

May 2004

A YEAR IN

IRAQ

Restoring
Services

Reopening
Schools

Building
Democracy

Vaccinating
Children

U.S. Agency for International Development

“Today, as Iraqis join the free people of the world, we mark a turning point for the Middle East and a crucial time for human liberty... Whatever their past views, every nation now has an interest in a free, successful, stable Iraq.”

President George W. Bush
March 19, 2004

Infrastructure Powering Up

Iraqi workers repair a boiler at Baghdad's Al-Doura power plant. Neglected for years, like most of Iraq's power plants, factories, hospitals and water systems, Al-Doura finally get badly-needed maintenance. Skilled Iraqi workers across the country jerry-rigged obsolete equipment to coax plants back to life.

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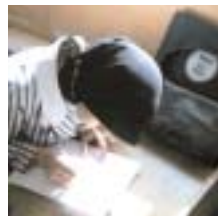
Front Cover: An Iraqi girl waits to receive food and water at a humanitarian aid distribution site.

Photo: Photographer's Mate 1st Class Arlo K. Abrahamson, U.S. Navy

Essential Services

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American Islamic Congress

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Top Ten: The 10 principal reconstruction tasks completed with U.S. assistance in the year since the old regime ended **Back Cover**

One Year of Relief and Reconstruction

\$3.3 billion in U.S. aid fixed schools, vaccinated millions of children, restored electricity and created Iraq's first democratic councils.

The emergency relief and reconstruction aid delivered to Iraq during the 12 months since the fall of Saddam Hussein in April, 2003, was the biggest U.S. foreign aid program since the Marshall Plan, delivering \$3.3 billion in help to Iraq's people.

This text explains how the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) have supported Iraq's recovery from three decades of tyranny and mass murder.

Advance members of USAID's disaster teams reached Iraq in the spring of 2003 even before fighting died down. They found much less war damage than feared. The 62-member Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART), one of the largest ever fielded, found little damage to housing or roads, limited civilian casualties and no widespread hunger or disease. The rapid collapse of Saddam Hussein's army and modern precision-guided weapons limited most war damage to military, police and Ba'ath Party targets.

Within a few weeks after the fighting ended, life began returning to its normal patterns. But another pattern soon became evident: the neglect that characterized Saddam Hussein's rule had permeated every aspect of Iraqi life. Although Iraqis had among the highest levels of education and medical care in the Arab world before Saddam Hussein began his wars, Iraq's oil wealth had been diverted to palaces and to the huge military he used to attack his neighbors and intimidate his people.

Meanwhile, the country's 1,000-year-old canals filled with silt, and sunken ships choked the country's only deep water port at Umm Qasr. Sewage plants poured raw filth into rivers, schools crumbled, foul water spread disease, women's literacy fell, and child mortality approached levels seen only in sub-Saharan Africa, especially in southern areas populated by Shiite Muslims.

Reconstruction after conflict or natural disasters is one of USAID's principal jobs. We helped rebuild Bosnia, Serbia, Kosovo, Afghanistan, East Timor and Mozambique. After Hurricane Mitch in 1998, we helped rebuild Honduras and El Salvador. In Sudan, Colombia, Sri Lanka, the Philippines, Nepal and the West Bank/Gaza, we supply aid even as conflict remains a problem.



Secretary of State Colin Powell consoles mourners at a mass grave site in Halabja in September, 2003.

“Real progress is being made on the ground that gives Iraqis hope that life will get steadily better. Electrical generation capacity already exceeds pre-war levels. Working with our Iraqi partners and other volunteers from the international community, we have repaired more than 1,700 critical breaks in Iraq's aging water network... We have renovated more than 1,500 schools. We have distributed 22 million vaccines to Iraqi children and pregnant women.”

Secretary of State Colin Powell
November 4, 2003

Need for democracy

Under Saddam, Iraqis had no experience with democracy, no control over public services and saw the government as a predator. They lived in fear of the knock on the door at night, prison, torture, and mass murder.

As Saddam's forces fled, Iraqis dug up mass graves in search of their loved ones who had vanished in the terror. Between 300,000 and 400,000 are said to lie in those graves—rivaling the Rwandan genocide of 1994 and the killing fields of Cambodia under Pol Pot.

USAID grants helped Iraqi human rights groups record the names of the victims and the circumstances in which they were slain. Coming to grips with the mass graves will help people recover from their trauma.

A February 2004 poll by Oxford Research International reported that 70 percent of Iraqis say their lives are now “good” while only 19 percent say their lives are “bad.” Seventy one percent also said they expect things to improve in the future while only seven percent said things would get worse.

In Germany and Japan after World War II,

it was mainly people under 30 who accepted democracy. That's why mass media and education are vital and why one of our first priorities in Iraq was to repair more than 2,000 schools, help students complete annual exams and reopen schools on time for the 2003-2004 school year.

All our efforts also aimed at bridging the ethnic division that has been used to divide the Iraqis. The Kurds, Marsh Arabs and Shiites—about three-quarters of the country's 25 million people—had been cut off from political power and from much of the country's economic and social benefits. Our goal was to help bring all the peoples of Iraq together, including the Sunnis and the ancient Christian community, and create a new national identity. We also began to end government abuse and corruption.

As we worked to rebuild power plants, schools, health clinics and water plants, a complex insurgency made delivery of aid difficult, costly and dangerous. But many courageous, skilled staff, NGO partners, and contractors worked with equally courageous and



The *Free Atlas*, carrying food for 2.3 million people, unloads in Aqaba, Jordan. It was the first shipment of U.S. emergency food for Iraq.

capable Iraqis in rebuilding the country.

In Fallujah and the Sadr City area of Baghdad, for example, we hired thousands of Iraqis and worked with moderate clerics to clean up garbage and to fix water, education, power and other services. All over Iraq we helped Iraqis form local councils to decide for themselves which projects to support—schools, roads, markets or other programs.

In Al-Hillah, Karbala and Baghdad, our staff and contractors opened women's centers providing literacy training, business skills and a place to organize against violence directed at women. Two former USAID contract workers working for the CPA, Fern Holland and her Iraqi translator Salwa Ali Oumashi, paid the ultimate price when they were slain as they drove from one of the women's centers they had helped set up in Karbala.

In the giant marsh areas of southeastern Iraq, Saddam deliberately drained the water and destroyed a way of life 5,000 years old, driving out hundreds of thousands of people to punish them for suspected disloyalty. We worked with Iraqi engineers, scientists and

other donor governments to begin restoring the water, rising inches per day to cover the desert wasteland and thorny plants Saddam had left behind. Driving along the roads in the marshlands, one could soon see the return of the water buffaloes, aquatic birds, and the proud fishermen in their slim wooden boats.

It is ironic that in the very cradle of civilization—the place where Hammurabi's Code

in 1,780 BC gave some of the earliest official rights to individuals—we have come to help our Iraqi colleagues restore some of those ancient rights. And we are committed to remain in Iraq in the coming year as sovereignty is transferred to a new Iraqi government, to assist the capable and willing people of that country as they endeavor to create an open, accountable system of government.



USAID Administrator Andrew S. Natsios greets Iraqi children during his June, 2003 visit.

“Thanks to early, prudent, and thorough contingency planning, the pre-positioning of emergency supplies, and careful coordination with U.S. and international humanitarian organizations, the humanitarian crisis in Iraq that many had predicted was avoided.”

USAID Administrator Andrew S. Natsios,
Senate Foreign Relations Committee, June 4, 2004



Marsh Arab boatmen



A mosque in Sulaymaniyah in northern Iraq

DART Took Quick Action

The Disaster Assistance Response Team made sure food, water and medicine were available and helped avert a humanitarian crisis.

In late 2002, the U.S. Government began planning for possible operations in Iraq. President Bush asked USAID to take responsibility for humanitarian affairs and created an inter-Agency Disaster Assistance Response Team to assess the humanitarian situation and coordinate relief. USAID technical staff and USAID technical staff went to Jordan, Kuwait, Qatar and Cyprus to prepare for post-conflict reconstruction.

To ensure basic food supplies for Iraq's 25 million people, the Agency's Food for Peace office made a grant to the U.N. World Food Program for the largest humanitarian relief project in WFP history. But first that meant fixing ports and airports so that supplies and humanitarian assistance could be landed.

The DART got the first look at Iraq's neglected hospitals and basic infrastructure and the damage caused by the looting that followed Saddam's collapse. They found high

child and maternal death rates, especially in the south, where untreated water appears to be one of Saddam's punishments for suspected disloyalty. Responding quickly, USAID chose five NGOs to distribute supplies and emergency medical kits, among other tasks: International Rescue Committee, International Medical Corps, Mercy Corps, and CARE.

These grants put Iraqi doctors and engineers back to work and began the process of restoring essential services, even if much of it was jerry-rigged by enterprising Iraqis. Beginning April 3, five shiploads of American grain left Galveston Harbor to ensure that the food chain remained intact. Some ships would land in Jordan and the food was trucked into Iraq. More food was later offloaded at Umm Qasr, Iraq's deepwater port, as it was dredged and cleared.

To assure urgent supplies and services for public health, the Agency turned quickly to the WHO and UNICEF. Vaccination campaigns began immediately reaching millions of children. No major outbreaks of disease took place.

The DART also focused on human rights, adding abuse prevention officers to the team to look for early signs of reprisals, ethnic violence or other abuse. (For a discussion of what they found, see page 21.)

