

which an individual has evidenced flexibility and staying power in stress situations in the past may be an important indicator of post relocation adaptation.

- c) The examination of expectations of self and others within the new environment in an effort towards bringing such expectations into greater synchrony with future realities. The extent to which the older immigrant will be able to modify his/her expectational set may be a determinant of whether he/she will feel frustrated in not having accomplished what he set out to do, or satisfied in what he/she has attained.
- d) Advice, and instrumental assistance with respect to exploring those diverse environmental settings in Israel (urban, rural;

age segregated, integrated; private, collective, and so forth) which are most congruent with personal needs and resources.

Given that most older Jews do not relocate in Israel in order to die, but rather to live as actively engaged individuals, pre- and post-relocation counseling which adopts the objective of bringing individual expectations—and resources—into harmony with the Israeli reality would ensure the maintenance of continuity of self and mental health in the older immigrant embarking on a major life adventure.

Twenty-five Years Ago in this Journal

Ultimately, of course, I would like to see the elimination entirely of budget committees, with their "hearings" and "representations" from functional agencies. I would like to visualize a continuous communal planning body, in which lay and professional leaders of agencies and federations and chests meet together, as peers, to wrestle through the problems produced by the fact that all needs continually out-strip our capacity to serve and finance. I would envision such a body as arriving at decisions each year on priorities and long- and short-term goals through the dynamics of the *group process*, rather than through negotiation and pressure power. This is admittedly a goal for the future, but I think it will be achieved one day if we are willing to start in the right direction now.

ROBERT SLAWSON
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Separating Maintenance from Social Service: An Israeli Case Study

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While professionals felt that separation (between financial support and personal services) was responsible for increased accuracy and fairness in determining financial eligibility, they were uncertain if separation was always in the best interest of the client.

IN the early 1970's Alvin Schorr observed that the American government was creating a duplex society in which the government deals with the economic life of the poor under one system and that of the non-poor under the other.¹ This has been the case in both pre- and post-State periods in Israel.² The poor undergo scrutiny through means-tested programs, placing into question the role of progressive social policy in the modern welfare state.

Income maintenance and personal services have been within the purview of welfare agencies since the early 1930's. A decade ago, separation between them was initiated in a number of select welfare agencies, and by 1980 a law separating financial aid from services was enacted.³ This historic change suggested that eligibility and treatment were to be given independently, thus enforcing the view that benefits are rights which are not conditioned on behavioral or service requirements.

The separation of maintenance from social services will be the focus of this inquiry. Its historical, ideological, and legislative dimensions will be explored. In addition, we will examine client and

professional response to this major policy change in Israeli society.

The Ideology of Separation

It has been suggested that "essential to an understanding of the separation issue is a recognition that the policy of separation represents no less than a fundamental departure from traditional welfare ideology, policy, and practice."⁴ Recipients should be able to define their situation in their own terms and be provided with services only if they desire them.⁵ The value of self-determination and improvement in the quality of both income maintenance and social service delivery are central.

In Israel the notion that client benefits are a matter of right has been alien to the country's deep ideological commitment to the work ethic. From the early development of social services in this country, income maintenance and treatment were inseparable. Preferring financial assistance was left to professional judgement. The rationale for this approach was based on the assumption that treating the individual's underlying problem could, in time, eliminate financial dependence.⁶

¹ Alvin Schorr, "Alternatives in Income Maintenance," *Social Work*, 11, No. 3 (July, 1966), pp. 22-29.

² Ruben Schindler, "Welfare and Work: Israel as a Case Study," *Social Services Review*, 55, No. 4 (December, 1981), pp. 636-648.

³ "Chok Havtachat Hachnasa (Income Maintenance Law) 1980, *Sefer Hachukim*, 1980, pp. 30-38. In Hebrew.

⁴ George Hoshino, "Separating Maintenance from Social Service," *Public Welfare*, 30, No. 2 (Spring, 1972), p. 54.

⁵ Eveline Burns, "What's Wrong with Public Welfare," *Social Service Review*, 36 (June, 1962), pp. 111-112.

⁶ *Hasherut Hasoziale Beknesset Israel* (Social Services in the Jewish Community of Palestine),

The merging of treatment and assistance originated in and reinforced the position that individual need is rooted in pathology. In a sense, public welfare's moralistic poor-law heritage held the individual to blame for his own poverty and relegated the poor to the status of second-class citizens. In essence, public welfare policy was not moving in the direction of social security ideology which held that the need for income maintenance arises from social and economic factors inherent in industrial society.

