

## PREFACE

THIS volume contains a selection of the papers presented at the Middle East Regional Conference of the International Association for Research in Income and Wealth which was held at Istanbul from 24th to 29th August, 1962. The topics covered in the Conference related to methodological and conceptual aspects of national income estimates, national accounts and related aggregates, estimates of capital formation and the uses of national accounts in development planning in Middle Eastern countries.

The Conference devoted considerable time to the discussion of problems of income estimation in U.A.R., Turkey, Pakistan, Jordan, Iran and Syria. Many of the papers included in this volume describe the difficulties experienced in the estimation of income in these countries because of the paucity of data, and explain the methods and procedures adopted to overcome these difficulties. The discussion of these problems will be of special interest to those who are engaged in the study of income and wealth in countries where similar difficulties have to be faced. These papers also indicate that in all these countries considerable efforts are made to improve the income estimates and that these estimates are now increasingly used for policy formulation.

The second topic related to the problems of the measurement of capital formation in these countries. One of the major aims of economic policy in developing countries is to accelerate the pace of capital formation and to raise the level of investment in the economy. Again, the paucity of data is a major impediment in estimating capital formation in these countries. Agriculture is still the mainstay of their economies and the estimation of non-monetary capital formation in this sector presents a number of problems. Some papers have raised the point that in developing countries the concept of capital formation should not be restricted to physical asset formation but should be enlarged to include expenditures which lead to increased productivity such as expenditure on research, social welfare, village development, etc.

The use of national income and its related sub-totals in the context of planning and economic development has now assumed a crucial importance in almost all the countries of the Middle

East. These estimates are required to obtain a detailed knowledge of the structure and behaviour of the economy and, as such, the Planning Departments are the main users of these estimates. The discussions at the Conference highlighted the various uses of income analysis in the planning of economic development in different countries.

This was the first occasion for a meeting of workers engaged in the estimation of national income in various countries of the Middle East. The benefits of this meeting have been manifold. The Conference provided a forum for the workers in the field of national income estimation to exchange views and benefit from the experiences of other research workers. It gave a unique opportunity to the participants to learn what was being done in the field of income analysis in the neighbouring countries. It stimulated their interest in the work and helped in establishing fruitful contacts with other workers.

TAUFIQ M. KHAN

Karachi,  
May, 1963.