

Education in Iraq: A Cultural Battlefield

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Student Protests

Saturday vs. Thursday school

February 2005

- Sadr City, Entire student body of secondary girls school al-Fazilah went to school on Saturday, vowed sit-ins demanding Thursday/Friday holiday.
"We will keep going to school with determination and persistence."
"We can't be like Jews. Saturday is a Jewish holiday and I hope the government listens to us."
-comments of sixth graders
- Baqouba; High-schoolers protest against Saturday holiday.
- Samarra; The al-Mutawakal high school remained open on Saturday after its teachers received death threats if they took the day off.

Other Current Problems

- Fear of kidnapping
- Children working
- Children joining militia groups
- Sectarian groups trying to install headmasters

Schools under Saddam

- Prior to mid 1980s **school was one of best in Middle East**
 - science and math
 - almost universal primary enrollment

- 1990s **decline in education**
 - Education Budget from 5% GNP through 1989 and \$620 per student.¹
 - to 3.3% of GNP in 1990 with only \$47 per student (largely Oil For Food Programme).¹
 - Teachers Monthly salary 8,000 – 20,000 Dinars (\$5 - \$13).¹

- In 1990s **schools in high disrepair**
 - 83% of schools in disrepair, especially in central and southern Iraq²

- By 2000 **23% primary school aged children not in school**
 - High impact on rural girls (only 50% in school).¹

- “Hundreds of Thousands” students dropped out because of excessive fees and bribes³

- Patriotism Teaching, murals and propaganda

¹Dr. Ala'din A.S. Alwan, Minister of Education. “Education in Iraq: Current Situation and New Perspectives, A report on the situation today and our strategies for the immediate future. Iraq Ministry of Education, 2004. http://www.iraqcoalition.org/ES/Iraqmoe_sit_analysis.pdf

² Global Policy Froum. Iraq Sanctions: Humanitarian Implications and Options for the Future. August 6, 2002. <http://www.globalpolicy.org/security/sanction/iraq1/2002/paper.htm>

³ USAID. A Year In Iraq: Opening Schools. July 13, 2004. Schools and Education. http://www.usaid.gov/iraq/pdf/AYearInIraq_education.pdf

State of Schools 2003

- May 2003 – “end of the war”
 - Approx. 200 schools destroyed¹
 - 197 burned after war¹
 - 2,753 looted after war¹
 - Most schools lacked plumbing, lighting, desks, windows and doors²
 - Curriculum hadn't been updated for 20 years¹
 - Only 1 in 6 students had textbooks²

1 Global Security.org, “Ministry of Education: Education Fact Sheet” Most statistics from UNICEF and UNESCO. <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/iraq/education.htm>

2 USAID Iraq Education Program, Overview Year One. May 2003 – March 2004. http://www.usaid.gov/iraq/pdf/iraq_year1_overview.pdf

Education Stakeholders: instilling new norms

- USAID
- United Nations
- World Bank
- Ministry of Education (MoE)
- Teachers
- Students
- Political Aspirants

International Stakeholders: USAID

- USAID was working closely with CPA
- Education allocated 2% of IRRF \$18.4 billion
= \$368 million¹
- USAID Dual Strategy: focus on emergency actions to support the resumption of schools while laying the foundations for critical reforms²

¹ Jabareen, Yosef. *The Politics of Reconstructing Iraq*. Class Lecture. April 4, 2005. M.I.T. Department of Urban Studies and Planning. From PCO allocation chart.

² USAID Iraq Education Program, Overview Year One. May 2003 – March 2004. http://www.usaid.gov/iraq/pdf/iraq_year1_overview.pdf

International Stakeholders: USAID

- Iraq Education Program Year One (May '03 –March '04)¹
“RISE” Rehabilitation of Iraqi Schools and Stabilization Program
-mostly through contractors and partners
 - Rehabilitation of 2,358 schools
 - Edited all primary and secondary school math and science textbooks
 - 8,759,260 textbooks distributed
(70% printed in Iraq, 30% in Jordan)
 - Distributed student and teacher kits, desks, chairs, cabinets, chalkboards
 - “Back to School” Campaign in August 2003
 - Secondary school teacher training
 - Set up education management information system
 - Establish 2,700 Parent Teacher Associations

