

# **IRAQ**

## **NATIONAL REPORT 1996**

### **I- A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM IN IRAQ**

Iraq (formerly known as Mesopotamia) was the cradle of the first human civilizations. The Sumerian, the Akadian, the Assyrian, and the Babylonian civilizations flourished in Iraq. With the advent of Islam and the flourishing of Arab - Islamic civilization, which was in its golden age during the rule of the Abbassides, Baghdad became the world centre of culture, knowledge and creativity, attracting scholars, men of letters and intellectuals from all over the world.

Iraq, nowadays, witnesses a general revival in all aspects of life, including the educational system which is favoured with special attention owing to its vital role in the process of cultural growth in society. The educational system has witnessed major developments and achievements which constitute one aspect of the giant and numerous accomplishments achieved by the Revolution in all aspects of the political, economic, and social sectors. The Constitution of the Republic of Iraq emphasizes that the State guarantees the right of free education, at all levels, for all citizens; imposes compulsory education at the primary level and ensures the eradication of illiteracy.

The Ministry of Education has undertaken to develop the educational process so that it may keep up with the educational developments and innovations at the international level.

During the school years 1993 /1994 - 1994/1995, the Ministry of Education pursued the implementation of the National Religious Campaign for teaching the recitation and interpretation of the Holy Quran to students at all educational levels. This Campaign was initiated in implementation of the instructions of H.E. Leader- President Saddam Hussein (God save him) for the purpose of achieving the desired educational revival through incorporating Islamic education into the educational process which is based on Arab cultural heritage and Arab-Islamic history. Islamic education, which involves spiritual, moral, educational, scientific and humanitarian dimensions, plays a vital role in building up an integrated, balanced human personality, creating a socially and morally virtuous individual and relating education to the issues of man and society and the philosophy of existence, knowledge and ethics.

#### **1-1 Structure and Organization of the educational System**

##### **1-1-1 Educational Philosophy, Objectives and Legislations.**

###### **a- Educational Philosophy**

The educational system in Iraq is based on certain values and principles, derived from the religious, human and national characteristics of society. The most prominent of these are the belief that man is a supreme value, and that education is a social process, sensitive to time and place factors, and dependent on social ideology, needs and available material and human resources.

Within this framework, the State ensures the right of free education for all citizens at all levels, compulsory education at the primary level, eradication of illiteracy, provision of equal opportunities as well as disseminating education of all types, and relating it to the

aims of development so as to guarantee bringing up a scientifically and educationally integrated human being who believes in the unity of the Arab Nation and its immortal mission, and possesses the spirit of optimism, challenge and collaboration.

In implementation of the principle of democratization of education, the State undertakes to provide equal learning opportunities for all citizens (males and females) without discrimination for sex, race, or religion, encourage talent and creativity in all intellectual, scientific, and artistic activities, with special attention to females and inhabitants of rural and remote areas, overcome economic and social obstacles so as to facilitate enrollment of learners in educational institutions, as well as promote the role of education in establishing understanding, co-operation, and peace on the international level and respect for the rights of man and his basic freedoms. The regional, preparatory meeting of Arab experts of education for international understanding, convened in Tunisia (25-28 April, 1994), prepared the ground for the forty - fourth session of the International Conference on Education concerning evaluation of education for international understanding and its perspectives in the Arab Homeland, and stressed that Arabs should draw on their cultural heritage, rich potentials and future prospects, within the context of work for human rights, democracy, peace and international understanding.

#### **b - Educational Objectives.**

The overall objective of education in Iraq is defined as follows:

((Bringing up an enlightened generation, believing in God, loyal to the Homeland, devoted to the Arab Nation, its message and its aims in unity, liberty and socialism, adhering to scientific thinking, armed with science and morality, relying on work and self-education, possessing the will to struggle and the power to confront the crucial challenges as represented by imperialism, zionism, and anti-nationalism, assimilating the factors of cultural development and open-minded to human thought, within the framework of originality and modernity)).

From this overall objective a number of general aims are derived, according to which the whole educational system functions. These aims which the system endeavours to realize cover twelve areas: human, religious, patriotic, national, democratic, socialist, scientific, labour, power and construction, originality and modernity, humanity, and lifelong education.

In the light of these general aims, efforts are devoted to the formulation of goals for the kindergartens and the various educational levels: "primary, intermediate, preparatory, vocational, and teacher education". From these general goals a number of subsidiary goals are also derived, covering specific areas related to physical, senso-motor, mental, emotional, spiritual, patriotic, national, human, social, and behavioural dimensions.

Afterwards, the general educational aims together with the goals of the various educational levels are translated into specific goals for the various school subjects taught in the classes of each level. The specific goals should meet the requirements of the local educational situation. Furthermore, they should assimilate the sources of the Arab-Islamic culture, concentrate on the cultural challenges facing the Arab Nation and fulfil the learners' needs and the requirements of their growth at the various educational levels

#### **c- Educational Legislations**

The educational legislation aim at ensuring the State's supervision over the educational policy, as well as organizing, financing and orientating the various types of general education in accordance with the educational philosophy, general educational objectives and the aims of the various educational levels. This is achieved through legislating" laws, regulations, and instructions which organize the various aspects of the educational process, particularly those concerning free education of various types, and at all levels, compulsory primary education, granting professional and transportation allowances to supervisory, administrative and teaching staff. These legislations determine the rules governing students' behaviour and discipline, organize the work of the various school committees and extra-curricular activities, as well as general and school examinations... etc.