The link between aid and service in this country was an outcome of the early pioneers' view that persons must toil to achieve nationhood. David Ben Gurion, Israel's first prime minister, stated that "not through money and not through benefits, but through our work will we earn our money."⁷ In the early post-State period a member of Parliament put it succinctly: "Social security means full employment, adequate manpower and the ability to work."⁸

In the contemporary context, Hoshino has expressed it in these terms:

... both the policy of disqualifying individuals whose acts contravene certain community or agency norms and the incorporation of various therapeutic and rehabilitative personal services are integral parts of maintenance programs.⁹

This view was integral to Israel's welfare structure until the early 1970's. Yet within a decade, legislation was enacted separating financial assistance from services.

Jerusalem: Department of Social Work of the Vaad Leumi, February, 1946, pp. 5-6. In Hebrew.

⁷ David Ben Gurion, "Hamilchama Behoser Avodah" (War Against Unemployment). *Kuntras*, 14, No. 17 (1927), p. 10. In Hebrew.

⁸ Mordechai Namir, MK, *Divre Haknesset* (Parliamentary Report), 11, February, 1952, p. 1262. In Hebrew.

⁹ George Hoshino, "Money and Morality: Income Security and Personal Social Services," *Social Work*, 1971.

The Rationale for Separation

Plans to separate income maintenance from services were proposed on numerous occasions in the 1970's. The rationale included a number of factors. To begin with, there was a large turnover of professional social workers in most public welfare offices, with nearly forty per cent of their time concentrated on clerical tasks related to income maintenance.¹⁰ It was suggested that social workers focus on service, with financial distribution delegated to eligibility workers. This argument paralleled the position taken by Hamilton on the American scene when she advocated relieving the social services from the "albatross of relief." She also noted that "the determination of eligibility for the basic maintenance grant and its efficient review would be carried out by trained civil servants."¹¹

Eligibility tied to service indeed limited the social workers' ability to carry out treatment in an effective manner. A study in one large public welfare agency in Jerusalem revealed marked discrepancies between population needs and stated policies, on the one hand, and the actual agency's performance, on the other. In spite of the ambiguity at the policy-making level, the agency function was to aid families to cope with stress and problems of everyday life. An examination of the bureau's actual service operations and clients' service consumption patterns found that the agency limited itself almost exclusively to providing income maintenance.¹²

¹⁰ Eliezer D. Jaffe, "The Social Work Establishment and Social Change in Israel," *Social Work*, 15, No. 2 (April 1970), pp. 104-109.

¹¹ Gordon Hamilton, "Separating Money Services," *Social Work*, 7 (January, 1962), pp. 2; 128.

¹² Riger-Shlonsky and Lotte Salzberger, "Welfare Services by Means of Welfare Bureaus," *Social Security* (December, 1975, 9-10), pp. 34-44. In Hebrew.

The authors concluded that the agency's professional personnel, all of whom were academically trained social workers, had assumed the powerful role of allocating material resources rather than exercising their professional skills. An additional need was that of achieving uniformity of practice in dispensing public aid.¹³ As regards the social workers, the Minister of Social Welfare noted:

I agree that it is impossible to burden the social workers with responsibility of distribution and the limited resources available without clear-cut eligibility criteria.¹⁴

Yet on the national level, the government was unable to expedite a united income policy in the 180 welfare bureaus because it lacked clear directives and guidelines.¹⁵

Separation, it was suggested, would also remove income maintenance from the municipalities, limiting use of political influence and resulting in more efficient and equitable administration as well as more dignified treatment of clients.¹⁶ It should also be noted that until the introduction of the income maintenance law there was a lack of clarity in the directives as to who could or should benefit. The directives forwarded to the municipalities by the Ministry of Social Welfare were only guidelines to be interpreted by social workers as they saw fit.

¹³ Eliezer D. Jaffe, "Separation in Jerusalem," *Public Welfare*, 31, No. 1 (Winter, 1973), pp. 33-38.

¹⁴ Michael Chazani, *Goals of the Ministry of Social Welfare Towards the 1973 Fiscal Year*, Jerusalem: Ministry of Social Welfare, 1974. In Hebrew.

¹⁵ Abraham Doron, *Marechet Hasaad Bmedinat Israel* (Social Welfare Policy in Israel), *International Relations*, No. 11 (Winter, 1977).

