ;(continued on p.2)

- d. To secure written documents which may be of help to I W S A W; and
- e. To try to identify needs and areas where the Institute may be of help.

To meet these objectives, a number of contacts, visits, meetings and discussions were held with prominent individuals, government officials, women's organizations, universities, research centers, and Arab League officials .

These visits of the Institute to the Arab countries proved to be valuable learning experiences which make the Institute more and more aware of the pressing needs of Arab women all over the different Arab countries.

Another line through which the Institute achieved its continuous contact with Arab women was through participation in a number of conferences on Arab women . The conferences that I W S A W participated in are the following :

- 1. " Women Rights in Arab Laws ", organized by the Lebanese Women's

Council and held in Beirut in May, 1974.

- 2. " Women's Role in Rural National Development " , organized by the Arab League, FAO , UNICEF , and ECWA and held in Cairo in October , 1974 .
- 3. " Women's Vocational Training and Socio-economic Development " , organized by the International Center of Vocational Training , Arab League , FAO , and UNICEF and held in Sirs-Al-Layan in July , 1975 .
- 4. " Women's Status in the Moslem Family" , organized by the International Islamic Center for Population Studies and Research , Al-Azhar University and held in Cairo in December, 1975 .

Activities of I W S A W in the Arab World have helped to know the conditions , traditions and developments affecting women in the different countries visited. Among the Institute's future plans are visits to the other Arab countries .