Recently a number of regulations which contribute to the development of the educational process have been issued, the most prominent of which is the parent-teacher councils regulation. Certain laws, regulations and instructions have been amended. These include laws concerning schools for the gifted, examinations, foreign students, teachers' institutes, fine arts institutes, educational T.V., and scouting.

## **1-2 Administrative System**

The Ministry of Education undertakes to draw up the general educational policy and plans as well as supervise and follow up their implementation. The (21) directorates general of education in the governorates undertake to supervise the implementation of the educational process and ensure the provision of material and technical prerequisites in co-ordination with the central administration in the Ministry, according to the principle of centralisation of planning and decentralisation of implementation. The administrative organization of the Ministry consists of the directorates general at the central and provincial levels.

The Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research undertakes to draw up the policy of higher education and supervise its administration and organization. However, both private and public universities in Iraq are autonomous in financial, administrative and technical matters. A number of other ministries such as the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, the Ministry of Industry, the Ministry of Defence, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Transport and Communications, the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation, and the Ministry of Oil, administer vocational training centres to qualify skilled manpower in various fields of specialization.

## **1.3. Educational Finance.**

Education in Iraq is financed at two levels: pre-university education which includes kindergartens, as well as primary, secondary, vocational, and teacher education.

The second level includes post-secondary technical education as well as undergraduate and postgraduate education. Financing at the second level is of two types, the first of which is free of charge provided by the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research, while the second type, covering private undergraduate education, is provided by professional and private organizations and associations.

Table No. (1 )  
Expenditure Rates of the Educational Budget for the School Years 1993/1994 - 1994/1995  
according to the Educational Levels.

	1993/1994	1994/1995
1. Kindergartens	2.2%	2.8%
2. Primary Education	64.3%	64%
3. Secondary Education	27.6%	27.9%
4. Vocational Education	5.9%	5.3%
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	100%	100%

### 1-4 Educational Ladder

The educational ladder in Iraq is as follows:

- a. Pre-school Education (Kindergartens): It is of two years duration to which children of the age - bracket (4-5) are admitted.
- b. Primary Education: It is of six years duration covering the age - bracket (6 - 11). It is compulsory for all children of that age-bracket.

c. Secondary Education:

It is a stage that follows the primary school and precedes the university. It extends over six years for the age group 12 to 17 and it comprises two stages: (1) Intermediate Education which lasts for three years (12 to 14 years of age). The aim is to enrich the learner's knowledge received in the primary stage, particularly in the area of language and general education.

- (2) Preparatory Education: It lasts for three years (15 to 17). The aim is to prepare students for university education or the labour market. This stage is divided into two branches (scientific and literary) starting from the second year of preparatory education, during which students pursue academic studies in science or humanities.

Another type of preparatory education is a three year vocational education which covers the age bracket (15 - 17). It consists of three branches: industrial, agricultural, and commercial. It prepares students for professional life or university education in the industrial, agricultural, and commercial fields.

- d. Teacher Education: There are teacher training (preparation) institutes to which students are admitted after completing the intermediate stage. The course lasts for five years. The graduates are qualified to teach in primary schools. There are also two-year teachers' institutes to which students are admitted after completing the secondary stage, and in which they are qualified for teaching in primary schools. Most of these institutes were converted into four-year teachers' colleges at a university level.

- e. University Education: to which students are admitted after completing the secondary stage. The length of the course ranges from three to six years. Applicants of the age group 18 or more are registered in colleges and universities to pursue their studies in various specializations such as arts, sciences, medicine, engineering... etc. In addition to colleges there are two-year postsecondary institutes which train students for various technical professions.

Higher studies for the degrees of Master and Ph. D. in many specializations are also available.

Figure No(1)

The Educational ladder In Iraq According to Age and Class [NOT INCLUDED]

### 1-5 Curricula

Designing and revising curricula constitute one of the major priorities of the educational process which aims at the learner's full development, with a view to assisting him in adapting to the social, economic, scientific and technical changes in modern societies. Designing curricula as well as editing textbooks and teachers' guides and manuals depend upon the educational philosophy and objectives. The Higher Committee for Developing Curricula, Aids and Examinations undertakes the responsibility of approving, revising and developing curricula, textbooks and teachers' guides. This Committee includes a number of directors general, experts and university professors, specialized in various subjects. Curricula and textbooks are taught according to the timetables approved for each educational level. Tables Nos. (2), (3) and (4) include the study plans approved for the various levels of general education.

Table No. (2)  
The Study Plan for the Primary Stage

Subject	First year	Second year	Third year	Fourth year	Fifth year	Sixth year
Islamic Education	4	4	4	4	4	4
Arabic Language and Calligraphy	11	11	11	11	7	7
English Language	-	-	-	-	4	4
Mathematics	6	6	6	6	5	5
Civics	-	-	-	3	1	1
History	-	-	-	-	2	2
Geography	-	-	-	-	2	2
Social and Moral Education	1	1	1	1		
Science	4	4	4	3	3	3
Agricultural Education	-	-	-	1	1	1
Art Education	2	2	2	2	1	1
Physical Education	3	3	3	2	2	2
Music and Anthems	1	1	1	1	1	1
Family Education	-	-	-	-	1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>34</b>

Notes:

First: Double-shift schools follow the above-mentioned plan.

