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FACT SHEET

U. S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT (USAID)

USAID Overview

The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) is the U.S. Government foreign aid agency. Our Mission is to promote peace and stability by supporting the people of developing and transitional countries in their efforts to achieve sustainable economic and social progress, and to participate more fully in resolving the problems of their countries and the world.

USAID is an independent federal government agency that receives overall foreign policy guidance from the Secretary of State. Our work supports both short-term disaster response and long-term, equitable economic growth and advances U.S. foreign policy objectives

USAID/Iraq

USAID has been a major partner in the United States Government's (USG) reconstruction and development effort in Iraq. Since March 2003, USAID has invested nearly \$6.4 billion on programs designed to stabilize communities; foster economic and agricultural growth; and build the capacity of the national, local and provincial governments to represent and respond to the needs of the Iraqi people.

USAID works closely with a variety of United States Government agencies: international institutions such as the United Nations and World Bank; Iraq's national, provincial and local governments; and a network of partners that includes non-governmental organizations (NGOs), local community groups and Iraqi citizens to implement a variety of development programs. USAID efforts focus primarily on supporting the political, economic and security conditions necessary for a stable, prosperous and democratic Iraq.

Much of USAID's program coordination is carried out through 15 Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) and 6 embedded PRTs (ePRTs). Established by the Secretary of State on November 11, 2005, the Iraq Provincial Reconstruction Team Initiative is a civilian-military, inter-agency effort that provides the primary connection between the U.S. partners and provincial and local governments in all of Iraq's 18 provinces. The PRTs in Iraq are U.S. State Department entities and are led by a Foreign Service Officer. Within the PRT, there are both civilian and military personnel working in cooperation to achieve USG and GOI goals. As a matter of practicality and security, most of them are located on military bases.

In addition, many of USAID's implementing partners work from compounds in Baghdad outside the International Zone and in satellite offices around the country, to increase outreach and access to Iraqi counterparts, both in the government and throughout society.

The programs, which are designed to support USAID's strategy that seeks to enable Iraqis to complete the transition to a secure, free and prosperous state, include:

Focused Stabilization: Reducing the Incentives for Violent Conflict Participation

USAID's **Community Stabilization Program (CSP)** is in its final months of implementation. The program's focus has been to achieve economic and social stability in urban Iraqi communities by working directly with community groups, local government officials, PRTs and ePRTs to develop and implement activities that foster more productive and peaceful communities.

CSP consists of four major components:

- *Community Infrastructure and Essential Services* that provide short- and medium-term employment activities;
- *Vocational Training and Apprenticeships* that allow youth aged 17 to 35 to gain practical career experience through relevant course work;
- *A Business Development Program* that offers micro-grants and teaches business skills to new and existing businesses; and
- *Youth Activities* that engage young Iraqis through community centers, local sports clubs and neighborhood teams, drama performances, and art exhibitions.

Expanding Private Sector Economic Opportunities

Broad economic growth driven by a strong private sector is vital to alleviating poverty and instability in Iraq. USAID's economic-growth programs work to build capacity within the Government of Iraq (GoI) by facilitating public sector reform and private sector growth, providing better access to financial services, developing private agribusinesses, and creating an enabling environment that fosters private sector development.

USAID's current portfolio of economic growth and agriculture activities includes:

Economic Governance – USAID's economic governance program assists the Government of Iraq's efforts to create an economic policy environment that encourages investment, generate jobs and is transparent. To do this, USAID provides technical assistance and training services to help the financial, business and agriculture sectors.

- **Private Sector Development (Tijara)** – USAID's *Tijara* program supports nine new Iraqi-owned microfinance institutions (MFIs) established by its predecessor *Izdihar* project and three international MFIs. In addition to loan capital, the program provides training, technical assistance and other capacity building. In addition, *Tijara*, which means "trade" in Arabic, has helped establish the Iraqi Company for Bank Guarantees. This approach has helped develop profitable lending portfolios in private banks nationwide.

In addition to trade assistance, USAID has assisted the government in standing-up a National Investment Commission. This has included helping the Commission develop by-laws, implementing regulations for investment law, and a one-stop-shop to promote international investment in Iraq.

- **Agribusiness (Inma)** – *Inma*, which means *growth* in Arabic, focuses on developing Iraq's private agribusinesses by facilitating the formation of fully-integrated agricultural enterprises and improving agricultural quality and production. *Inma* connects farmers to markets, increases the competitiveness of Iraqi agribusinesses, and facilitates domestic and foreign partnerships. On-farm soil and water management is a companion activity.