- Iraq Education Program Year Two (July '04 –July '05)²
 - Goals:
 - 162 “centers of excellence” model schools
 - Early childhood learning –television programming
 - Continue
 - Teacher training
 - Rehabilitation of schools
 - MoE infrastructure

¹ USAID Iraq Education Program. Overview Year One. May 2003 – March 2004. http://www.usaid.gov/iraq/pdf/iraq_year1_overview.pdf

² Creative Associates International, Inc. Iraq/ Education II. http://www.caii.com/CAIStaff/Dashboard_GIROAdminCAIStaff/Dashboard_CAIIAdminDatabase/CAIAdminProjectDetails.aspx?PDDSurveyID=1127

International Stakeholders: USAID

- USAID primary education partners
 - Consultants
 - Creative Associates (contract \$ 157 million for 3 years)
 - United Nations
 - UNICEF (\$7 million grant)
 - UNESCO (\$10 million grant)

Contracting Creative Associates International (CAI)⁴

USAID “expedited process”

“shall request offers from as many potential sources as is practical under the circumstances”

Two week RFP for 5 contractors, only CAI responded, CAI subcontracted 2 of other 5, CAI subcontracted by RTI

90 % of CAI business comes from USAID

Director is wife of General Accounting Office accountant, Director of RISE is former head of education for USAID, Deputy director former Chief of Staff at USAID, Deputy Secretary of State advisor and “good friend” of John Gannon, Director of NIC

- USAID secondary education partners
 - Consultants
 - Bechtel (\$ 680 million for 18 months)²
 - Research Triangle International
 - Development Alternatives, Inc.
 - NGOs
 - Save the Children
 - Mercy Corps
 - ACDI-VOCA
 - CHF
 - International Relief
 - Iraq Foundation (trained 64,000 secondary school teachers in 18 governorates –not Kurdish 3)³

USAID Iraq Education Program, Overview Year One. May 2003 – March 2004

²*BBC News. Bechtel wins giant Iraq contract. 17 April, 2003. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/business/2957875.stm>*

³*The Iraq Foundation. Revitalization of Iraqi Schools and Stabilization of Education, Teachers' Training in Iraq. June 2003 to March 2004.*

⁴*The Center for Public Integrity. Windfalls of War: Creative Associates International Inc. April 18, 2005. <http://www.publicintegrity.org/wow/bio.aspx?act=pro&ddlC=11>*

International Stakeholders: USAID

Total Schools Rehabilitated in Iraq with USAID Funding

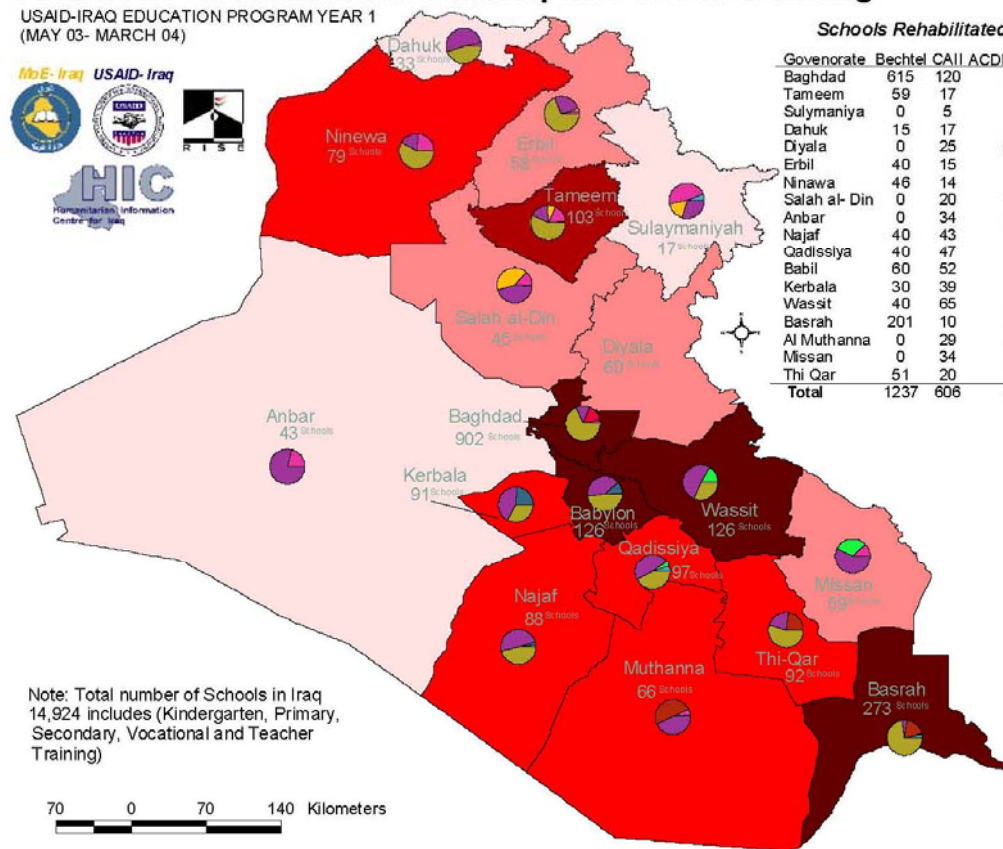
* Rehabilitated Schools as of March 30 2004 - 2358

