



SUCCESS STORY

War Victim Becomes Entrepreneur

An assistance fund helps a bomb victim restart his life

Nawfal Sahar, a 25-year-old Iraqi man, was traveling along the road from Tikrit to Ramadi when air bombardment hit his car, injuring both Nawfal and his brother, and killing his uncle.



Photo: USAID

They were not the intended targets of the air raid, but Sahar and his brother found their lives suddenly altered by war. Left completely paralyzed from the waist down, Sahar could support neither himself nor his family. His helplessness dragged him into poverty and depression.

Through the Marla Ruzicka War Victims Assistance Fund, USAID was able to help Sahar reclaim his life. The program granted him \$3,860, which he used to establish a small shop attached to his home. His brother helps him run the shop. The grant enabled Sahar to provide for his family, and as he sells supplies and groceries to his neighbors,

Paralyzed from the waist down after a bombing, Nawfal Sahar used a USAID grant to open a meat shop, allowing him to generate income for his family again.

his confidence improves. Despite his disability, the shop has reintegrated him into the fabric of the community.

USAID has dedicated \$20 million to help Iraqis injured by Coalition Forces. The fund has helped over 350,000 Iraqis restart their lives after losing their homes, livelihoods, or loved ones to the conflict.

Since May 2003, USAID has helped Iraqis injured by coalition forces piece their lives and livelihoods back together. Over 350,000 Iraqis have benefited directly from projects completed under the War Victims Assistance Fund. The fund covers health care, income generation, and rehabilitation of destroyed homes, schools, and clinics. It also provides sustainable income for families that lost their main breadwinner, as well as prosthetics and medical treatment for survivors. U.S. Senator Patrick Leahy said the program shows the Iraqi people “the face of a compassionate America.”

The USAID-funded program was started by Marla Ruzicka, an American activist working to help the conflict’s victims reclaim their lives. She was killed in a roadside bomb in 2005 on the Baghdad airport road, but each day Iraqis like Sahar who have rebuilt their lives with help from the fund ensure that her legacy lives on.