DART chief Michael Marx said the NGOs "were exceptionally creative" in delivering aid. "The NGOs have been courageous," added Lewis Lucke, USAID's first mission director in Baghdad. "They've operated in less security than the contractors, and they have not withdrawn. I think they are unsung heroes."

Results

- The U.S. sent 62 experts to prepare for rapid humanitarian relief and set up DART offices in Arbil, Baghdad, Al Hillah, and Basra.
- Before the fighting began, DART teams moved to the Middle East to begin stockpiling emergency food, water, medicine and shelter.
- The speed of the military campaign and the accuracy of US weapons meant that few Iraqis fled their homes and no humanitarian emergency ensued.
- The DART focused on supplying food, restoring services and helping local towns set up democratic councils.
- Several quick DART grants helped Iraqis restore medical care, set up human rights groups, and begin resolving ethnic and land conflicts.



US food aid arrives at WFP warehouse in Umm Qasr.



(Top) Millions of Iraqi children were immunized in USAID programs.

An Iraqi doctor receives emergency health kits from the DART.

▲ Iraq begins destroying illegal missiles

▲ UN Security Council debates Iraq resolution, France threatens veto

▲ Ground war begins

▲ WFP prepositions emergency food

▲ Coalition secures coastline

Fixing Iraq's Infrastructure

U.S. contractors restored power and bridges while repairing neglected water and sewage systems vital to Iraqi's health.

Courtesy of Bechtel National, Inc.



A massive dredge hired by USAID contractor Bechtel removes silt from the country's only deepwater port at Umm Qasr. This paved the way for large-scale deliveries of U.S. food and the return of commercial shipping.

April '03

- 1
- 2 ▲ Emergency food grant to WFP
- 3 ▲ *Free Atlas* leaves US with 28,000 tons of food
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9 ▲ Coalition forces take Baghdad airport
- 10 ▲ Statue of Saddam toppled
- 11 ▲ Education contract, Creative Associates
- 12
- 13 ▲ Local governance contract, RTI
- 14
- 15
- 16
- 17 ▲ DART arrives Baghdad
- 18
- 19
- 20
- 21
- 22
- 23
- 24
- 25
- 26 ▲ Infrastructure contract, Bechtel
- 27 ▲ WFP trucks arrive in Iraq
- 28
- 29
- 30 ▲ *Free Atlas* unloads food for 2.3 million
- ▲ Health contract, Abt Associates

Infrastructure

U.S. assistance began reconstruction of Iraq's electricity plants, bridges, water systems and other infrastructure within a few weeks of the collapse of the regime.

Congress passed the Supplemental Appropriation bill in April, 2003, and within a few weeks the Agency began work in several sectors. The biggest contract, worth \$600 million, went to Bechtel for rebuilding infrastructure.

Some criticism was reported in the press of the decision to limit bidding on the infrastructure contract to seven major firms capable of such large projects overseas. However, the process was entirely legal and necessary if

delays were to be avoided. Bechtel ended up performing exceptionally well under extremely difficult circumstances. When the second infrastructure contract, worth \$1.8 billion, was opened up to all bidders in 2004, fewer than seven companies applied. Bechtel won that one, as well, in a joint offer with Parsons of California.

Bechtel entered Iraq in late April 2003, within days of signing the contract. It began with a country-wide assessment of the critical economic infrastructure. Prioritizing easier repairs first, the company began ordering equipment for longer term projects and bringing in technical experts from around the world. The harbor at Umm Qasr was dredged; chemicals were bought for water treatment facilities, and work began on power stations, electric transmission lines and diesel generating sets throughout Iraq.



Thomas Hartwell



Courtesy of Bechtel National, Inc.

A damaged electric power pylon (above), one of hundreds attacked by vandals who often sold the copper wiring.

Iraqi engineers (left) monitor controls at a power plant repaired with USAID funding.

Electricity

Restoring and improving Iraq's electricity supply has been the biggest and most costly challenge. Power plants had not been properly maintained for many years and, except for Baghdad, most of the country got power only a few hours a day. In addition, saboteurs and thieves have frequently destroyed pylons and stolen copper wiring from the power transmission lines that link Baghdad with the north and south of the country.

Nevertheless, repairs helped boost electricity output above the pre-war 4,000 megawatt level by October, 2003, and dependable power was distributed to many parts of the country for the first time in years. After all the repairs are made, USAID, the CPA and Bechtel expect electricity production to reach 6,000 MW by the summer of 2004.

In an effort to block the restoration of power, at-

tackers had tried to cut the pipelines supplying fuel to some power plants as well as the electric power cables sending power to the cities. Coalition forces have been able to train Iraqis to provide security for those vital fuel and power conduits.

While total electric power output continued to climb, it was distributed in a new way. Under the old regime, the outlying regions were required to send power to Baghdad which enjoyed electricity nearly 24 hours per day. But the smaller cities such as Basra had power only a couple of hours each day. Now power is more evenly shared, even if Baghdadis may feel they have less hours of power than they enjoyed in the past.

Power is also growing at a time when demand is spiking due to booming sales of electric appliances from refrigerators to air conditioners to satellite televisions since Iraq's central controls and trade isolation has ended.

Water and Sanitation

An Iraqi engineer (near right) checks water flowing from a new treatment plant built with U.S. and CPA aid. It provides 40,000 people in south-east Iraq clean drinking water. The city's only source had been contaminated water from a branch of the Tigris River.



Ben Barber/USAID

"I used to get sick from the river water," said the engineer.

Untreated sewage flows directly into the Tigris and Euphrates. Many wastewater treatment facilities are inoperative due to vandalism, deliberate neglect, and a lack of parts, electricity and chemicals. To end this, the U.S. is spending \$217 million repairing water systems throughout Iraq, directly benefitting 14.5 million people. Contractors have already repaired hundreds of breaks in the water network, significantly increasing water flow.

In Baghdad, one water plant is being expanded and three sewage plants are being repaired, improving daily water flows to hundreds of thousands of people. We are installing back-up electrical generators at 41 Baghdad water facilities and pumping stations to ensure continuous water supply. Repairs to Baghdad's sewage treatment plants—Rustimiyah North, Rustimiyah South, and Kerkh—will benefit 3.8 million people by October 2004.

Other rehabilitation projects include two water plants and four sewage plants in Najaf, Karbala and Hillah; the entire Sweet Water Canal system near Basra; the Safwan water system; and water and sewage plants in Kirkuk and Mosul.

Since the early 1990s, Iraqi children died in very high numbers. Much of this is directly attributable to the deliberate neglect of the country's waste water facilities and the draining of the southern marshlands. The death rate has been so high—hundreds of thousands over the past 12 years—that in parts of the South it may be tantamount to infanticide.

Results

- Generated 4,518 MW on October 6, 2003—surpassing the pre-war level of 4,400 MW.
- Installing power at Baghdad International Airport and Umm Qasr seaport.
- Repair thermal units, replace and repair turbines, rehabilitate the transmission network, and install and restore generators—expected to add 2,152 MW.
- Another 827 MW being added through maintenance, rehabilitation, and new generation projects.
- Rehabilitating units at Doura and Baiji power plants.
- Reconstruction of 400-kv transmission network
- Installing new generating capacity at power plants in the north and center.

▲ End of major combat operations

▲ US lifts sanctions on Iraq

▲ Airport contract to SkyLink

▲ J. Paul Bremer named head of CPA

▲ Umm Qasr transferred to civilian authority

▲ Community project grants to five NGOs



Iraqi workmen cleaning a waste water plant, part of a massive USAID effort to provide clean water and improve health throughout the country.



Captain Stuart Bagg, SFC

Iraqi girl getting water from makeshift system



Thomas Hartwell

Removing caked silt from Sweet Water Canal reservoirs. The Canal system supplies water to 1.75 million people in Basrah governate.

Results

- Repaired and rehabilitated water systems throughout Iraq.
- Repaired hundreds of breaks in Iraq's neglected water network, significantly increasing water flow.
- Baghdad: Expanding one water plant and rehabilitating three sewage plants.
- South Central: Rehabilitating An Najaf and Karbala' water treatment plants.
- Basra: Work began on Basra's 14 water treatment plants in January. By summer 2004, water quality and volume will surpass prewar levels.
- North: Rehabilitating water plants in Kirkuk, Mosul and Al Dujayl, and the Al Dujayl sewage plant.

Telecommunications

USAID contractors have carried out some \$55 million in projects to repair Baghdad's switching network.

In 2002, approximately 1.2 million Iraqis subscribed to landline telephone service. Parts of the network's switching component were damaged during the war and service was disrupted. Since then, USAID has been restoring the national telecom fiber network, repairing the telephone switching system in Baghdad and restoring international telephone service.



Courtesy of Bechtel National, Inc.

Iraqi Telephone and Postal Company workers connect subscribers in a Baghdad area telephone exchange.