Second: Two class periods are allotted to agricultural education in rural schools, provided that the second class period is taken from science class periods in the fourth, fifth and sixth classes.

Third: Christianity is taught two class periods a week in schools where the majority of students are Christians.

Fourth: Students practice extracurricular activities in the practical, artistic and athletic fields according to a schedule to be prepared for this purpose.

Table No. (3)  
The Study Plan for the Intermediate Stage

Subject	First year	Second year	Third year
Islamic Education	3	3	3
Arabic Language	6	6	6
English Language	6	5	5
History	2	2	2
Geography	2	2	2
Civics	1	1	1
Mathematics	5	5	5
Algebra	-	-	3
Geometry	-	-	2
General Science	4	-	-
Chemistry	-	2	2
Physics	-	2	2
Biology	-	2	-
Man and Human Heal	-	-	2
Art Education	2	1	1
Physical Education and Military Training	2	2	2
Total	33	33	33
Family Education for Girls	1	1	1
Total	34	34	34

*Notes:*

First: Double-shift schools follow the above-mentioned plan.

Second: Evening schools follow the same plan except for the omission of physical education and military training periods.

Third: Two class periods are allotted to practical activities in the schools applying the vocational arts sections experiment.

Fourth: Students practise extracurricular activities in the scientific, educational, social, literary, artistic, athletic, agricultural and industrial fields according to a schedule to be prepared for this purpose.

**Table No. (4)**  
**The Study Plan for the Preparatory Stage**

Subject	4th year General	5th year Literary	6th year Library	5th year Scientific	6th year Scientific
Islamic Education	3	3	3	3	3
Arabic Language	5	8	8	4	4
Kurdish Language	-	2	-	2	
English Language	5	6	6	5	5
History	2	3	3		
Geography	2	3	3		
Sociology	-	2	-	-	-
Economics	-	2	3		
Mathematics	3	2	2		~5
Chemistry	3			4	4
Physics	3	-	-	4	4
Biology	3			4	4
Physical Education, Military Training and Civil Defense	1	2	1	2	1
Art Education	1	1	1	1	1
National Education	1	1	1	1	1
Total	32	35	31	36	33
Family Education For Girls	1	1	1	1	1
Health Education For Girls	1	1	-	1	
Total	34	37	32	38	33

*Notes:*

First: Double-shift schools follow the above-mentioned plan.

Second: Evening schools follow the same plan except for the omission of physical education class periods and adding them to Arabic language class periods.

Third: Students practice extracurricular activities in the scientific, educational, social and practical fields according to a schedule to be prepared for this purpose.

Fourth: One class period is allotted to national education and added to the study plan of sixth and fifth classes (scientific and literary).

## **II- MAJOR QUALITATIVE AREAS IN THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM**

The Ministry makes constant efforts to develop the educational system through provision of various effective educational services which contribute to the achievement of the objectives of the educational process. These services cover various areas, the most important of which are:

### **2-1 The Great National Religious Campaign for Teaching the Holy Quran:**

In the light of the instructions of H.E. Leader-President Saddam Hussein (God save him), the Ministry of Education has undertaken to provide the prerequisites for the implementation of the National Religious Campaign for teaching and interpreting the Holy

Quran. The Campaign is based on principles and beliefs derived from the Holy Quran and Sunna (the Prophet Mohammad's sayings and doings) which reflect genuine Arab-Islamic values and contribute to building up a new society. The Campaign covers all classes, i. e. starting from the first primary class and ending in the sixth preparatory class.

The Ministry has laid down a plan for the teaching and understanding of the Holy Quran which involves the following objectives:

- A- Good understanding of the Holy Quran which develops the pupil's language, improves his pronunciation, encourages sound thinking, and protects him against delinquencies.
- B- Focusing on values and ways of coping with life which contribute to the physical, moral, and spiritual development of the child's personality.
- C- Developing the skills of primary and secondary school teachers of Islamic Education so as make them effective elements in achieving the ultimate objectives of the Campaign.
- D- Developing pre-service education of primary and secondary school teachers of Islamic Education so that they may acquire essential skills for effective teaching of the subject.
- E- Quantitative development of educational and specialized supervisors in Islamic Education and qualitative improvement of their performance so that they may serve as leaders, advisors, and models for teachers of Islamic Education.
- F- Following up the process of teaching Islamic Education and the Holy Quran, evaluating relevant curricula and activities as well as the performance of those concerned with Islamic Education such as primary and secondary school teachers and headmasters of schools
- G- Specifying proper activities for promoting Islamic Education and teaching the Holy Quran, particularly (AL-Khatma) - recital of the entire Quran - and requirements of carrying out such activities.
- H- Motivating students to recite the entire Quran, understand its meaning, memorize as many chapters (suras) of the Quran as possible, for the purpose of developing the student's language, improving his pronunciation, encouraging sound thinking and protecting him against delinquencies.
- I- Endeavouring to ensure closer co-operation between the Ministry and its educational institutions and other social organizations in order to achieve the objectives of teaching Islamic Education and the Holy Quran.

## **2-2 Educational Supervision:**

Educational supervision is concerned with the development of the various aspects of the educational process. It undertakes all types of supervisory activities including class visits' educational workshops, seminars and training courses, according to the actual needs of the administrative and teaching staffs. The total number of supervisors in Iraq amounts to (1577) of whom are (503) specialized supervisors who undertake supervision over secondary schools and pre-service teacher training institutes. The remaining (1074) are

educational supervisors who undertake supervision over primary schools and kindergartens.