USAID-IRAQ EDUCATION PROGRAM YEAR 1
(MAY 03- MARCH 04)



Schools Rehabilitated by USAID Partners per Governorate

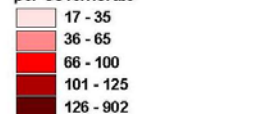
Governorate	Bechtel	CAII	ACDI/VOCA	CHF	IRD	MC	SAVE	OTI	RTI	Total	Per Gov.
Baghdad	615	120	0	0	140	0	0	27	0	902	902
Tameem	59	17	8	0	0	0	0	18	1	103	103
Sulymaniya	0	5	3	0	0	0	0	8	1	17	17
Dahuk	15	17	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	33	33
Diyala	0	25	34	0	0	0	0	1	0	60	60
Erbil	40	15	1	0	0	0	0	2	0	58	58
Ninawa	46	14	0	0	0	0	0	19	0	79	79
Salah al-Din	0	20	19	0	0	0	0	6	0	45	45
Anbar	0	34	0	0	0	0	0	9	0	43	43
Najaf	40	43	0	3	0	0	0	0	2	88	88
Qadissiya	40	47	0	0	0	5	0	0	5	97	97
Babil	60	52	0	13	0	0	0	0	1	126	126
Kerbala	30	39	0	22	0	0	0	0	0	91	91
Wassit	40	65	0	0	0	21	0	0	0	126	126
Basrah	201	10	0	0	0	0	51	2	9	273	273
Al Muthanna	0	29	0	0	0	0	33	3	1	66	66
Missan	0	34	0	0	0	18	0	7	0	59	59
Thi-Qar	51	20	0	0	0	0	21	0	0	92	92
Total	1237	606	65	38	140	44	105	103	20	2358	



Percentage of Schools Rehabilitated by USAID Partner by Governorate



Density of Schools Rehabilitated per Governorate



Note: Total number of Schools in Iraq 14,924 includes (Kindergarten, Primary, Secondary, Vocational and Teacher Training)

70 0 70 140 Kilometers

Bechtel
(1,237 schools)

CAI
(606 schools)

International Stakeholders

■ United Nations

■ UNICEF –with \$ 7 million from USAID

- National **school survey** of 2004 and analysis submitted to MoE for approval
- Distributed **kits** of pencils, notebooks, pens, pencils, ruler, eraser to 560,000 kids
- **Train** 250,000 primary school teachers
- Develop Education Sector Coordination Plan

USAID Iraq Education Program, Overview Year One. May 2003 – March 2004. http://www.usaid.gov/iraq/pdf/iraq_year1_overview.pdf

■ UNESCO –with \$10 million from USAID

- 3.1 million science **textbook printing** project (in Iraq and Jordan) updating and removing Ba'athist propaganda
- Train MoE to edit, print and distribute textbooks
 - Feb 2005 took 24 MoE supplies directors to Cairo to learn about textbook production and distribution

“though there appears to be corruption in the printing industry, the new textbooks are getting to schools across the country. Thieves are not interested in taking them as they are in stealing more lucrative items such as computers and air conditioners, also being sent to schools as they are repaired.”