Results

- International calling service to Iraq was restored on December 30.
- The Al Mamoun Telecommunications site was handed over to the Ministry of Communications on February 26.
- New phone switches and an international satellite gateway were integrated with Iraqi Telephone and Postal Company switches.
- Tools, equipment, and parts were purchased to enable Iraqi engineers to restore the network.
- The national fiber optic network from Mosul to Umm Qasr was repaired, connecting 20 cities to Baghdad.
- Baghdad area phone service was reconstituted by installing new switches.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30

- ▲ USAID/ UNICEF begin vaccinating 3 million children
- ▲ \$425 million emergency food grant to WFP

- ▲ Team assesses southern marshes
- ▲ Umm Qasr port reopens

- ▲ Army Corps of Engineers picked as advisor

Ports

Umm Qasr, on the border with Kuwait, is the country's only deepwater ocean port and the first Iraqi city liberated from Saddam Hussein's forces. Work by USAID contractors began immediately to remove sunken ships left since the 1980-88 Iran-Iraq War as well as munitions and silt. With Bechtel and Stevedoring Services of America, the U.S. completed a \$45 million program to restore the port's ability to process food and handle commercial shipments.



Wreckage from Iran-Iraq War is removed from Umm Qasr

Courtesy of Bechtel National, Inc.

Results

- Reopening the port to commercial traffic June 17, 2003.
- Offloading 40 ships per month.
- Dredging to an average depth of 12.5 meters.
- Rehabilitating Iraqi ships to help maintain harbor.
- Renovating grain facility to process 600 metric tons an hour.
- Providing revenue for port operations by collecting new port tariffs.
- Installing generators and security fencing at the old and new ports and grain facility.
- Renovating administration, passenger terminal and customs hall buildings.
- Employing 500 Iraqi staff, mostly in the Marine Department of the Port Authority.

Bridges

USAID and Bechtel are doing \$34 million in work on bridges, roads, and railways. Major bridge projects are shown below.



USAID and Bechtel have repaired bridges in several key locations in Iraq.

Results

- Al Mat Bridge: A key link on Highway 10 that carries 3,000 trucks daily between Baghdad and Jordan. The four-lane bridge reopened to two-way traffic March 3, 2004.
- Khazir Bridge: Critical to the flow of fuel and agricultural products. South span repaired—two of the four lanes—and reopened for two-way traffic May 5, 2004.
- Tikrit Bridge: Important link for passengers and commerce over the Tigris River between Tikrit and Tuz Khurmatu. Work expected to finish in May 2004.
- Repaired a floating bridge on the Tigris River in Al Kut. This improves traffic for approximately 50,000 travelers a day.

Airports

USAID and partners SkyLink and Bechtel have spent \$47 million rehabilitating Baghdad and Basra airports, improving the transport of humanitarian, reconstruction, and commercial goods. About 20 non-military flights are processed daily at Baghdad International Airport. It has been prepared to accept commercial flights when they resume.

Projects at Basra International Airport include repairing the runway, taxiway, and apron striping, installing two baggage x-ray units, repairing passenger support facilities and installing communications systems. Other projects include installing the security fence and repairing airport water and sewage treatment plants.



Reconstructed terminal at Baghdad International Airport

Courtesy of Bechtel National, Inc.

Railroads

The Iraqi Republic Railways (IRR) system—although run down and badly in need of repair—had 2,200 km of track, repair shops, stations, and over 10,000 wagons.

“Our first task in the railway sector was to assess the capability of the railway to transport humanitarian aid arriving at the Port of Umm Qasr to cities throughout the country,” said David White, Bechtel's IRR manager.

The U.S. team soon established a long-lasting working relationship with the senior IRR management in Basra and Baghdad and jointly inspected 1100 km of the railway. They are constructing 72 km of new track. IRR contributes equipment and labor, while USAID contributes project management, material, and parts.

Workers perform a damage assessment at railroad bridge prior to preparing a repair plan.

Results

- Repairing 16 km of track at Umm Qasr and 56 km of track between the port and Shuiaba Junction near Basra to move cargo, including food, from the seaport to mills.
- Removed explosive ordinance at the rail line project near Shuiaba Junction.



Courtesy of Bechtel National, Inc.

Small Grants Meet Needs

After the conflict, the transition team moved to prevent ethnic clashes and get people started on fixing things.

When looters destroyed the computer center at Mosul University in northern Iraq, the Agency's quick-response team from the Office of Transition Initiatives (OTI) jumped in and provided 48 computers and internet access to serve the 32,000 students.

"If there were three times as many computers here at school," said an assistant professor, "they would be used. It was a good achievement for the Americans to set it up."

OTI was one of the first USAID offices on the ground in April 2003, quickly giving out small grants in places where security allowed relief and reconstruction to begin. Staff and contractors worked with farmers, businessmen, human rights groups, educators and others to create visible projects that gave Iraqis hope they were seeing their society begin to change.

Some 670 small grants worth \$45 million were launched to provide jobs, basic services, access to information, communications, and protection of human rights.

The region around Halabja was attacked by Saddam Hussein's forces with poison gas in 1988, killing more than 100,000 Kurds. Many survivors still suffer aftereffects. One small grant helped an Iraqi doctor travel to mountain villages to offer treatment for physical and mental problems.

"U.S. aid is paying our salaries, the cost of our vehicle and for basic medicines such as antibiotics, analgesics and anti-parasitics," said an Iraqi physician, as about 30 women and children crowded into a village house to meet with her medical team.

Some of her patients suffer from lung and nerve damage from the "cocktail" of various nerve and mustard gases dropped on the region in 1988 by Iraqi forces, she said.

"If we didn't have the U.S. funds we could not do as much as we do," she said.

Transition grants now focus on preparation for a new Iraqi government, working at the national level on civic education, civil society, media development, women's participation, conflict mitigation, and transitional jus-

tice. For example, they are funding public information on the new constitution, election plans, and the transition to Iraqi sovereignty.

To avoid conflict between ethnic or other groups, USAID gave 62 grants as of March 2004, worth \$4.3 million, working closely with the U.S. military civil affairs teams in the Sunni regions of central Iraq, the Shi'ite regions in the south and various ethnically mixed locations in the north.

Some 79 small grants worth \$5 million helped created a national network of new Iraqi human rights groups and supported the new Ministry of Human Rights. Other grants help marginalized and vulnerable groups including women, youth, minorities, and the disabled.

U.S. grants have also helped Iraqis account for and move beyond the atrocities committed by the Saddam Hussein regime. Work includes protecting and unearthing mass graves, supporting the Iraqi Special Tribunal and other forums to address past crimes; providing services for victims of past crimes; and backing the Iraqi commission set up to handle property disputes.

Another critical transitional job was to provide more than 130 Iraqi national ministries, schools, clinics and other municipal buildings with start-up kits called "Ministries in a Box" which included desks, chairs, computers and office equipment. Despite the looting and destruction immediately after the collapse of the Iraqi regime, these enabled people to get back to work in a hurry.

Transition activities also focused on helping Iraqi women, who have long had only limited participation in political and civil society. More than half of Iraq's women are illiterate, making it difficult for them to participate in political life and to defend their rights in cases of inheritance, marriage and abuse issues.

Iraq's fertility rate of 5.4 children per woman is one of the highest in the region contributing to low infant birth weight.

U.S. transition teams helped Iraqis set up women's organizations aimed at providing educational programs, vocational training and income generating projects.

Community development groups funded by U.S. teams were created to encourage women to engage in community decisions, empowering women at the grassroots levels. And parent-teacher associations also gave women both a voice in school issues as well a taste of participation in community affairs.

Results

- In order to have the quickest impact after fighting ended, the Agency's transition teams gave out many small grants.
- Mosul University's computer lab had been looted so one grant set up about 30 computers and internet service to help students and teachers continue their work.
- To reach out to Iraqi-Kurdish villagers whose village was taken over by Al Ansar terrorists, transition grants sponsored literacy classes for women.
- The "Ministry in a Box" grants paid for Iraqis to replace chairs, desks and some computers so government could resume its functions quickly.



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Former prisoners sort through some of the millions of files that the Ba'ath Party kept on its victims.



Debbi Morello/USAID

Most government offices were stripped bare in the looting that followed Saddam's fall. Here replacement

desks are delivered to a government ministry as part of USAID's "Ministry in a Box" program.

Building Democracy

Under Saddam, the Iraqi people had no say in their government. Now the U.S. is helping them take charge of their own affairs.

A key element of U.S. assistance is to help Iraqis learn to make decisions at the grass roots level, rather than depend on the central government to make them. The devolution of power from the capital down to the smaller cities, towns, villages and neighborhoods is giving Iraqis a sense of responsibility for their own affairs, something they have not had for many decades.

New local councils, parent teacher associations, NGOs, human rights organizations, and environmental societies are giving people a voice in their own affairs and a say in how they are governed.

Iraqis have shown they support these projects, often matching funds and providing services. Because they are directly involved in process, they are more able to protect them from corruption or co-option by traditional, non-democratic forces.

Karkh District Council

A man in a sport shirt energetically shouted his opinions while a turbaned cleric, three women, and other members of a district council listened as Iraqis met in Baghdad for the first time in their lives to explore democracy last September.

One council member, who worked in a bank before the downfall of the regime in April, said that USAID made it possible for the new councils to form and begin to take a role in running the city's affairs.

"I saw that Americans are here to help us and take us from the pits," she said. "Saddam the criminal did nothing for us. The Americans gave us food and gave us elections in the neighborhood. The people chose me to be on the council."

Among the topics they debated were how to hire an administrator, how much to pay as salary, and how the group could apply for a



Thomas Hartwell



More than 80% of Iraq's adult population has been engaged—either directly or indirectly—in democracy or governance at the local level because of U.S. programs.

Mokhtars (municipal registrars) from a governate prepare for elections to a new district council.