### **2-3 Educational Counseling:**

The Higher Committee For Educational Counseling and Vocational Guidance in the Ministry undertakes the responsibility of educational counselling. Sub-committees are formed at the provincial level for the same purpose.

Besides, there is a specialized consultative committee to offer technical advice to counsellors. Educational counselling aims at finding solutions for the problems a student may face in the school, as well as helping him to select his future profession in accordance with his inclinations, capacities and aptitudes, and in conformity with society's needs and orientations. Educational counselling services cover (140) intermediate and preparatory schools.

### **2- 4 Social Counselling:**

The Ministry of Education has provided this new type of service by appointing social counsellors in the city of Baghdad, on an experimental basis. This experiment is regularly evaluated, continually developed and expanded according to mid - term and long - term plans which extend over the years of the educational plan (1992/1993-2005/2006).

### **2- 5 Educational TV:**

The Educational TV aims at providing new educational experiences and fostering educational concepts and tendencies through educational and cultural programmes prepared and presented by specialized scientific committees. It was introduced in Iraq in 1977. Later on, it was widely used in the various areas of education at all educational levels.

### **2-6 Teaching Aids:**

Teaching aids aim at supporting textbooks with reliefs, transparencies, illustrations, slides and graphs. The Ministry endeavours to provide schools with teaching aids as well as science and language labs. It undertakes to improve and diversify teaching aids, and also supply equipment to the productive centres in the governorates so as to meet schools' needs

### **2-7 School Libraries:**

The Ministry pays special attention to developing school libraries. The Ministry also endeavours to apply the experiment of the comprehensive library-which includes educational technology and teaching aids in addition to references and books- in a number of schools, as a preliminary step to a wider application later on. School libraries amount to (10813).

### **2-8 School and General Examinations:**

School and general examinations aim at measuring and evaluating students' achievement. Evaluation and examination techniques are periodically revised and developed by a specialized technical committee. School examinations are devoted to measure students' performance throughout the year. The Ministry also holds three general examinations:

- 1) at the primary level: to qualify graduates for admission to the secondary level (intermediate education).
- 2) at the intermediate level: to qualify graduates for admission to the various branches of the preparatory level.
- 3) at the- preparatory level: which terminates with a certificate qualifying its holder to pursue postsecondary education or join the labour market.

## **2- 9 School Activities:**

The Ministry is concerned with improving the school activities and encouraging the athletic movement so as to ensure integration among these activities, with a view to realizing the educational objectives. Such activities cover all sorts of extra-curricular programmes, including cultural and scientific activities, school picnics, as well as athletic, scouting, artistic, musical and theatrical activities. These activities aim at fostering creativity among students. The Ministry is keen on participating in artistic, scientific and scouting activities as well as artistic exhibitions at Arab and international level';

## **2-10 Special Education:**

The Ministry takes special care of slow-learners and students with special learning difficulties, to develop their personalities and abilities so as to enable them keep up with their normal school mates, through opening special classes, annexed to certain primary schools in all governorates, and supplying them with adequate equipment, furniture, teaching aids, and special tests.

There is a gradual increase in the number of these classes. Their total number (grades 1-4) amounts to (460) classes to which (574) teachers are recruited to teach (3705) pupils.

## **2-11 School Health Services:**

School health institutions undertake the responsibility of providing students with health education and basic health services so as to protect them from diseases and improve health conditions in the school environment. Desirous of bringing up healthy citizens capable of shouldering the responsibility of building up the society, the Ministry of Education co-operates with the Ministry of Health to check up students periodically to identify pathological cases in order to offer early treatment and prevention.

## **III - DEVELOPMENT OF EDUCATION (1993/1994-1994/1995)**

### **3- 1 Quantitative Development of the Educational System.**

Tables Nos. (5) and (6) indicate the quantitative development in kindergartens, primary, secondary, vocational and post-secondary education.

During the year 1994/1995, the total number of students at all levels of both general and vocational education amounted to (4690884). During the same year, the total number of primary and secondary school teachers amounted to (198506).

**Table No. (5)**  
**Number of Pupils/Students and Members of Teaching Personnel by Sex and Educational Level**  
**for the Year (1994 / 1995)**

Year	Number of pupils/Students			Base Year	% Increase	Number of Members of Teaching Personnel			Base Year	% Increase
	1994/1995	1994/1995	1994/1995			1994/1995	1994/1995	1994/1995		
Sex/Educational Level	Males	Females	Total	1991/1992		Males	Females	Total	1991/1992	
Kindergartens	50108	47373	97481	83459	85.6	-	5323	5323	4949	93
Primary Education	1861963	1466330	3328293	3239316	97.3	47106	10834Q	155446	135562	87.2
Secondary Education	687024	418721	1105745	1064512	96.3	25102	31141	56243	46499	82.7
Vocational Education	95506	29143	124649	137315	110.2	4776	5040	9816	9421	96
Teachers' Institutes	14183	20533	34716	36806	106.0	973	1038	2011	2075	103.2
Total	2708784	1982100	4690884	4561408	97.2	77957	150882	228839	198506	86.7

Note: Data concerning the Autonomous Region for the year (1990/1991) were added.