-Paul Gibbings, director of the UNESCO textbook printing project

IRIN News.org. UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. “Iraq: Printers unhappy with loss of textbook contracts .” April 27 2004.

http://www.irinnews.org/report.asp?ReportID=40781&SelectRegion=Iraq_Crisis&SelectCountry=IRAQ

■ World Bank (from multi-donor Iraq Trust Fund)

■ Emergency **Textbook** Provision Project¹

- \$ 40 million
- 69 million textbooks for 2004/05 school year (only 20% printed in Iraq caused protests)
- Finished: May - December 2004

■ Emergency **School Reconstruction** and Rehabilitation²

- \$60 million
- 100 schools reconstructed
- 140 schools rehabilitated
- Ongoing: October 2004 – June 2007

¹The World Bank. Project Information Document. Report AB869. Iraq: Emergency Textbook Provision Project. PID Prepared: May 19, 2004.

²The World Bank. Project Information Document. Report AB727. Iraq: Emergency School Rehabilitation Project. PID Prepared: April 11, 2004.

Local Stakeholders since March 2004

■ March 2004

Baghdad Educational Symposium; educators, business, civic, political and religious leaders¹

“Changing Iraq’s curriculum is a **holy duty**” -Interim President Chalabi. IGC

¹The Coalition Provisional Authority March 30, 2004. *Second National Seminar on Strategies and Curriculum Reform of the New Education System*. Ministry of Education, Iraq. http://www.iraqcoalition.org/pressreleases/20040330_ed_symposium.html

Principles of education reform

Principle 1 Must be based on objective study and evaluation of the current situation, and a precise diagnosis of the problems of the current system and the obstacles facing reform and rebuilding.

Principle 2 In order to **guarantee the participation of all sectors of Iraqi society** in the reform process, the responsibility of reforming the education system must extend beyond the Ministry of Education and its institutions.

Principle 3 All decisions concerning reform of the curriculum must be strictly Iraqi and in line with Iraqi values and culture. . . that aims at a **proper building of the Iraqi personality**

Curriculum left by Saddam is “static, harsh and highly politicized”

These reforms require **filtering out political pressure, propaganda**, and violent tendencies from the curriculum
- Minister Ala’din Alwan

■ April 2004 CPA handed over MoE to Iraqis

■ July 2004 –post CPA²

- Still need 4,000 to 5,000 new schools
- Students attending school in 3 shifts
- Plan to build 500 schools in 6 months
- Minister of Education Sami Al Mudhaffer, criticized CPA coordination with MOE
 - schools reconstructed twice
- Avoid curriculum **about Saddam**
 - “we don’t want to bother the students with him” or
 - “you could do it in one lecture”

² EducationNews.org. *Christina Asquith Interview with Iraq’s new Minister of Education, Dr. Sami Al Mudhaffer to talk about education reform, terrorism and teaching democracy*. Tuesday, July 6, 2004. <http://www.educationnews.org/interview-with-iraq-new-minister-of-ed.htm>

Local Stakeholders early 2005

- Ministry of Education
 - Continued school rebuilding –decentralized to Director Generals of Education in Governorates
 - TV education broadcasting
 - Curriculum and science program for all grades
 - 6 hours each day, 7 days a week
 - Previously existed until 1993

Reconstruction of Iraq

Do these activities measure up to Robert C. Orr's *(Winning the Peace: an American Strategy for Post Conflict Reconstruction, Washington, D.C. : CSISPress, c2004.)*

“10 principles for Cooperation and Strategic Approach

Yes No

	Yes	No
1 People of the country must own the reconstruction process		★
2 Coherent International Strategy based on internal and external parties interests	★	
3 Holistic reconstruction, broad range of interrelated tasks		
4 Security is a must		★
5 Success is made on the ground		
6 Needs must be prioritized and activities sequenced	★	
7 International intervention should not undermine local leaders, institutions and processes		
8 Sustaining resources (especially funding)	★	
9 Accountability and human rights training		
10 Timeline should be driven by situation		

Revisionist History?

Japan's Ministry of Education has edited from junior high school textbooks:

- The US acted 'unilaterally'
- Changed 'battlefield' to 'noncombat area'
- WMDs were not found in Iraq
- Other selective exclusions from
 - early 20th century invasions of China and Korea
 - Japan's roles in WWII

Revisionist History?

- Scholastic: US company for educational materials

[Images removed for copyright purposes]

Lasting Effects

Dangerous to politicize education

. . . but almost impossible not to.

What Iraqis and others will remember about
this period of history remains to be seen.