October '03

- 1 ▲ 3 million kids vaccinated
- 2 ▲ Schools open
- 3 ▲ School supplies for 3.3 million delivered
- 4 ▲ Schools open
- 5 ▲ Pre-war level of electricity passed
- 6 ▲ School supplies convoy attacked
- 7 ▲ Agricultural program begins
- 8 ▲ 1,600 schools rehabilitated
- 9 ▲ 235 CAP projects completed
- 10 ▲ Currency exchange begins
- 11 ▲ Rockets hit Al-Rasheed Hotel
- 12 ▲ Iraqi Fulbright program restarted
- 13 ▲ Global Donor Conference pledges \$32.2 billion
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Ben Barber/USAID



A council member stands in front of an animated meeting of a district council as it debated hiring an adminis-

trator and buying a computer. At first scorned as a woman by some members, the council later elected her

to represent the district on the city council.

computer from the city government.

U.S. Army Civil Affairs teams and USAID's contractor Research Triangle Institute, working with the CPA, organized meetings of local citizens in 88 Baghdad neighborhoods and hundreds more around Iraq. The members were selected from neighborhood leaders, businessmen, clerics, teachers and others seen by their neighbors as leaders or people of good character. The local councils in turn elected representatives to district councils and those in turn elected representatives to the city councils in Baghdad and elsewhere.

Under Saddam Hussein, the Ba'ath Party ruled by fear. There was little chance for independent local government or civil society. Now, new council and groups are being formed and new laws and institutions are under way.

For democracy to take root, the local councils must be seen as representative and able to provide for the community's basic needs. USAID worked with the councils to restore basic services and create jobs. It taught citizen leaders and government officials to respond to community needs and promoted

wide participation in public decisions about the use of public funds and provision of services. Nearly 700 local, city and state councils have been established, and more than 2,000 community projects have been completed or are underway throughout the country.

As a result, more than three-quarters of the population, either directly or indirectly, have been engaged in democracy at the local level. Now Iraqis are beginning to devise solutions to problems in their communities, building skills in community decision-making, and learning how to resolve or lessen conflicts peacefully.

To help explain how democratic meetings work, a former official from Colorado was asked to write a guide to running local government. It was translated into Arabic and distributed to all members of local councils, explaining how to run a meeting, encourage people to speak and contribute, resolve disagreements and reach decisions through compromise—all vitally needed skills.

The local councils are producing a new group of leaders able to participate in higher levels of government. For example, after one

Iraqi was selected to join her local or neighborhood council in Baghdad, the group's members voted to send her as their representative to the district council—the next higher level of government. This body—at first hostile to a woman achieving such high rank—later recognized her leadership qualities and voted to send her to the Baghdad City Council. Indeed, many of the new leaders chosen by the local council process can be expected to be elected to higher office when national elections are held in 2005.

At the district council meeting, the Iraqi experiment in democracy seemed to be running off the tracks when a couple of council members began shouting their opinions around the table, appearing to be angry enough to come to blows. However, one council member explained that this was only theatrics and would not disrupt the process.

"Don't worry—that is the Iraqi way," she said with a knowing smile.

In fact, the shouting soon gave way to constructive debate; the council agreed on some issues and deferred others before it adjourned peacefully.

Results

- **Local advisory councils formed** in 16 governates, 78 districts, 192 city and sub-districts and 392 neighborhoods.
- **Provided the local councils with small budgets to spend on projects** such as fixing schools, traffic controls or public health. Councils also advise the CPA about the area's needs.
- **Local councils select a few of their members to represent the neighborhood in district councils** with responsibility for larger portions of cities and towns.
- **The district councils in turn appoint one or two members to represent the districts on the city council.**
- **The advisory councils provide Iraqis with their first chance to experience grassroots democracy** and learn how to debate and compromise in order to achieve results.
- **Councils require all elements of Iraq's diverse society to work together for the common good:** men, women, Shiites, Sunnis, Kurds and other groups.

▲ New currency arrives at banks

▲ Mosul's 100,000 jobs project begins

▲ First bulk cargo ship arrives at Umm Qasr.

▲ Accelerated Learning Program funded

▲ CPA takes over UN Oil for Food program

▲ US/Iraqi Education Cooperative Agreements

Iraqis Involved in Community Action

Five NGOs work with Iraqi communities to build roads, schools, markets and other public services.

To help Iraqis emerge from decades of repression, USAID provided about \$70 million to create a Community Action Program (CAP) that helped citizens form civic organizations and select reconstruction projects in their communities.

The CAP drew on five of USAID's traditional allies in development and relief to carry out the reconstruction effort in Iraq: Mercy Corps, International Relief and Development (IRD), Agricultural Cooperative Development International and Volunteers in Overseas Cooperative Assistance (ACDI/VOCA), Cooperative Housing Foundation (CHF) and Save the Children.

One NGO funded a quick, tarred road across a seven-kilometer region of central Iraq where isolated villages had spent months of the rainy season unable to reach markets, clinics, schools and other services.

"People are grateful to me and they stop to thank me," said one Iraqi contractor who built the road under a CAP grant. As he stood under a blue sky on the freshly tarred road, local drivers and passengers stopped their pickup trucks and crowded vans to thank him with effusive Arabic greetings.

The CAP's aim is for communities to decide for themselves on the projects and contribute resources to both the work and the oversight.



Mercy Corps

A CAP project built safety railings on the stairwells in the buildings behind these

children. Other projects remove sewage from the streets in many towns.

Results

- Set up 650 Community Action Groups to back grassroots democracy.
- Committed \$48.4 million for 1,364 projects.
- Iraqi communities gave \$15.3 million in labor, land, and buildings to joint projects.
- ACDI/VOCA focuses on Mosul, Kirkuk and the Iran-Iraq border, completing 146 projects.
- CHF works in south central Iraq setting up community associations. Projects include access roads, sewage, water, school repairs, and swamp clean-up as well as community centers and sports clubs. They have completed 105 projects.
- IRD has completed 234 projects in Baghdad; 73 are focused on income and jobs.
- Mercy Corps completed 89 water, sewage, clean-up, and school projects.
- Save the Children completed 271 projects in the south. Focus on sewage, water, public health, and girls' education.



Ben Barber/USAID

An Iraqi manager of the company which built a seven-mile road under a U.S.

contract outside Hillah, stands as cars begin to use the route.



Thomas Hartwell

Children at a kindergarten in Basrah. The school was refurb-

ished through a USAID grant to Save the Children.



Thomas Hartwell

Young Iraqis practice their computer skills at a women's center south of Baghdad. The

center also offers nutrition and health classes and plans to open an Internet cafe.

Dec. '03

- 1 ▲ Program creates 50,000th job
- 2 ▲ Work on Umm Qasr railroad begins
- 3
- 4
- 5
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- 7
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- 9
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- 12
- 13 ▲ 350th small education grant
- 14
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- ▲ Baghdad telecommunications exchange reopens
- ▲ Saddam Hussein captured

International phone service restored ▲

Locals councils created throughout Iraq ▲

Rebuilding Iraq's Health System

From vaccines and medicines to refurbishing health clinics and repairing sewage systems, American aid is reviving Iraq's run-down health system.

As workmen hauled buckets of earth and mortar to complete a new water and sewage system for his hospital, an Iraqi doctor described how the buildings in the southeastern town had been neglected for years before U.S. aid arrived.

"The hospital was run down—we had no toilets to use because they were always blocked up," said the surgeon and director of the hospital just 10 miles from the border with Iran.

"The patients suffered from the bad odor and it was hard to prevent infections after surgery."

But one of several U.S.-backed contractors, running projects to improve health facilities and services in Iraq, discovered the need and offered to hire Iraqi contractors to fix the hospital.

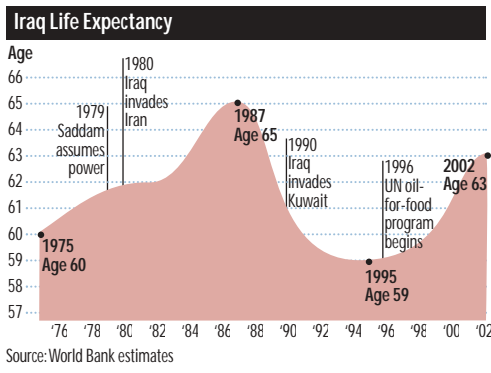
By September, 2003, new toilets were already lined with smooth, easily-cleaned tiles. The water system worked well and there were no bad odors.

The yard outside the clinic was still torn up as workmen finished the new septic tank to contain wastes.

In April 2003, USAID set aside \$150 million for health programs to reverse the disastrous drop in Iraqi citizens' health over the previous decade. The Hussein government had cut spending on health by 90 percent in that period but built many luxurious palaces and maintained its huge army.

Health services favored specific political, ethnic and geographic groups. Maternal mortality grew close to three-fold in that period. It is estimated that 30% of women gave birth without a qualified health worker.

Iraqi hospitals and clinics—once the envy of the Middle East—fell into disrepair. Many lacked medicines or equipment while doctors' and other staff salaries shrank to as little as \$20 per month.



U.S. assistance aimed at improving maternal and child health, health infrastructure, health policy and management. The task would take forms as varied as massive immunization programs for millions of children to hiring backhoes and tile-cutters to create septic tanks and clean toilets in clinics.

