



# Providing Sanitation to Iraq

## Creating a Sanitary Environment

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Many Iraqi cities and neighborhoods lack sewage treatment systems, threatening public health conditions, promoting disease, and creating unsanitary living conditions.

USAID, working in cooperation with Iraqis and the Coalition Provisional Authority, has identified the areas most in need of wastewater treatment and is implementing several projects to improve sanitation.

### Sewage Treatment

Iraq has **13 major sewage treatment plants**, but few are currently operational.

Countrywide, most sewage treatment plants were **only partially operational before the conflict**, and shortages of electricity, parts, and chemicals exacerbated the situation.

Baghdad's three sewage treatment plants, which together contribute three-quarters of the nation's sewage treatment capacity, are inoperable. **Raw waste from Baghdad's 3.8 million residents** currently flows untreated directly into the Tigris River.



*Above: Some residents of An Nasiriyah have to cross an open canal of wastewater to get to their houses in a residential area of Nasiriyah in southern Iraq. Photo: Thomas Hartwell*

*Below: Raw sewage is pumped into the Euphrates River at An Nasiriyah in southern Iraq. Wastewater treatment plant capacity was insufficient before the war, and many were looted in the aftermath. Photo: Thomas Hartwell*

### Community Action

Liquid and solid waste were uncontrolled in the neighborhoods of Ad Diwaniyah, creating abysmal living conditions for its residents.

In cooperation with local sanitation authorities, USAID Community Action Program partner Mercy Corps has begun work on upgrading sewage lift stations, extending stormwater trunks, and procuring jetty trucks.

Mercy Corps is also organizing a health and hygiene public education campaign and initiating beautification projects.



**In close cooperation with Iraqi nationals and the Coalition Provisional Authority, USAID is restoring critical infrastructure, delivery of healthcare and education services, expanding economic opportunities, and improving governance.**

## Protecting Public Health

Solid waste collection is substandard in most Iraqi towns, and accumulated garbage poses a threat to public health.

Piles of trash had accumulated on most corners of Al Akrad neighborhood in Al Hillah. Scorpions had infested the mounds, and stings were a common occurrence, especially among children. USAID partner CHF worked with the community to remove the trash and establish an enterprise to employ residents in ongoing trash collection.

In urban Kirkuk, four contractors have signed on to construct 400 solid waste collection points to improve sanitation and reduce public health risks. One hundred "Keep Your City Clean" signs are being painted in Arabic, English, and Kurdish to encourage residents to use the sites. The project is being implemented by USAID partner International Rescue Committee, which extended solid waste collection services to Haweja, a historically underserved city outside Kirkuk.

*Right: Multi-language posters are used to promote community involvement in USAID sanitation initiatives in Kirkuk.*



*Above: Baghdad's three sewage plants are inoperable. USAID Photo*

## Accomplishments

- Countrywide, USAID is restoring six large-scale sewage treatment plants, benefiting 5.5 million Iraqis.
  - All three of Baghdad's large-scale sewage treatment plants will be repaired and running at full capacity by October 2004, serving 3.8 million residents.
- Seventy of Baghdad's 90 non-functioning waste pumping stations have been rehabilitated.
- Sewage treatment plants in Diwaniyah and Karbala' are being repaired to serve 200,000 residents. Currently, untreated waste is discharged directly into the Euphrates River.
- USAID is rehabilitating An Najaf and Al Hillah sewage treatment plants to serve 194,000 residents.



# USAID

*"We believe in economies that reward effort, communities that protect the weak, and the duty of nations to respect the dignity and the rights of all." – George W. Bush*