**Table No. (6)**  
**Number of Schools by Sex and Educational Level for the Year**  
**(1994/1995)**

Sex / Educational Level	Males	Females	Co-educational	Total	Base Year 1991/1992*	% Increase
Kindergartens			637	637	641	-0.6
Primary Education	998	753	7206	8957	8879	0.9
Secondary Education	1341	1013	596	2950	2764	6.7
Vocational Education	138	96	5	309	291	6.2
Teachers' Institutes	19	21	7	47	50	-6.0
Total	2496	1883	8521	12900	12625	2.2

Note: Data concerning the Autonomous Region for the year (1990/1991) were added.

### 3-2 New Trends in Educational Policy:

The Ministry of Education has continued to implement its educational programmes during 1993/1994 - 1994/1995 in the light of the educational policy derived from the State's social and political philosophy:

1. Developing the qualitative aspects of the educational policy according to the methods of scientific and educational research.
2. Continuing to implement the Great National Religious Campaign for teaching and interpretation of the Holy Quran, preparing Islamic Education textbooks and chapters o,

the Holy Quran (recital and interpretation) for all educational levels, as well as organizing seminars and symposia on the Religious Campaign, issuing instructions and circulars which inform teaching staff and administrations of schools on proper methods of teaching Islamic Education. Islamic Education is introduced in the general examinations at the intermediate and preparatory levels and is considered a basic subject of school curricula.

3. Continuing to implement the Compulsory Education Law in order to achieve the principle of equal opportunities for all, in accordance with the strategy of Arab educational development, towards introducing basic education afterwards.
4. Continuing the development and diversification of secondary education in both its academic and vocational streams according to students' abilities and interests with a view to achieving the principle of sound educational and vocational orientation.
5. Continuing to lay down educational short-term, medium-term and long-term plans (1995 - 2006).
6. Paying due attention to rural education and underprivileged groups, specially in villages and densely populated areas, as well as providing education for girls, juveniles and adults. Moreover, special care is devoted to slow - learners through increasing the number of special classes affiliated to primary schools.
7. Making use of educational technology and mass media in developing the various aspects of the educational process, as well as using them widely in training programmes and self-education.
8. Setting programmes which foster scientific skills and tendencies, develop the abilities of gifted students and create scientific awareness through curricula and textbooks.
9. Continuing the development of curricula for all educational levels, teaching methods, and audio-visual aids, by applying scientific and evaluative techniques and modern technology.
10. Continuing to develop administrative work techniques in educational fields by means of applying scientific research methods, making use of modern technology and adopting an incentive remuneration system for administrative and educational staff.
11. Continuing to develop evaluation and examination techniques according to new trends in education.
12. Continuing to develop the educational counseling system and extend its services in the intermediate and preparatory schools, so as to guarantee the best guidance for students and proper solutions for their problems according to scientific, educational and psychological methods.
13. Paying more attention to the experiment of teaching foreign languages (French, Russian and Spanish) in addition to the English language so as to make use of world experiments through co-operation and exchange of expertise with developed countries.
14. Pursuing efforts to strengthen Arab and international cooperation in the area of education, support Arab and international organizations, abide by their resolutions and recommendations, and respond to the needs of brotherly and friendly countries.

### **3-3 Educational Innovations:**

The Ministry of Education is pursuing efforts to develop the educational system to meet the demands of change within the framework of the educational and social philosophy. This is achieved through updating the system by means of introducing new experiments and trends which cover different areas, including curricula and textbooks, methodology, laboratories, teacher education and training, educational supervision and examinations.

The major guidelines of innovative trends are as follows:

1. Integrating education with development in all sectors, as well as relating education to the objectives of society.
2. Emphasizing the productive aspect of education and stressing the value of work.
3. Updating curricula, teaching methods and teaching aids as well as relating curricula to the environment and society.
4. Encouraging field and applied studies.
5. Diversifying secondary education and decreasing the differences between academic and applied studies to achieve comprehensive and integral education.
6. Expanding vocational and technical education so as to meet the requirements of the development plans for trained technical cadres
7. Pursuing efforts to qualify primary school teachers at a university level and increase their in-service training opportunities.

In the light of these trends and in implementation of the Recommendations issued by the International Conference on Education, especially Recommendation No. (73) of 1981 on (Interaction between Education and Productive Work), the Ministry has undertaken, through its annual qualitative conferences and specialized scientific symposia to translate these trends into projects aimed at updating the educational system and experimenting with new models of education based on sound, scientific principles, evaluating their results, and universalizing successful experiments.

The major educational innovation projects which the Ministry continues to implement and develop are:

1. The project of vocational education sections which aims at strengthening integration between academic and vocational education. These sections were attached to intermediate schools as workshops where students can practise various types of practical activity which cover carpentry, metalwork, electricity, carpet weaving, ceramics, sewing and embroidery.
2. The project of establishing six schools for gifted students (of both sexes). Students with high marks are selected for these schools provided that they obtain good results in appropriate scientific and IQ tests. They study special curricula in addition to the formal curricula studied by ordinary students.