¹⁶ Abraham Doron, "Hareformah Behavtachat Kium Haachlusiah Mamezukah" (Income Maintenance Reform for Populations at Risk), *Economic Quarterly*, No. 25 (September, 1978), pp. 180-187. In Hebrew.

The interest in separation of maintenance and services (or treatment) was also politically expedient. Since the establishment of the State, the welfare portfolio has been in the hands of religious minority parties.¹⁷ Their ability to bring about major welfare changes was limited. The separation issue provided an opportunity for the Ministry to demonstrate leadership in welfare policy, serving the interest of clients and following the advice of most professionals.

By the mid-1970's a policy review by the Minister of Social Welfare called for appointing a task force to study separation.¹⁸ The working committees, composed of professional social workers, unanimously recommended separation.¹⁹ They suggested that "work in the welfare bureaus have [sic] to be based on a clear organizational separation between the treatment framework and income maintenance."²⁰ Freeing professionals from eligibility distribution would enable them to focus on treatment. By 1976, an increasing number of agencies were experimenting with separation, and by 1982 Israel's public welfare network had completely separated financial aid from treatment.²¹ The efficacy of separation will now be explored

¹⁷ The welfare portfolio from the very establishment of the State was held in the main by the *Mizrachi* party. They viewed religious life and a Socialist labor ideology as integrally related, serving as a coalition partner in almost all of the governments of Israel.

¹⁸ *Hamlazot Havadah Lebedikot Irgun Sherute Hasaad Hamekomim* (Recommendations of the Committee to Examine Local Welfare Services), Ministry of Social Welfare (December, 1975), pp. 1-62. In Hebrew.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

²⁰ Though income separation had commenced in agencies in the early 1970's, the formal completion took place in 1982 when welfare clients received public assistance with the National Insurance Institute.

²¹ It would be accurate to note that social welfare agencies retained their role in distributing in-kind services.

from the client and professional perspective.

The Client's View

Both in the United States and in Israel, the general view has favored separation.²² But, as Wyers has noted, for the United States experience "the extent to which separation of income maintenance from social services has successfully fulfilled its purpose has not been determined."²³ While there has been limited empirical research to determine the efficacy of separation in this country, a number of recent studies present some guidelines.

Access

Studying separation, Bar, Marcus and Shoham found that access presents a major problem for clients.²⁴ In post-separation, over 60 percent of 241 clients responded that they had no knowledge of where eligibility workers were located.²⁵ They were equally uncertain about review. In pre-separation, social workers and agency directors were seen as key helpers in deciding eligibility. In the new income maintenance arrangement, clients no longer had access to grant-review with support of professionals.

²² For example see Donald V. Fandetti, "Income Versus Service Strategies," *Social Work*, 27 (January, 1972), pp. 87-93; Hoshino, *Separating Maintenance*, *op. cit.*; Shirley Weber, "From Separation to a Turned-on Model of Services," *Social Casework*, 53 (December, 1972), pp. 593-603; Winifred Bell, "Too Few Services to Separate," *Social Work*, 28 (March, 1973), pp. 66-77.

²³ Norman L. Wyers, "Whatever happened to the Income Maintenance Line Worker," *Social Work*, 25 No. 4 (July, 1980), pp. 259-263.

²⁴ Chavivah Bar, Yehudah Marcus, Elanah Shoham, *Hashnataim Harishonot Shel Tochnit Hashimu* (The First Two Years of Income Separation). Jerusalem (April, 1980). In Hebrew.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 34.

No less important are clients' wishes to have a continuing relationship with social workers. Sixty-four per cent of clients indicated that they wanted professionals to visit them at home and meet with other family members. Bar and colleagues stressed that clients who sought help were:

... persons who lack basic sustenance such as food, clothing, and housing. The clients interviewed were often depressed and expressed difficulty in coping and functioning.²⁶

Indeed, most clients who come to welfare agencies are high-risk multi-problem families. Though clients indicated that eligibility workers discussed issues other than financial aid, only four percent were referred for professional help.²⁷

The problem of service utilization in post-separation may be further compounded because knowing services exist does not necessarily bring about their future use. A study by McDonald and Piliavin of A.F.D.C. recipients in America suggests that "strong knowledge manipulation failed to influence use."²⁸ Knowledge by itself will not bring clients to treatment. Furthermore, regardless of how effective eligibility workers are, their roles do not include that of expediting use of service. To modify this, McDonald and Piliavin call for "active case management and referral if people are going to find desired services."²⁹ But this crucial function is limited in practice.³⁰

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 58.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 59.