In Basra, for example, looters had sacked the administrative offices where one Iraqi doctor runs 11 clinics in an area serving



Thomas Hartwell

Debbi Morello/USAID



USAID grants funded mobile health clinics to serve thousands of women in remote villages in northern Iraq.

“Health care spending in Iraq has increased to 60 times pre-liberation levels. Two hundred and forty Iraqi hospitals and more than 1,200 primary health centers are operating and have been since last summer. More than 30 million doses of children’s vaccine have been distributed.”

CPA Administrator, L. Paul Bremer, at the handover of the Ministry of Health, Baghdad, March 27, 2004

Results

- Procured more than 30 million doses of vaccines with the Ministry of Health and UNICEF.

- Vaccinated three million children under the age of five, part of a campaign to provide vaccines for 4.2 million children and 700,000 pregnant women.

- Developed comprehensive strategy with the Ministry of Health and transferred authority on March 27. MOH was first ministry to revert to Iraqi control.

- Funded monthly immunization campaign with UNICEF and the Ministry of Health.

- Awarded \$1.8 million in small grants to Iraqi NGOs for healthcare.

- Renovated 52 primary health care clinics and re-equipped 600 others.

- Trained 340 master trainers in acute respiratory infections and diarrheal diseases.

- Distributed high-protein supplementary food rations to 240,000 pregnant and nursing mothers and malnourished children.

- Rehabilitated the National Polio Laboratory.

- Trained 1,000 health workers and volunteers to work with acutely malnourished children.

U.S. funding is restoring Iraq's neglected health sector.

350,000 people. “The electricity was damaged, the windows shattered and all the furniture were taken,” she said.

But USAID provided \$18,000 to repair the building. “They hired Iraqi contractors to fix everything and provide water pipes, electricity, furniture, computers, a refrigerator, everything.”

To deliver the \$150 million in health aid, U.S. officials gave contracts to three groups:

Abt Associates, the U.N. Children’s Fund and the World Health Organization. They launched programs aimed at reducing Iraq’s alarming infant mortality rate and improving overall life expectancy.

By 1990, the year Saddam invaded Kuwait, Iraq’s health measures were among the poorest in the region. This is particularly true in the south.

Malnutrition was high, sanitation poor

and many diseases had re-emerged.

Within months of the arrival of U.S. assistance, health service delivery in Iraq returned to pre-war levels.

Health care spending has now reached 60 times pre-conflict levels. However, the hospitals and healthcare system is still sub-standard due to years of neglect so U.S. assistance will continue to be provided to the ministry in the coming years.

Schools and Education

U.S. funds paid for Iraqi workmen to turn crumbling schools into freshly painted places to learn.

Sajad's elementary school in Basra, Iraq's second largest city with some 2 million people was typical of the country's run-down schools. As a workman climbed a wooden ladder last September to repair the leaky roof with a mixture of mud and mortar, Sajad's mother explained how both her nine-year-old son and her older daughter had missed many weeks of school last year when the rains came and water flooded the classrooms.

She said she had tutored her children at home so they scored at the top of the class but was very glad that the repairs would "make it easy for my son to go to school next year—before it was too difficult."

In addition to the roof, the workmen installed new tiles, paint, ceilings, toilets, bathrooms, water tanks, pipes, air conditioning the office and fans for classrooms.

Twenty-five years ago, Iraq had one of the best education systems in the Middle East. By the time U.S. troops entered the country, buildings were poorly maintained, teachers poorly paid and trained, and basic equipment and schoolbooks were lacking. Enrollment, especially for girls, had declined greatly.



Girls at a Baghdad school (above) carry boxes of school supplies. Creative Associates International delivered school bags (right) containing calculators, notebooks, pens and pencils to secondary schools throughout Iraq.

Thomas Hartwell



Thomas Hartwell

The repairs to our school "make it easy for my son to go to school. Before it was too difficult," one mother said.



Ben Barber/USAID

Sajad, 9, sits next to his older sister Yasmine, 11, who is holding their baby sister as

they tell how much a U.S. contractor has improved their rundown school in Basra.



Ben Barber/USAID

Iraqi construction team hauls buckets of mud and mortar to the roof of Sajad's

school in Basra which had been leaking in the rains.



Ben Barber/USAID

Iraqi workmen at Sajad's school take a lunch break. Wall was notched for a new coat of plaster.

Accelerated Learning



American Islamic Congress



American Islamic Congress

The Accelerated Learning Program is replacing old chalkboards, such as the one above.

Khamail (left) teaches math and physics in a city in southern Iraq. "They are so enthusiastic that they overwhelm me," she says of her students.

Hundreds of thousands of Iraqi students dropped out of school in the last decade of Ba'ath Party rule, because they could not afford to pay the fees and bribes or because they had to help support their families. As a result many young people, especially girls, have received less formal education than their parents. In response USAID launched an accelerated learning program in the fall of 2003 to help particularly motivated young people to make up for lost time and do two years academic work in one.



American Islamic Congress

Some students in the Accelerated Learning Program were so eager to continue their studies that they voted to give up their mid-year vacation.

Results

- Renovated 2,300 schools on time for the opening of the 2003-2004 school year.
- Printed and distributed 8.7 million new math and science textbooks throughout the country.
- Set up 2,700 parent teacher associations.
- Trained 32,632 teachers.
- Distributed school bags and school supplies to 1.5 million students.
- Funded partnerships between five U.S. and five Iraqi universities.
- Distributed new school desks throughout Iraq.
- Encouraged girls to attend school again and helped push their registration up to 96 percent at the beginning of the school year. The figure for boys was 92 percent.

Within weeks of Saddam's fall, Creative Associates, which had the main U.S. contract to improve education, along with Research Triangle Institute, Bechtel, CHF and other NGOs and contractors, fanned out across Iraq to visit communities and respond to requests that their schools be fixed. Some 2,500 schools had been repaired by March of 2004.

USAID also worked with and funded UNESCO to print and distribute 8.7 million new science and math textbooks for grades one through 12, updating them and removing Ba'athist propaganda in the process.

At an elementary school in Baghdad, while workmen plastered the walls and installed fans, the headmistress was meeting in her office with the first parent-teacher association in her school—one of 2,700 supported by U.S. assistance.

For the first time, teachers, parents and school administrators met to decide how to improve education, to ensure students and teachers show up, to spend budgets and get the best books, materials and programs.

"This is the first time we have had this,"



Ben Barber/USAID

In an ethnic Kurdish village along Iraq's border with Iran, an Iraqi woman reads from her son's literature book. A U.S.-funded literacy team

taught her to read after the Al Ansar terrorist group controlling the village was driven out by U.S. and Kurdish forces.

she said. "The new PTA supervises the construction project and is receiving the new furniture, the refrigerator, the cooler."

In addition, 32,632 teachers have been trained through a USAID program which encourages interactive teaching, team work, and critical thinking. And 1.5 million secondary school students received book bags stuffed with pencils, crayons, pens, paper and other supplies.

Five grants worth \$21 million were also awarded to create partnerships between U.S. and Iraqi universities. The State University of New York at Stony Brook is working with Baghdad University, Al Mustansiriyah University/Baghdad, Basra University, and Mosul University on archeology and environmental health. The University of Hawaii College of Agriculture and Human Resources is working with the University of Mosul Hamam Al-Alil and University of Dahuk for strengthening academic, research, and extension programs. Other U.S. schools in the program are DePaul University College of Law, Jackson State University, and the University of Oklahoma.

Reforms Pave the Way for Growth

Iraqi GNP peaked the year Saddam Hussein came to power. By the time he invaded Kuwait, it had dropped by over 80%.

During Saddam's reign, Iraq's economy was shattered by war, corruption, and heavy centralization. Over the past year, U.S. assistance supported reforms that stimulate international trade and generate employment. Iraq is applying the economic reform lessons learned in the early 1990s from the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, including:

- Reactivating food production and markets;
- Involving the private sector early on;
- Linking economic development with democratic governance, and
- Ensuring transparency in government finance and procurements.

U.S. experts in economic management helped Iraqi ministries examine and reform laws, regulations, and institutions, and they provided a framework for private sector trade, commerce, and investment. These have strengthened the Central Bank and the key ministries of Finance, Trade, Commerce, and Industry. Technical support from the U.S. contractor BearingPoint has helped to start and expand small and medium enterprises. Aid also strengthened the regulatory framework and economic governance of telecommunications, power, and other utilities.

To date, the CPA has made more than 1,800 loans available, with amounts up to \$5,000 for micro-enterprises and \$25,000 for small businesses. USAID technical assistance helped ensure a repayment rate of nearly 100 percent. Fifteen percent of the clients are female.

