

FOREWORD FROM THE MINISTER OF HEALTH

When Dr. Walid Ammar took office as Director General in 1993, the Ministry of Public Health, like the whole public administration, was disorganized and unable to lead the health sector.

This situation could not be tolerated as health protection is a basic need which no legitimate government can ignore. Working under several ministers, Dr. Ammar has overseen the reactivation of the Ministry's services and the rehabilitation of its facilities.

In this book, he describes the structures of the health care system, with its characteristic partnership between the public and private sectors. Dr. Ammar clearly stresses the dilemma facing the Ministry: fulfilling the mandate for equity in health while maintaining financial efficiency at a time of economic constraints. This dilemma poses the challenge of continuous reform and evaluation of the quality and coverage of health care in Lebanon. A number of reform components are already being implemented and their present and future integration is also described in this book.

As a Minister of Health, I commend Dr. Ammar's work in undertaking this massive compilation which will very likely remain a reference book on the health care system in Lebanon for many years to come.

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