²⁸ Thomas P. McDonald and Irving Piliavin, "Impact of Separation on Community Social Service Utilization," *Social Service Review*, 55, No. 4 (December, 1981), pp. 628-635.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 634.

³⁰ In Israel, referrals by eligibility workers to social welfare agencies are both formal and informal. The formal part relates to an information sheet primarily concerned with accumulating data about income and work. The latter is arbitrary

Utilization of Social Services

Success of separation can be evaluated in the light of increased or decreased utilization of income and social services. A study conducted by Magdassi sampled 90 clients in three large welfare agencies who received income maintenance in pre- and post-separation periods.³¹ A similar group of clients were studied who had obtained financial assistance directly from the National Insurance Institute. Findings indicate that clients who had obtained assistance from welfare agencies prior to separation continued to seek treatment after separation (60%).³² Clients who obtained income maintenance through eligibility workers at the National Insurance Institute made a limited number of requests for services (20%).³³ These findings suggest that welfare recipients will favor combined and worker-initiated services. Magdassi's findings are interpreted in part to attribution theory, a conceptual framework also used by Piliavin and Gross studying separation.³⁴ Attribution theory suggests that the more supportive and ready workers are to facilitate the helping process, the more positive and frequent client response. From the client's perspective, request for help is

where the eligibility worker refers the client to treatment. The client is presented with this information and it is his choice to seek services: Personal interview with the eligibility unit in the National Insurance Institute, Ramat Gan, January 16, 1984. I am indebted to Anat Libik, Audrey Agasar, and Bat Sheba Edilstein.

³¹ Amie Magdassi, *The Relationship Between the National Insurance Institute Claimants and the Social Services Agency After the Separation*. Unpublished M. A. Dissertation, Tel Aviv University, October, 1981. In Hebrew.

³² *Ibid.*, p. 137.

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 138.

³⁴ Irving Piliavin and Allen E. Gross, "The Effects of Separation of Services and Income Maintenance on AFDC Recipients," *Social Service Review*, 51, No. 3 (1977).

equated with stigma.³⁵ One can conclude that in combined conditions

Workers may be seen . . . as concerned and not simply intrusive when they initiate appointments for service or assist recipients in grant and budget matters. . . . recipient requests for service may be further eased in the course of worker initiated contact because much of the effort and inconvenience in getting service started has already taken place. The recipient in effect is more able to request services "in passing."³⁶

Magdassi's findings appear to be very much in keeping with those of Piliavin and Gross, who noted that

The changes that have taken place in public welfare social service delivery under the term "separation" may have had several negative consequences. Specifically the findings indicate that under the circumstances of separation, recipients tend to reduce requests for services and to perceive service workers as less helpful.³⁷

The study of Bar and his colleagues also points to the importance of retaining links with a social worker. In post-separation, Bar and colleagues asked respondents: "Are you satisfied, now that the eligibility worker is responsible for financial assistance and the social worker for 'other matters?'" Over 90 percent indicated that they were happy with this arrangement.³⁸ Clients who had retained a relationship with their social workers emphasized the importance of treatment continuity. Clients who had lost contact with their social workers indicated that they sought help and support from eligibility workers beyond public assistance.³⁹

Professional Response

Professional response to separation was ascertained by in-depth interviews

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 392.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 393.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 404.

³⁸ Bar et al., *op. cit.*, p. 46.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 46-47.

of 18 professional social workers who were employed in both pre- and post-separation conditions.⁴⁰ All respondents except one favored separation. Effective case management, greater treatment opportunities, improved morale, were some of the consequences of separation. These findings should come as no surprise, since professionals initially had recommended separation. While professionals felt that separation was responsible for increased accuracy and fairness in determining financial eligibility, they were uncertain if separation was always in the best interest of the client. As one worker put it, "separation is good for the worker, for the agency, for the profession—but I'm uncertain about the client."⁴¹

A major concern centered on access, a response also expressed by clients themselves. In post-separation clients are required to seek eligibility in agencies outside their immediate community. In urban areas, recipients must now travel some distance to agencies and register for benefits, while in rural areas field annexes are available, often operated only twice a week. When review is instituted, extensive travel to agencies situated in the larger cities is required. The general feeling is summarized by a respondent who noted: "There are many clients who fall by the wayside." In addition, clients seeking public assistance are in the main multi-problem families who have neither the skills nor the motivation to seek aid without encouragement and support. And even when applications are processed, there is a question whether eligibility work-

ers can provide the therapeutic help needed.