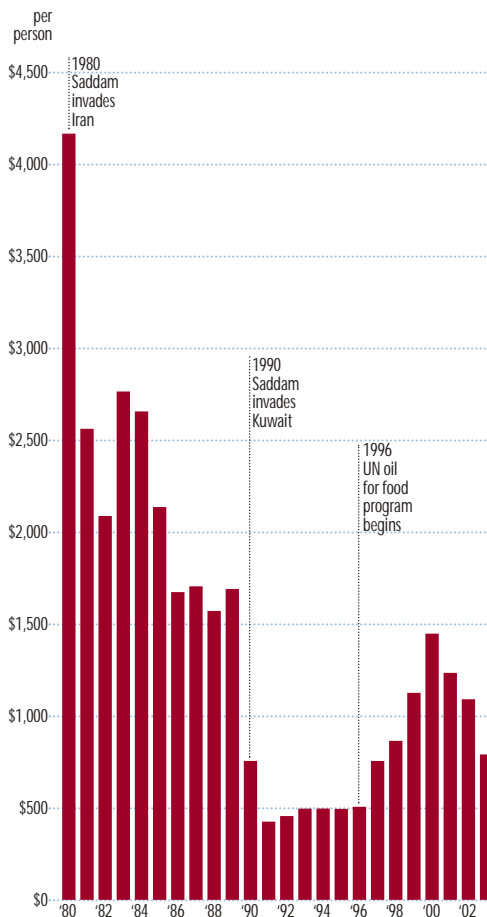
These economic reforms are generating jobs and can be expected to generate even more in the future, both in cities and on farms. As they take hold, they should attract

Results

- Launched new currency.
- Created more than 77,000 public works jobs for Iraqis.
- Helped set up a new system that allows 80 banks to send and receive payment instructions.
- Worked with Iraqi Treasury to finalize year-end financial statements of Iraq's two largest banks—the state-owned Rasheed and Rafidain, so that they met international accounting standards.
- Helped train staff to use a new accounting and financial reporting system. It will be used by all Iraqi treasury offices and ministries.
- Updated commercial laws for private sector and foreign investment; help develop the new company law.
- Worked with the CPA and UK Customs Service to design the reconstruction levy which imposes a five percent tariff on Iraqi imports.

donor and private investment as well as providing the conditions for a revived private sector to flourish. Transformation of the Iraqi economy will be one of the lasting benefits of the post-war reconstruction.

Iraq Gross Domestic Product



Source: Economist Intelligence Unit



Iraq's old currency was replaced January 15. The exchange put 4.62 trillion new dinars into circulation and destroyed the old currency with Saddam Hus-

sein's photo on the bills. The new dinar appreciated from 2,000 per U.S. dollar to 1,300 during the course of the conversion.

Restoring Date Palms and Open Markets

American aid is dredging canals in the ancient Fertile Crescent and improving its farms and orchards.

Ancient Mesopotamia was the place where man first learned the art of cultivating wheat and other foods. But the fertile lands between the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers, where for 8,000 years crops and livestock were raised, fell on hard times under Ba'ath Party neglect, and Iraq's farming system deteriorated, producing some of the lowest crop yields in the world.

Working with Development Alternatives Inc. (DAI), the United States is addressing the underlying causes of declining production. Focusing on improving production of grains, vegetables, fruits, livestock, dairy, and poultry, the program also emphasizes rural financial service, water management and soil reclamation. Beyond a series of quick-impact projects, the U.S. goal is a productive, employment-generating, market-oriented agricultural system over the next three to five years. Agriculture is the second largest employer in Iraq.

If the farms and pastures and date orchards of Iraq can be made to prosper once more, it will keep thousands of young people from migrating to the cities in search of jobs. It is often in the slums of such cities that youths are recruited into crime or radical ideologies out of frustration at their inability to find rewarding employment and training.



© Getty Images

American agricultural assistance is bringing new technology to Iraq's neglected

agricultural sector, including here at Ninawa.



© Getty Images

One program is supplying offshoots like these to 13 Iraqi governorates.

Date Palm Rehabilitation

Iraq once had the largest date palm tree orchards in the world, with over 30 million trees. But the Iraq-Iran War and the catastrophic destruction of the southern marshes cut that number in half, leaving many Iraqis without homes or income. Now, the Ministry of Agriculture has made date palm rehabilitation a priority.

Under an agreement signed February 7, 2004, USAID's Agricultural Reconstruction Development Program for Iraq will purchase 40,000 date palms for orchards and offshoot nurseries in 13 governorates, while the Ministry will provide land, personnel, logistics, and maintenance for the orchards. The agreement is particularly significant because there are 621 varieties of date palms in Iraq, but no existing orchards where certified date palm varieties can be purchased. Initially, therefore, the mother orchards will serve as a national register of varieties, and, future offshoots will be available for planting.



Iraq once had more date palm orchards than any other country. Under an agreement with the Ministry of Agriculture, the U.S. is helping restore the industry.

Results

- **Winter Crop Technology Demonstrations:** On 334 hectares in 15 governorates, 128 farm families are establishing plots with new crop varieties.
- **Kirkuk Veterinary Hospital Renovation:** A grant of \$96,000 is renovating this veterinary hospital.
- **Taza and Rashad Veterinary Clinic Rehabilitation:** A \$50,000 USAID grant will be matched by supplies and equipment from the Ministry of Agriculture. These rural veterinary clinics are the two principal sources of vaccines and medicines for animals in 125 communities.
- **Internet Connectivity and Repairs to a Student Union Building:** The Baghdad University School of Agriculture will receive a \$75,000 grant.
- **Seven grants totaling \$394,000** were approved in February 2004 to help rebuild veterinary programs in North and Central Iraq.
- **The Ministry of Agriculture is establishing 18 date palm nurseries** in an effort to re-establish Iraq's dominant position in the international date market.

Marshlands

A sheet of fresh water was released, raising hope that this vast ecosystem and the unique culture it sustained may some day be restored.

Driving east towards the Iranian border from Nasiriyah, one suddenly finds the land on either side of the road falls away to a flat, shimmering plain of water—the reviving Marshlands of Iraq.

Said by some to be the site of the Garden of Eden, the 8,000 square-mile marshlands were home to nearly one million Marsh Arabs or Madan before Saddam Hussein drained the marshes and slaughtered thousands after the Shiite revolt of 1991. Instead of slowly seeping through the marshes, nourishing the land, filtering the water, and supporting its reeds, fish and many Arab villages, Saddam's new drainage canals diverted the Tigris-Euphrates River system directly into the sea.

The loss of the Middle East's largest wetlands deprived millions of migrating birds of critical habitat and has become an ecological disaster on a scale similar to the drying up of the Aral Sea. Now the fresh waters have begun to return to the marshlands. As soon as the regime fell last year, Iraqi engineers reopened the dikes and cut some berms and dams that had been used to drain the lands and drive out the Marsh Arabs. By early October, the waters were rising over the arid



Marsh Arabs collect reeds in newly-re-flooded marshlands after dams built by Saddam

to drain the region were cut open to restore the water flow and revive the ancient

production of fish, birds, and plants.

desert flats, covering the thorny and useless plants that sprouted over the past decade where once fish, birds and animals thrived.

The United States has been helping to revive the ancient waterways, traditional villages and aquatic agriculture which not only served the Marsh Arabs but provided the number one source for protein in all of Iraq: water fowl, eggs, water buffalo, fish and milk.

Some Marsh Arabs have converted to dry farming in reclaimed lands drained in the last decade. They have found it profitable to raise crops and can be seen driving their tractors in tidy fields alongside the roads of Southern Iraq. They may be reluctant to have those fields reflooded and have made requests that

some of the dry areas remain as they have been this past decade.

In June, 2003, USAID sent the first team of water and soil scientists to the Marshes in years to talk to local leaders and determine what the Agency could do. In February, an Iraqi and international team, supported by USAID, convened in Basra and designed an action plan for the marshlands. The program created a long-term strategic plan for marsh management and will begin to restore the marshland ecosystem through improved management and strategic reflooding. It will also provide social and economic assistance to thousands of Marsh Arabs as they return to their homes.

Results

- Providing social and economic assistance to marsh dwellers.
- Funding soil and water quality lab at the new Center for Iraq Marshlands Restoration.
- Launching pilot projects to improve treatment of waste and drinking water.
- Improving healthcare.
- Creating jobs in fisheries, aquaculture, livestock production, and date-palm reproduction.
- Developing an integrated marsh management plan.

Reversing the Flow May Revive Abandoned Marsh Villages



Ben Barber/USAID

One expert from RTI discovered a pumping station that had lifted marsh waters over an earthen wall into a river, part of a mas-

sive effort to drain the marshes. RTI reverse-engineered the system to reflood that part of the marshes.



Ben Barber/USAID

Nearby stand the ruins of a village which was looted of everything after the residents fled Saddam's forces

and the retreating waters. If enough water can be restored, the marshlands may one day be reoccupied.

Mass Graves of Hussein Regime

USAID officers were among the first to visit Iraq's mass grave sites. More than 270 sites have been reported.

In early in May, 2003, Sloan Mann of USAID went down to Hillah to investigate some sites suspected of concealing mass graves. "I went there two days after the mass grave was discovered," Mann said. "When I showed up, people were randomly digging through the site... Children walked

barefoot in the grave. There were many families. Some were in mourning. Some were curious onlookers."

Spread out across the desert floor of Iraq's largest military base was a scene of horror: parents, wives, brothers weeping over the white cloth bundles that contained all that was left of their loved ones: bones, an identity card or an occasional watch or piece of jewelry.

Seized from their beds in the night at hundreds of Kurdish villages in the 1980s, or rounded up in broad daylight by Saddam's troops in the Shiite cities of the south in the 1990s, most victims had vanished without a

trace. Rumors of mass killings, shootings at the edge of mass graves, now proved horribly true.

What Mann found was one of the first of Iraq's mass graves. By January, 2004, 270 suspected mass grave sites had been reported, of which 53 were confirmed. Some graves hold a few dozen bodies; others go on for hundreds of meters, row after row of bodies. No one knows how many dead these graves hold. British Prime Minister Tony Blair said the toll is 400,000, while Human Rights Watch said 290,000.