3. 'Nicer application of the educational counseling project in secondary schools on scientific, educational and objective bases which help students to face different problems, provide them with self-confidence, encourage them to participate in school activities and advise them on the studies and specializations best suited to their abilities, potentials and aptitudes.
4. Wider application of the computer project and introducing computers in the curricula of certain secondary schools as a subject and aid in teaching and learning. Appropriate measures are taken to train the cadres and provide the essential requirements for a wider application of the project and the realization of its objectives.
5. Apply the basic education project with a view to unifying primary and intermediate education into a nine-year educational stage.
6. Continuing to apply the holistic approach project in primary schools. The project aims at teaching beginners how to read and write according to a holistic approach which begins with 'wholes' and ends with 'parts', conforming to the natural sequence of the child's thinking, so as to help him guess the meanings of words from the context and achieve speed and fluency in reading.
7. Due attention is paid to the special education project in primary schools which aims at raising the efficiency of the educational process, and developing the abilities of slow learning children so as to help them keep up with their normal class-mates within the same age group and school level, through offering them effective care and specialized services.
8. Due attention is paid to Foreign Languages Teaching Project to help secondary school students acquire basic language skills in foreign languages (French, Russian and Spanish), in addition to English, so as to utilize these skills to fulfill the needs of post-secondary education level as well as prepare qualified manpower for the development process.
9. Expanding the Project of the Integrated Experiences Unit in kindergartens which aims at removing the boundaries between school subjects and subjecting children to integrated educational situations which arouse their interests and increase their energy so as to ensure the full development of the child's personality in all aspects (physical, psychological, social, and mental), taking into consideration individual differences.
10. Paying due attention to Unesco Affiliated Schools Project which aims at devising new effective teaching methods, techniques and materials for the Female Teacher Training Institute in Baghdad - related to certain topics in the area of education for international understanding, establishing communication and relations between schools in various countries and encouraging research work in the area of international education and guiding principles.
11. Paying due attention to the Comprehensive Library Project which aims at converting the school library into an information centre through the addition of audio-visual aids to the books and publications so as to prepare students for living in a changing world.
12. Expanding the Teacher-Supervisor Project which aims at developing educational supervision through relying on highly experienced teachers who undertake to follow up their colleagues in order to evaluate and improve their scientific and professional

performance and thus help them develop their creative and innovative abilities and actively participate in developing the educational process.

13. Pursuing efforts in the area of educational television so as improve the educational process, raise the educational and cultural standards of students and teachers, and also provide guidance for parents and those concerned with the educational process.
14. Applying the experiment of accelerated study of fast learners as a means of observing individual differences and exploiting the exceptional abilities of this group with a view to helping them complete their educational programme faster than other students according to specific criteria.
15. Continuing to develop methods of evaluation and examinations through a qualitative development of questions, and involving teachers in devising questions within a comprehensive project of test items bank, according to various levels and school subjects.

The following table contains statistical data related to the educational innovations by number of schools, teachers, target students.

Table No. (7)

## Educational Innovations for the School Year 1994/1995.

serial No.	Educational Innovations	No.of Schools Covered	No.of Teachers	No.of Target Students
1.	Vocational Education Sections	178	645	782B4
2.	Foreign Languages	52	1112	11157
3.	Computers	163	217	96396
4.	Gifted Students Schools	6	221	1809
5.	Comprehensive School	3	121	1441
6.	Holistic Approach	4014	9399	286781
7.	Integrated Experiences Unit Project	111	580	
8.	Special Education Classes	567	787	3830
9.	Educational Counselling	1140	1140	All Students
10.	Comprehonsive Library	270	270	
11.	Pioneer Industrial Schools	2	24	131
12.	Teacher-Headmastor-Supervisor	464	464	
13.	Basic Education	19	599	14117
14.	HandicraR Workshops	220	178	-
15.	Acceleration of Students	-	-	31

**3-4 Educational Research and Documentation:**

The Ministry pays special attention to educational research. A Centre for Educational Research and Studies was established to undertake- in co-operation with other educational bodies concerned - the responsibility of conducting research projects, studies and reports.

The Centre is also responsible for developing and orientating educational research to the service of the educational plans and programmes, with a view to finding proper solutions for the problems encountered.

Within this context, studies were conducted on various topics for the purpose of improving the different aspects of the educational process. These studies were highly effective in developing educational, administrative and technical methods, as well as keeping pace with new educational trends, drawing up qualitative plans and making use of their findings in dealing with the problems facing the educational process.

Here follows titles of major studies and research projects:

#### **A. Studies and Research Projects Carried out in 1993/1994.**

- Evaluation of Training Programmes for the Religious Campaign for Teaching and Understanding the Holy Quran.
- A Study of the Causes of Female Dropout from the Primary School.
- Education of the Rural Woman in Iraq.
- The Preparatory Schools for Islamic Studies.
- The National Report on the Development of Education (1994).
- Parallel Education.
- Educational Policy in Iraq.

#### **B- Research Projects and Studies Carried out in 1994/1995.**

- Impact of the Blockade on the Educational Performance of Primary and Secondary School Students.
- The Needs of Preparatory Level Students under the Economic Blockade.
- Features of Education in the Twenty-first Century.
- Evaluation of the Experiment of Considering General Education Students Conditioned in Three School Subjects.
- Criteria of Assessing the Performance Efficiency of the Educational Supervisor.
- Personality Traits in Normal and Abnormal Youths.
- Assessment of the Experiment of Schools for Gifted Students.
- Evaluation of Teaching the Computer at the Preparatory Level in Iraq.
- Causes of Variation in Success Rates between Males and Females at the Preparatory Level.
- A Follow-up Study of Accelerated Students in Iraq.
- The Psychological Perspective of Undesirable Behavioral Phenomena in Youths.
- Accrediting Annual Achievement and Written Examinations for Third and Fourth Primary Classes.
- A Comparative Study of General Examinations Results of the Preparatory Stage for the Period 1985/1986 - 1994/1995.