Chaiklin and Frank have stated the matter in these terms:

There is a vast difference between knowing people's needs and offering them service and forcing them to take the service. . . . The evidence suggests that families who need service most are least likely to ask for it. They are also most likely to make up the permanent welfare population . . . Quick and efficient systems for diagnosis and referral are needed.⁴²

However, the issue raised by social workers was not limited to access. Of some concern were the advisory and advocacy roles.

In pre-separation there was control, perhaps powerful control, centered in the social worker. Well over 40 per cent of workers felt, however, that this was coupled with the advocacy function which was now missing. For poverty families and those of second and third generation, the advocacy role was particularly vital.

There were those who argued, however, that separation was instituted to achieve fairness and accuracy in determining eligibility. They suggested that in pre-separation there was a tension between their investigative and service responsibilities. Separation freed them from this dilemma. It is interesting that almost a decade ago Hoshino addressed himself to this very issue. He noted:

It is explicitly recognized that the public welfare function includes both investigative and service elements. The question becomes whether both can be encompassed within the same worker. The evidence suggests they cannot be, thus adding a legal argument to other arguments for a complete separation of financial aid from service.⁴³

Regardless of how one resolves this di-

⁴⁰ Eighteen social workers in both urban and rural centers were interviewed. They include the municipalities of Ofakim, Arad and Azur, in the South; Beit Shaan in the North; and Kiriat Ono and Givat Shmuel in the Tel Aviv area.

⁴¹ Interview with the Director of Social Welfare Agency in Arad, January 16, 1984.

⁴² Harris Chaiklin and Carol Landau Frank, "Separation, Service Delivery and Family Functioning," *Public Welfare*, 31, No. 1 (Winter, 1973), pp. 2-7.

⁴³ Hoshino, *Separating Maintenance*, pp. 56.

lemma, however, it is apparent that facilitative-advocate function will become less effective for social workers in light of separation.

Organizational Changes

It is agreed that prior to separation there was difficulty in planning and developing a viable and dynamic structure of services that had any rationale apart from public assistance. Now that separation has been instituted, what distinct changes are to be reported?

Evidence from all respondents suggests that new models of social service delivery systems are being instituted. Agencies are establishing satellite services enabling workers to reach out to new clients and problems. There has been more intensive work with target populations, such as youth and the aged, and more limited intervention with high-risk groups. There is universal access, with services available without regard to financial status. There is more time for planning and pilot projects, more time for supervision, and above all, greater emphasis on accountability.⁴⁴

But, in spite of these advancements, there is strong evidence that poverty families are being serviced less and lower-middle and middle-class clients more. One of the most popular services developed in recent years is the couple and family counselling center. These centers, which are integrally related to welfare bureaus, primarily serve persons who are articulate and motivated. There is a slow but gradual development of "creaming" of services which is

bound to occur when universal services are offered. This writer's work in a family welfare agency over a two-year period strongly supports the observations of the respondents noted above. Services are used in very limited fashion by poverty families in general, and by third generation poverty families in particular.

With implementation of separation, welfare agencies have been required to evaluate and review their case services. The objective is not only to arrive at cost-efficiency, but more specifically to determine which clients have shown motivation and progress in treatment. The most difficult families do not meet these criteria and consequently are dropped from agency rolls.

The Legislative Dimension

One cannot conclude this study without examining the legislative aspects, the criteria for income maintenance and their implications for clients.

Hoshino has noted that public welfare is a political matter because of its legislative base and the expenditures and the number of people involved.⁴⁵ One should add that the application of legal concepts to public welfare programs helps to clarify the terms on which aid and services are provided.

Income maintenance benefits are linked to work and require means test. Benefits are limited to a year. Financial aid is awarded if sufficient evidence can be brought that the recipient has made efforts to work. Documentation from the labor exchange is a prerequisite for benefits. There are other investigative procedures which put into question the client's credibility. The law places within the National Insurance Institute the right of its workers "to enter any place

⁴⁴ Note *Midos* the official organ of the Professional Association and a detailed account of separation and the significant changes for the agency from a professional perspective in Beer Sheba. While the author tracks the positive features experienced by workers, she is more cautious about the implications for clients: Ahud Daliah, "Social Welfare Agency . . ."