Democracy and Governance Strengthening the Effectiveness of Local Government

USAID's Democracy and Governance Program is a multi-faceted initiative that encourages the integration of democratic principles into all levels of Iraqi government – national, provincial and local – to enhance the lives of Iraqis throughout the country. The program portfolio has four components:

- **Community Action Program (CAP)** – CAP III helps communities identify and prioritize local needs, such as school renovations, literacy programs, neighborhood cleanups, and sewerage and water system rehabilitations. It then develops and implements projects that address those needs through direct work with local councils. The effort is to improve the capacity of local councils to serve constituent communities and give Iraqi citizens a voice in decisions affecting their communities. The program also provides assistance to civilian victims of war through the Marla Ruzicka Iraqi War Victims Fund.
- **Local Governance Program (LGP)** – LGP III is designed to support implementation of Iraq's new law for governorates that are not incorporated into a region. Specific objectives are to define, strengthen and facilitate the operation of recognized local government bodies in relation to Iraq's prescribed governance systems by: enabling aspects of democratic representation in recognized local government bodies; engaging government bodies in sub-national planning processes; promoting the constructive, informed involvement of local government bodies in budget formulation and execution processes; and enhancing oversight functions of local government bodies.
- **Legislative Strengthening Program (LSP)** - The Legislative Strengthening Program is designed to improve the functioning of the Council of Representatives, the highest body of democratic institutions in Iraq, and support reform and institutional strengthening to better oversee government operations, legislate, and represent their constituents.
- **Elections Support** – USAID's Elections Support Program provides training and technical assistance to the Independent Higher Electoral Commission (IHEC) of Iraq to help that institution's staff become better able to plan and administer credible elections. The project implementer offers expert advice on drafting laws and regulations, and helps develop the capacity of the provincial election offices as well as mentoring the national electoral commission staff in such areas as finance and budgeting; information technology and communications; strategic planning; political party, candidate and voter registration; outreach and voter education; procurement; human resources management; logistics; and public relations/media.

Election strengthening activities include advisory input on how to develop an election management system, identifying improvements to electoral processes, drafting a public outreach strategy, and developing plans for a permanent and sustainable voter registry.

Improving the Capacity of National Government Institutions

USAID's **National Capacity Development program**, named *Tatweer* after the Arabic word for "development", works closely with seventeen ministries and executive agencies to increase their effectiveness in public administration. USAID/*Tatweer* assists the Government of Iraq (GOI) in

reforming internal operations and systems, implementing best practices and lessons learned, and applying international standards.

Core focus areas include strategic planning, budgeting and fiscal management, project administration, personnel systems, leadership and communications, information technology and anti-corruption. USAID/*Tatweer* works in all 18 Provinces and coordinates closely with the Deputy Prime Minister to assure that critical service delivery ministries have programs tailored to the individual needs of each province. All training is in Arabic and most is done outside Baghdad. The program maintains offices in Baghdad, Erbil, Ramadi (El Anbar); Hillah (Babil), Kirkuk, Basrah.

From among the 70,000 civil servants trained, 2,000 have been trained as trainers in their own right and will carry the program forward on a sustainable basis as USAID/*Tatweer* gradually phases out. As a result, nearly all training is being conducted by the Iraqi ministries themselves rather than USAID/*Tatweer*. This approach ensures future sustainability by providing the GOI with the capacity to take up the expense of identifying needs, selecting candidates, training candidates and monitoring performance.

Provincial Reconstruction Teams

USAID's PRT representatives coordinate a network of partners that implement development activities in the field. With expertise in a variety of disciplines – economic development, public administration and finance, agriculture, democratic governance and engineering, among others – USAID representatives and partners provide technical assistance to support Iraqi responses to a variety of community needs and challenges. PRTs assist in facilitating positive interactions with and among Iraqis, helping to bolster moderate factions that are committed to non-violence and promote reconciliation across sectarian divides.

- ***Iraq Rapid Assistance Program (IRAP)*** – IRAP offers grants through Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) and embedded PRTs to support activities that meet essential needs in their areas of operation. IRAP supports a wide array of Iraqi organizations, such as local indigenous groups, cooperatives, associations, informal groups, NGOs, local and provincial governments, private voluntary organizations, student groups, media and the private sector. Activities supported by IRAP include efforts to promote reconciliation, conflict resolution and prevention; advance economic recovery with employment and vocational training; support independent media with journalist training and law reform; and provide nationwide training to regional and locally elected officials.
- **Provincial Reconstruction Team: Local Governance Program (LGP-2E)** – The extended phase of the Local Governance Program (LGP-2E), which started January 2009, is designed to strengthen the performance of provincial government institutions to perform their functions as outlined in the new Provincial Powers Law and create a more responsive public administration. This is accomplished by building capacity for planning public investment in the provinces, executing provincial budgets, and strengthening transparency and accountability.

Humanitarian Assistance

The Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) within USAID facilitates and coordinates USG emergency humanitarian assistance overseas. In Iraq, OFDA provides assistance to Iraqis who have been forced to move elsewhere in the country due to sectarian strife, personal threats against their safety, or escalating violence within their communities.



Faced with more than 2.8 million internally displaced persons in Iraq, OFDA and its network of six NGO partners and three UN agency organizations are providing shelter, relief commodities (i.e., non-food items such as blankets and jerry cans), emergency health care, potable water and sanitation systems, income-generating activities, and host community/host family assistance. OFDA also coordinates relief efforts with the United Nations High Commissioner on Refugees and other international organizations.