Mann was one of the abuse prevention officers USAID sent to Iraq in the spring of 2003

Iraqis and U.S. aid workers dig up the first of hundreds of thousands of bodies left in mass graves by Saddam Hussein's regime.



Thomas Hartwell



Thomas Hartwell

Iraqis search for relatives and friends among victims found in a mass grave in Musayib, 75 kilometers southwest of Baghdad. The victims are thought to be from the 1991 uprising

against the Iraqi government. Wrapped in white cloth, they lie in a nearby youth center as they are identified by relatives on the bases of identity documents, clothing or jewelry found with the bones.



Thomas Hartwell

An Iraqi woman grieves over the remains of two family members, found in a mass grave site at Musayib.

Human Rights

to prevent revenge killings, attacks on vulnerable people or other abuse in the wake of the conflict.

Within a month of his visit to Hillah—he would later evaluate sites at Radwaniya Prison, Musayib, and at three locations around Mahaweel—the Agency was making grants to help Iraqis preserve the sites and exhume the bodies for proper identification.

Agency grants were made to the Free Prisoners Association, the Lawyers Association and human rights groups to buy computers and compile lists of the missing, to track suspected grave sites, link victims to their families, and safeguard documents relating to the torture, disappearance, and execution of hundreds of thousands of Iraqi civilians.

“Above all, if people in Iraq and around the world hope to learn from the crimes of the past, the mass graves of Iraq must be documented, reported and never forgotten or denied.”

Andrew S. Natsios,
USAID Administrator

There are three categories of mass graves:

● **Over-run sites:** disturbed by people seeking the remains of their missing relatives and friends. Since they are already dug up and it would be hard to stop people from completing their searches, USAID trains Iraqis to help the community emotionally and to collect whatever information is possible.

● **Humanitarian exhumation sites:** Professionals teach Iraqis how to put the bones together, identify remains and determine how victims died.

● **Full criminal investigation sites:** Between eight and 20 sites are to be selected for use in the Iraqi Special Tribunal established by the Iraqi Governing Council to try cases of crimes against humanity, war crimes, and genocide.



Thomas Hartwell

DART abuse prevention officer Jean Geran inspects mass grave near Basrah. Human Rights Watch estimates the site may contain several hundred people.

Iraqis identify the remains of a victim from a mass grave in Musayib. Some 270 mass grave sites have been reported throughout the country.



Thomas Hartwell

A man holds out an ID card found in a mass grave in Musayib, 50 miles southwest of Baghdad.



Sally Hodgson/Dept. of State

Negroponte Discusses Iraq

John Negroponte was named by President Bush to be U.S. Ambassador to Iraq and confirmed by the Senate May 6, 2004. In this interview, he describes the main mission of the U.S. embassy as helping the Iraqi people take control of their own affairs. The Embassy will play a supportive, not commanding role.

Q: What is your Mission Statement as the new U.S. Ambassador to Iraq?

A: I am honored to serve as the new U.S. Ambassador to Iraq and am looking forward to working with the dedicated men and women who will be serving in our new Embassy.

Our mission will be to help the sovereign government and people of Iraq take control of their own affairs and rebuild their country. The new U.S. Embassy will be a supportive rather than commanding presence on the ground, providing policy direction and coordination for all U.S. Government activities in Iraq except for U.S. forces.

Q: What will be your new Embassy's role in Iraqi democratization and economic development?

A: In partnership with the Iraqi people, the U.S. Embassy will support democratization and rule of law, promote economic development and support efforts to restore security and eliminate terrorism. The United States is also providing unprecedented funding and reconstruction assistance to help Iraq achieve a level of prosperity commensurate with its natural and human resources and proud history.

Q: Looking ahead, what do you see as your greatest challenges?

A: There are two primary challenges ahead of our Embassy staff. One is supporting political stability. We will help the Iraqi people establish a forward momentum for their new democracy and political development. Another challenge is security. In coordination with the U.S. and coalition military, we will seek to expand and improve the training of Iraqi forces—including their civil defense, police and military.

Q: What will be the role of the United States in the upcoming elections?

A: We commend the hard work of the United Nations elections team, headed by Carina Perelli, in preparing the groundwork for the Iraqi elections.

The U.S. Embassy will work with the Iraqi people, the independent Electoral Commission, and the UN as Iraq prepares voter rolls, trains election workers, designates polling stations and distributes ballots for parliamentary elections to be held by January 31 of next year.

Q: What is your vision of Iraq in the future?

A: As President Bush has said, a prosperous, stable and democratic Iraq is central to the peace and stability of the region. All of our efforts over the past year have sought to support the Iraqi people achieve this goal and ensure that the new, free Iraq will be a constructive presence in the region, with a government at peace with its neighbors and its own citizens.

John Negroponte

John Negroponte was named by President Bush to take over as U.S. ambassador to Iraq at the new embassy to be set up in Baghdad in July. Currently chief U.S. envoy to the United Nations, he was sworn in to that post on September 18, 2001, just after the terrorist attacks on Washington and New York.

Negroponte has served for 37 years in the Department of State as a career diplomat. He had eight different assignments abroad including membership in the U.S. delegation to the Paris Peace Talks on Vietnam in 1968 through 1969.

He served as ambassador to Honduras, 1981-1985; ambassador to Mexico, 1989-1993; and ambassador to the Philippines, 1993-1996. From 1996 to 1997 he was special negotiator for the post-1999 U.S. presence in Panama.

He also served as deputy assistant secretary of state for oceans and fisheries affairs from 1976 through 1979 and was deputy assistant secretary of state for East Asia and Pacific affairs in 1980. President Reagan named Negroponte deputy

