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## *Three significant water projects ongoing in Erbil Province*

By LuAnne Fantasia  
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Erbil, Iraq - "Approximately 40,000 people will go from two hours of water every three days, to three or four hours of water everyday," said Younnis Talib, project engineer in the Erbil Resident Office.

A short distance from the Iraq/Iran border, the Sakran natural spring water flows into a recently constructed catchment, where a 5.5 mile pipeline carries it to a 450 cubic meter holding tank. Another five miles of pipe delivers the water to the town of Choman below and its two neighboring villages, where it connects to an existing water network.

"It is enough water to meet their needs because they don't have the same needs as someone living in Erbil, for example," Talib said.

At one point, local farmers prevented the contractor from working at the spring catchment area until the Kurdistan Regional Government negotiated a mutual agreement. Scheduled to finish mid-December, the Choman Water Project employs an average of 90 local Iraqi workers a day and is a \$1 million Economic Support Fund project. It is one of three water projects currently ongoing in the Erbil Resident Office.

### **Rosti Valley Phase II**

Over a year ago, Rosti Valley in the Erbil Province suffered devastating damage



Five miles of pipe delivers mountaintop spring water to the town of Choman below and its two neighboring villages, where it connects to an existing water network [USACE Photo by LuAnne Fantasia]

from a flash flood that gained power and speed as it descended the mountain, leaving remnants of bridges, homes, and river banks behind. Phase I of the Erbil Resident Office's Rosti Valley project replaced a critical bridge and provided a massive clean-up of the debris the flood left in its wake.



**Rosti Valley Phase I bridge:** During Phase I of the Rosti Valley project, a bridge was replaced that was critical for passage to 17 villages up and down the mountain river. This project also included the massive cleanup of debris from a flash flood in the spring of 2007. [USACE Photo by LuAnne Fantasia]



Engineer Younnis, project engineer in the Erbil Resident Office. [USACE Photo by LuAnne Fantasia]

Today, work is over 50 percent done on Phase II—a gabion weir and renovation of irrigation canal intakes along the mountain river that will minimize or diminish floods to come.

“We had to prevent future damage to the agriculture and irrigation for the people of these 17 mountain villages,” said Gailani Mahmud, project engineer in the Erbil Resident Office.

“A 7-meter gabion weir (about 23 feet) toward the top of the mountain provides most of the protection, because it breaks the initial current of flood waters. And, there are 15 other locations down river, each with a series of 3-meter gabions (about 10 feet),” he said.

The wire gabion baskets are assembled and filled with rock at different locations up and down the river in Rosti Valley and the project employs approximately 50 local workers a day, said Mahmud. “But it is hard work. The men physically break the rock out of the mountain or haul them from the river bed.”



Phase II of the Rosti Valley project is currently ongoing and will prevent future damage to the agriculture and irrigation for the people of the valley's 17 villages. A 23-foot-high gabion weir toward the top of the mountain provides most of the protection, breaking initial current of flood waters. There are 15 other locations down river, each with a series of 10-foot-high gabions, as seen in this photo. [USACE Photo by LuAnne Fantasia]

## Sareshma Water Project

A third water project in the village of Sareshma will provide clean water to approximately 15,000 Iraqi citizens. Construction on the \$1.3 million Economic Support Fund project has temporarily stopped due to disputes with neighboring villages. The Erbil office is working with the Governor of Erbil and the Deputy General to find a solution for the dispute. The project is scheduled to complete late November.



Approximately 40,000 people will go from two hours of water every three days, to three or four hours of water everyday when the Erbil Resident Office's project is completed [USACE Photo by LuAnne Fantasia]

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