



For Immediate Release
 October 9, 2008
 U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Trevino sees the Iraqis moving on with their lives

By LuAnne Fantasia
 Gulf Region North District



Trevino said his most rewarding experience during this tour in Iraq is the difference the Coalition Forces have made since his first tour in 2005. Although there is still a major gap in Iraq's social structure, he sees the Iraqi people moving on with their lives. [USACE Photo]

Kirkuk, Iraq – Wanting to help make a difference, Army Reserve Lt. Col. Mario Trevino from Nokesville, Va. volunteered for a year in Iraq arriving for duty in March and scheduled to redeploy in January 2009.

Trevino is an Engineer officer with the US Army Corps of Engineers Contingency Response Unit—a Reserve unit based at the USACE headquarters building in Washington, D.C. In his civilian life, Trevino is the Lodging Program manager for the U.S.

Navy, at the Navy Installations Command's Fleet and Family Readiness in the nation's capital.

"The US Army Corps of Engineers is the most important part of the reconstruction efforts here in Iraq," Trevino said. "Since the time when US troops arrived, rebuilding this country has required the expert and proven methods of construction that USACE has to offer...in addition to the expert and professional skills of more than 400 civilian and military volunteers who have answered the call of duty [in our

northern district]."

Since the Gulf Region Division's activation in 2004, the Kirkuk Area Office and its two resident offices oversaw project and construction management of some 284 reconstruction projects in the Kirkuk and Sulaymaniyah Provinces; totaling more than \$446 million. Projects include Transportation and Communication; Security and Justice; Oil and Electricity; Public Works and Water and Health and Education.



. Lt. Col. Mario Trevino, a resident of Nokesville, Va., feels he has helped make a difference for the people of Iraq. His mission in Kirkuk, Iraq with the US Army Corps of Engineers has been project and construction management; helping the Iraqi people rebuild their infrastructure after 35 years of neglect and conflict. Since the Iraq Reconstruction Program began in 2004, USACE has completed more than 4,000 projects nationwide. "I see the children's joy when we complete their new school. They'll be the next generation for this country, and I believe education is the key to their future." [USACE Photo]

"The predominant projects in our Kirkuk area have been 40 border forts [along the Iraq/Iran border in neighboring Sulayminayah Province]; 74 schools in both Kirkuk and Sulaymaniyah Provinces and the recently completed Kirkuk-to-Bayji Pipeline Exclusion Zone," said Trevino.

Begun in January 2007, the Pipeline Exclusion Zone is 80-kilometers of razor wire, fence, and anti-vehicle ditches and berms that immediately reduced theft, attacks and sabotage on the pipeline from the oil-rich fields of Kirkuk to the Bayji Oil Refinery. Today the project benefits the Government of Iraq to the tune of \$30 million daily.

Trevino sees the Corps of Engineers' footprint changing in Iraq now. "As U.S. reconstruction funding becomes scarce, and Iraqi funding begins to make its way to the continued reconstruction efforts, we [USACE] will probably see a lull in project development until Iraqi funding becomes available," he said. "In the mean time some of our efforts will be focused on other type of projects, such as Iraqi bases for their current military."

On a more personal level, Trevino wanted to help make a difference for the Iraqi people and he feels he has. "I see that our efforts in Iraq have provided better facilities, new roads, and new water systems. Those projects have given many Iraqi people a better life. I see joy in the children when we complete their new schools. They'll be the next generation for this country and I believe education is the key to their future."

Trevino said it has been his pleasure to meet and work with the local elders of many of the smaller villages; provincial governors and director generals in Kirkuk and Sulayminayah and the Iraqi military leaders.

"The commanding general of the Iraqi military forces in the Sulayminayah Province recently asked our Gulf Region Division commanding general to help them develop a plan for an Iraqi equivalent to the US Army Corps of Engineers. I hope I can help complete a written plan for that before I leave in January," said Trevino.

It has taken a long time for the Coalition Forces to build capacity within the Iraqi government and military, according to Trevino. "We're still working at it but we're getting closer than ever."

Note: LuAnne Fantasia is the public affairs officer for the Gulf Region North district, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Iraq. For more information, contact her at (540) 542-1437 or e-mail requests to luanne.fantasia@usace.army.mil. For more information on the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in Iraq, visit www.grd.usace.army.mil.