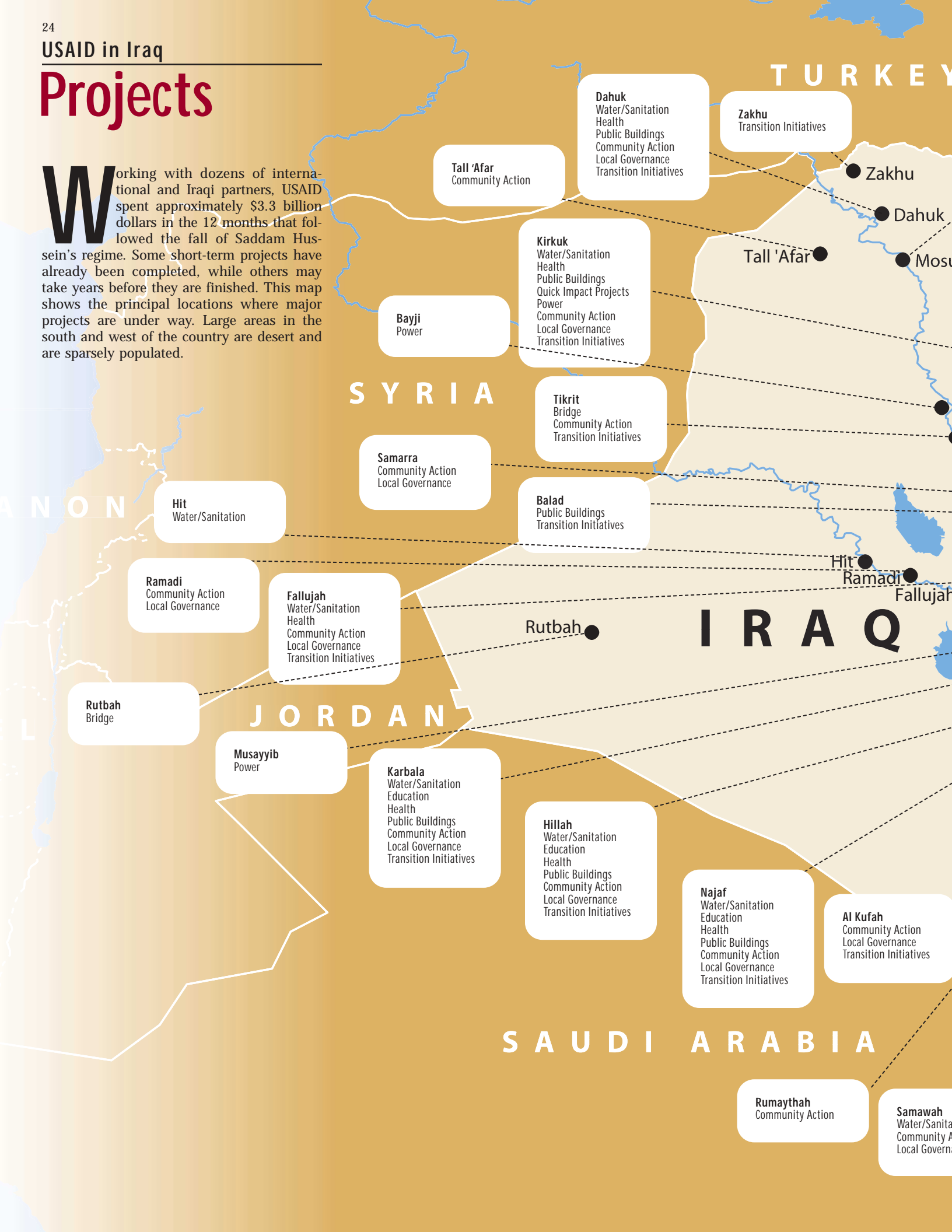


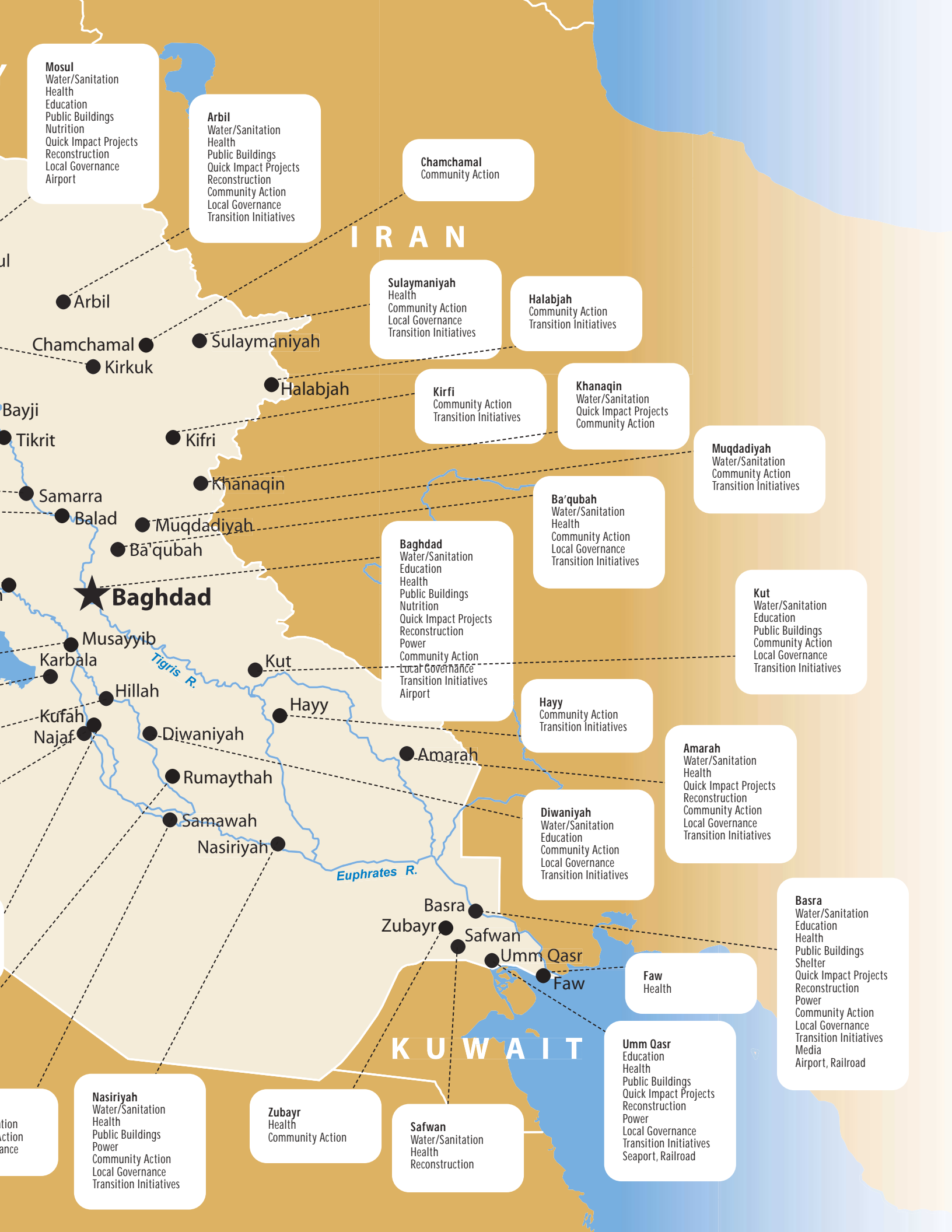
assistant to the president for national security affairs under General Colin Powell when the future secretary of state was the national security advisor.

From 1997 until he was called back to national service by President Bush in 2001, Negroponte was executive vice president for global markets of the McGraw-Hill Companies.

Projects

Working with dozens of international and Iraqi partners, USAID spent approximately \$3.3 billion dollars in the 12 months that followed the fall of Saddam Hussein's regime. Some short-term projects have already been completed, while others may take years before they are finished. This map shows the principal locations where major projects are under way. Large areas in the south and west of the country are desert and are sparsely populated.





IRAQ

KUWAIT

Mosul
Water/Sanitation
Health
Education
Public Buildings
Nutrition
Quick Impact Projects
Reconstruction
Local Governance
Airport

Arbil
Water/Sanitation
Health
Public Buildings
Quick Impact Projects
Reconstruction
Community Action
Local Governance
Transition Initiatives

Chamchamal
Community Action

Sulaymaniyah
Health
Community Action
Local Governance
Transition Initiatives

Halabjah
Community Action
Transition Initiatives

Kirfi
Community Action
Transition Initiatives

Khanaqin
Water/Sanitation
Quick Impact Projects
Community Action

Muqdadiah
Water/Sanitation
Community Action
Transition Initiatives

Baghdad
Water/Sanitation
Education
Health
Public Buildings
Nutrition
Quick Impact Projects
Reconstruction
Power
Community Action
Local Governance
Transition Initiatives
Airport

Ba'qubah
Water/Sanitation
Health
Community Action
Local Governance
Transition Initiatives

Kut
Water/Sanitation
Education
Public Buildings
Community Action
Local Governance
Transition Initiatives

Hayy
Community Action
Transition Initiatives

Amarah
Water/Sanitation
Health
Quick Impact Projects
Reconstruction
Community Action
Local Governance
Transition Initiatives

Diwaniyah
Water/Sanitation
Education
Community Action
Local Governance
Transition Initiatives

Basra
Water/Sanitation
Education
Health
Public Buildings
Shelter
Quick Impact Projects
Reconstruction
Power
Community Action
Local Governance
Transition Initiatives
Media
Airport, Railroad

Faw
Health

Umm Qasr
Education
Health
Public Buildings
Quick Impact Projects
Reconstruction
Power
Local Governance
Transition Initiatives
Seaport, Railroad

Nasiriyah
Water/Sanitation
Health
Public Buildings
Power
Community Action
Local Governance
Transition Initiatives

Zubayr
Health
Community Action

Safwan
Water/Sanitation
Health
Reconstruction

Arbil

Chamchamal

Kirkuk

Baghdad

Musayyib

Karbala

Hillah

Kufah

Najaf

Diwaniyah

Rumaythah

Sulaymaniyah

Kifri

Muqdadiah

Ba'qubah

Kut

Hayy

Amarah

Diwaniyah

Rumaythah

Samawah

Nasiriyah

Halabjah

Khanaqin

Baghdad

Musayyib

Karbala

Hillah

Kufah

Najaf

Diwaniyah

Rumaythah

Kirfi

Khanaqin

Baghdad

Musayyib

Karbala

Hillah

Kufah

Najaf

Diwaniyah

Rumaythah

Khanaqin

Muqdadiah

Ba'qubah

Kut

Hayy

Amarah

Diwaniyah

Rumaythah

Samawah

Nasiriyah

Muqdadiah

Ba'qubah

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Hayy

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Diwaniyah

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Samawah

Nasiriyah

Arbil

Chamchamal

Kirkuk

Baghdad

Musayyib

Karbala

Hillah

Kufah

Najaf

Diwaniyah

Rumaythah

Sulaymaniyah

Kifri

Muqdadiah

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Amarah

Diwaniyah

Rumaythah

Samawah

Nasiriyah

Halabjah

Khanaqin

Baghdad

Musayyib

Karbala

Hillah

Kufah

Najaf

Diwaniyah

Rumaythah

Kirfi

Khanaqin

Baghdad

Musayyib

Karbala

Hillah

Kufah

Najaf

Diwaniyah

Rumaythah

Khanaqin

Muqdadiah

Ba'qubah

Kut

Hayy

Amarah

Diwaniyah

Rumaythah

Samawah

Nasiriyah

Muqdadiah

Ba'qubah

Kut

Hayy

Amarah

Diwaniyah

Rumaythah

Samawah

Nasiriyah

Ten Major Achievements

USAID in Iraq, April 2003–March 2004

- 1 Prevented humanitarian emergency**
delivered 575,000 metric tons of wheat, reforming public distribution system. Page 4
- 2 Created local and city governments**
at more than 600 communities. Page 10
- 3 Restarted schools**
Fixed 2,500 schools; textbooks to 8.7 million students, supplies to 3.3 million; trained 33,000 teachers. Page 16
- 4 Vaccinated 3 million children**
Equipping 600 primary care health clinics and rehabilitated more than 60 others. Page 14
- 5 Providing safe water**
Expanding Baghdad water purification plant and rehabilitating 27 water and sewage plants. Page 6
- 6 Re-opened deep water port**
Dredged Umm Qasr, repaired equipment. Today it handles 140,000 tons of cargo a month. Page 5
- 7 Restoring electric service**
Repaired eight major power plants with CPA, adding 2,100 megawatts by summer 2004. Page 6
- 8 Helped CPA launch new currency**
and re-establish Central Bank. Page 18
- 9 Reviving the Marshlands**
Reflooding revives ancient way of life. Page 20
- 10 Established Good Governance**
Budgeting, accounting systems add transparency, accountability to ministries. Pages 10, 18

Thomas Hartwell

U. S. Agency for
International Development



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