#### **C- Documentation and Translation:**

##### **1. Publications in the Area of Documentation and**

##### **Translation Issued in 1993/1994:**

- Directory of Educational Theses (1968-1991).
- Articles in Educational and Vocational Guidance (Translation).
- Islam and Environmental Protection (Translation).
- Innovations in Science and Technology Education (Translation).

- Articles in Literacy and Adult Education (Translation).

## **2. Publications in the Area of Documentation and**

### **Translation Issued in 1994/1995.**

- Educational Theses' Abstracts (1985 -1989).
- Education in China (Translation).
- Articles in Environmental Education (Translation).
- Failure: An Obstacle Facing Education for All.
- A Report on the World Olympic Summit of Indigenous Cultures for Peace and Development (Translation).
- The Organizational Structure of the Ministry of Education.
- A Report on the Intercountry Workshop on Aids education in Schools (Translation).
- A Report on the International Decade and International Day for the Prevention of Natural Disasters (Translation).
- Basic Education: Challenge and Response (Translation).

### **3-5 Teaching Methods and Techniques:**

The Ministry of Education has undertaken to develop and diversify teaching methods, make use of modern techniques which help achieve the full development of the student's personality, observe individual differences among students, invest educational innovations to stimulate them to acquire more knowledge, skills and attitudes, acquaint them with the contents of their natural and social environment, and exploit their knowledge and skills to build up their self-confidence and develop their deductive and critical thinking.

Such goals were achieved by resorting to various techniques such as preparation of test batteries, making use of teaching aids, laboratories, educational technologies and teachers' guides, encouraging students to adopt the problem-solving approach and conduct both individual and collective simplified research projects, encouraging discussion and exchange of ideas and opinions, providing students with opportunities to visit productive projects and factories as well as investing broadcasting and TV programmes, tapes, posters, maps and other teaching aids, to bring school subjects closer to students' comprehension and relate them to everyday life.

### **3-6 Non-formal Education:**

Due attention was devoted to formal and non-formal education as forming component parts of the network of educational institutions in the country, within the framework of lifelong education.

Non-formal education, which mainly takes the form of parallel education, relies on the following variables and factors:

- (a) Following up technological progress and finding new educational channels to face this challenge.
- (b) Meeting the requirements of intellectual revival and cultural renewal of social life and human behaviour through modernizing cultural and social institutions.
- (c) Adding flexibility to the educational system and formal education.

- (d) Expanding the scope of vocational training through organizing successive specialized courses.
- (e) Developing organs of mass media and investing them to support educational and training programmes.

Within this framework, the channels of non-formal education may be defined as follows:

1. Juvenile classes which provide for children above ten (who are not admitted to primary schools) but not more than fifteen. Such classes help achieve the principle of equal educational opportunities for all. Duration of study in juvenile schools is four years during which students study the primary school curricula which include practical and theoretical elements. Graduates of juvenile schools are qualified to pursue their studies or to enter the labour market.
2. Private institutes, supervised by the Ministry of Education, which offer vocational courses and provide training opportunities for those who desire to learn a certain profession such as typewriting, sewing, hairdressing... etc.
3. Offering summer activities in schools during the summer vacation with a view to investing students' capacities and leisure time in special centres which organize various programmes.
4. Developing training centres within the framework of women's organizations as well as farmers' and workers' mass organisations through offering cultural and health education programmes.
5. Lifelong educational activities offered by training centres, workshops and vocational sections in vocational schools which aim at expanding the citizens' involvement in vocational, industrial and agricultural activities, acquainting them with the latest developments in these areas, and providing them with basic skills which serve the development plan in the country.

Non-formal education adopts various means and techniques such as television, broadcasting, newspaper, public libraries, cultural and religious centres, trade unions, cinemas, theatres, clubs, women's education and health education institutions, self-education programmes, educational technologies... etc.

### **3-7 Pre-service and In-service Teacher Training:**

The Ministry of Education has always endeavoured to improve teacher training so as to keep up with the economic, social and cultural changes which necessitate changes in the various roles of teachers.

Due attention was devoted to professional preparation of teachers - in teacher training institutes and colleges of education-through qualified training of all types of educational cadres, improving their skills and increasing their efficiency. The major developments in the area of teacher education include:

1. Converting five teachers' institutes into teachers' colleges at the beginning of the academic year (1992/1993).
2. Introducing special courses of Islamic education in teachers' institutes and colleges.
3. Maintaining, developing and activating teaching practice programmes in pre-service teacher training institutions.

The Ministry was also concerned with in-service

training programmes with a view to improving the efficiency of teachers and thus increasing the effectiveness of the educational system. This was achieved by means of offering training opportunities to teachers, providing them with new experience through acquainting them with innovations in the various fields of education and science. Here follows some major achievements in this area:

- a. Promoting the Institute for Educational Development and Training as well as pre-service and in-service/training departments in the governorates, through providing human, financial and material resources essential for the teacher training process.
- b. Diversifying types and methods of training and adopting modern techniques, as well as establishing co-operation and co-ordination with scientific and professional societies, trade unions, universities and training centres.
- c. Adopting innovational projects in teacher training such as training by correspondence, training pamphlets project, and training by video.
- d. Developing provincial handiwork and scientific centres.
- e. Making use of modern evaluation and techniques to increase effectiveness of programmes.
- f. Establishing strong links between the follow-up training programmes and the educational situation in schools.