⁴⁵ Hoshino, *op. cit.*

for purpose of investigation to determine the client's assets, or for purposes of clarifying any particulars related to his income . . . documents, certificates, and to request information and clarity from any person who may have knowledge of these matters short of entering a person's abode without a permit of entry." The National Insurance Institute may petition other persons to elicit information.

What is particularly regressive is the punishment that may arise in the form of financial fines and recall of funds for clients presenting misinformation. In addition, there are residency laws which state that the recipient must reside in the country for a period of 24 months before receiving benefits. It should also be noted that the law often fails to specify what constitutes need, what services are to be provided, or what is considered adequate relief. Lazin has put it in these terms: "Ministry administrative guidelines and regulations clarify broad statutes, but detailed laws are absent."

While the above features place the client in a vulnerable position, there are a number of positive steps which the law has introduced. Emphasis is placed upon retraining, enabling clients to return to the marketplace with new skills and opportunities. In addition, persons receiving children's allowances also qualify for public assistance. These benefits are computed independently. But in the main, the law is heavily weighted toward the means test, placing barriers before the clients' rights to assistance.

Summary and Conclusion

This paper has addressed separation of income maintenance and treatment in the Israeli social welfare services. In the light of the long tradition during which assistance was inextricably tied to treatment, separation presents a major policy innovation. The thrust for separation was an outcome of professional thinking in freeing the social services from the "albatross of relief" and helping clients deal more effectively with their needs. Treatment would become more meaningful, new services would be initiated, new target populations and high-risk groups would be reached. While progress has been reported in these areas, whether clients are indeed benefitting from separation remains questionable.

Access has been a central problem for clients in post-separation situations. They are not knowledgeable of services and even if they were, it would take more than knowledge to bring them to agencies. Evidence clearly suggests that welfare clients desire and are in need of professional help. Separation has limited these opportunities.

Professionals who view separation as a progressive step in welfare policy question its efficacy for clients. Concerned about access, their own advocacy role, and the creaming off phenomenon, they see as crucial the price that is being paid for separation. Finally, the regressive features of legislation place into question forward-looking welfare policy in Israeli society.

The Negev and its Social Welfare

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. . . it is more plausible that attention will be given to ways in which the Negev can develop its human services through being more effective and cost efficient, in other words, adopting a strategy of "doing more for less". Through this approach, the planning process will take on greater importance, especially in terms of four basic tasks: 1) information gathering and problem definition; 2) setting objectives (or describing options) and prioritizing them; 3) choosing objectives (or options) and allocating resources; and, 4) collecting data on program implementation and then interpreting the information.

Introduction

The social welfare of Israel reflects a range of problems and needs that require attention at a time when resources are becoming increasingly scarce. While many persons involved with human services are concerned with issues such as maintaining present levels of service provision, there is one region which has remained a priority for new programming and initiatives for more than thirty years—the Negev.

In response to this situation, Ben-Gurion University's newly established Center for Human Services Development, the American-Israel Joint Distribution Committee and the Israel Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs initiated an effort in 1984 at a systematic assessment of the Negev's needs—specifically, in terms of human services, manpower development and training, service provision, and research. The purpose of this assessment was to lay the foundation for an incremental but planned approach to upgrading the region's social welfare. This article describes the Negev, its background and demographic characteristics, and reviews as well key findings of the assessment study.¹

¹ This study was funded by a grant provided by the American-Israel Joint Distribution Committee.

Background

The Negev

David Ben-Gurion said that "the future of Israel is in the Negev." Few can contest this statement in terms of the region's vastness and potential for development. Yet, throughout Israel's brief history as a modern nation, the Negev has been on the periphery of the country's social, cultural and economic development. While the region constitutes nearly two-thirds of Israel's land, less than ten percent of its population (i.e., approximately 300,000 people, 60,000 of whom are Bedouin) reside in the area.

In spite of the absence of any clear national policy regarding the Negev's development over the past few years, it cannot be said that the region has been without a purpose. During the 1950's, effort was generated to: 1) found and develop new towns and settlements, including Beer-Sheva as a regional city and primary industrial center, as part of a strategy for dispersing the waves of newly arrived immigrants; 2) establish a presence of sovereignty over the largely unpopulated territory for defense purposes; and, 3) utilize the area's untapped natural resources and incorporate it into the national economy.²

² For a detailed description of the Negev's de-