Table No. (8)  
Training Activities of Teachers, Supervisors, Educational  
Specialists and Administrators during (1994/1995)

Area of activity	1994		1995	
	Number of courses and seminars	Number of trainees	Number of courses and seminars	Number of trainees
Kindergartens	43	795	37	1023
Primary Education	904	30719	1017	35470
Secondary Education	504	13702	625	19013
Vocational Education	11	238	9	151
Educational and Specialized Supervision	10	208	11	242
Personnel	20	439	12	338
<b>Total</b>	<b>1492</b>	<b>46101</b>	<b>1711</b>	<b>56237</b>

It is worth mentioning here that certain measures were taken to improve the teacher's social and economic status.

### **3-8. International and Regional Co-operation in the Area of Education:**

Great efforts were made in Iraq to achieve international and regional co-operation in the area of education. The Ministry has undertaken to strengthen educational, cultural and scientific co-operation with Arab and foreign educational institutions through participation in educational symposia, meetings and conferences organized by UNESCO, ISESCO, ALECSO, UNICEF and other international organizations concerned with the educational process.

The Ministry has benefited from innovative trends published in educational documents and also from foreign expertise, particularly in the areas of informatics, curricula, evaluation, as well as pre-service and in-service teacher training.

## **IV- Major Problems Facing the Educational System and its Future Trends.**

### **4-1 Problems Facing the Educational System:**

The educational system in Iraq faces a number of inter-related problems which hinder the achievement of its objectives. Perhaps the most important problems are:

- a) The problem of providing and maintaining adequate school buildings which meet the requirements of quantitative and qualitative development in the educational system.
- b) The problem of providing adequate number of teachers to meet the increasing need for education at various school levels.
- c) The problem of providing instructional materials and prerequisites, particularly stationery and school furniture.
- d) The problem of providing prerequisites for curricula, teaching aids and educational technologies which require sufficient financial resources.
- e) The problem of developing evaluation and examination techniques through introducing modern technologies, as it requires substantial funds as well as a high degree of awareness and enthusiasm on the part of teachers.

These problems and obstacles were due to the unjust economic blockade imposed on Iraq as well as the great damage inflicted by the treacherous thirty-state aggression (1991) which aimed at destroying the infrastructure and vital facilities

All this aggravated the difficulties which face the educational system. The total value of the damage sustained by the educational institutions is estimated at I.D. (214, 666, 319,-) (Iraq dinar-3.20888 US Dollars).

Despite the negative consequences and effects of aggression and blockade which had its toll on the educational situation, Iraq is determined to pursue its educational plan quantitatively and qualitatively.

### **4-2 Major Trends and Prospects in the Educational Sector:**

Taking into account the current and future variables as well as the conditions, available resources and the nature of problems and challenges facing the educational process, the Ministry has defined a number of future trends for the educational sector, the most significant of which are:

1. Pursuing the implementation of the National Religious Campaign to teach the Holy Quran and providing essential resources to ensure the success of the Campaign and achieve its objectives in correcting students' behaviour through reciting the Holy Quran, understanding its meanings and abiding by Islamic divine values and laws for human behaviour.

Due attention will also be devoted to the development of Islamic education curricula and programmes so as to ensure promoting the students' spiritual and ethical values.

2. Drawing up clearly defined educational strategy and objectives, and translating them into educational plans which take into consideration variable factors and conditions, and ensure the development of the objectives, structure and techniques of the educational system.

3. Preparing educational plans for all school levels up to the academic year (2005t2006) which include new developmental projects conformable to modern variables in the educational system.

4. Developing school curricula so that they may keep up with technological, scientific and social progress, as well as paying due attention to science and mathematics curricula since they represent the starting point to overall cultural progress.

5. Raising teacher education to the university level through establishing teachers' colleges which also undertake in-service teacher training by making use of modern techniques in this field.

6. Diversifying and integrating secondary education with vocational education so as to achieve integration between them, and opening channels between these two types of education as well as establishing links with other forms of education so as to ensure creation of good citizenship.

7. Developing educational research and conducting interdisciplinary and multi-disciplinary studies and research projects through involving researchers of various specializations in the implementation of these studies and research projects.

8. Improving administrative and technical performance by utilizing modern machinery and expanding the use of computers and preparation of software which contribute to the development of the educational system.

9. Endeavouring to improve the teacher's economic, social and scientific status as well as motivating and rewarding highly efficient teachers so that they may perform their various roles effectively, and function as educators and social leaders.

10. Paying due attention to gifted and talented students through developing means of detecting their abilities and determining methods of promoting their talents and capacities.

11. Paying due attention to the process of evaluation in various fields, particularly in relation to educational programmes, innovative projects, students' achievement,... etc, so that the process of evaluation becomes a vital factor in developing work and achieving the educational objectives.

12. Endeavouring to develop educational and social counselling and vocational guidance with a view to investing students' capacities, solving their problems and promoting correct social behavioural patterns among them.
13. Developing informatics and documentation systems as well as educational and scientific information systems, through establishing data bases to ensure circulation and exchange of information.
14. Endeavouring to promote the efficiency of educational supervision for the purpose of improving students' scientific level and developing teachers' skills.
15. Promoting the role and increasing the effectiveness of parent- teacher councils.