

United States Civilian Engagement with Iraq

Under the terms of the **U.S.-Iraq Strategic Framework Agreement**, we are building a dynamic partnership with the Iraqi government and people. U.S. government agencies are working to support Iraq's development in a range of sectors, including education, energy, trade, health, culture, law enforcement, and judicial cooperation. Examples of this cooperation include:

Agriculture: The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) seeks to help Iraq develop a food and agricultural system that is competitive, sustainable and globally integrated. Experts from USDA are providing technical assistance in areas such as food safety, soil and water policy, and education initiatives. USDA recently arranged a visit to Baghdad for representatives from the most prominent agricultural firms in the United States to meet with Iraqi counterparts to explore commercial ties. To complement these efforts, USAID is working to strengthen Iraq's private agribusinesses and to connect local Iraqi farmers to national markets.

Commerce/Trade: The U.S. Department of Commerce works to enhance U.S.-Iraqi commercial relations by providing U.S. companies with guidance on how to do business in Iraq. The Department of Commerce also works to facilitate commercial exchanges between U.S. and Iraqi companies. For example, the Department of Commerce is arranging a visit of U.S. companies to Iraq this fall to explore business opportunities. The Secretary of Commerce co-chairs the U.S.-Iraq Business Dialogue, a group of U.S. and Iraqi private sectors representatives who advise the Department of Commerce and Iraqi Ministry of Trade on private sector views, needs, and concerns regarding economic development in Iraq. Through the Commercial Law Development Program (CLDP), Commerce is helping to create a modern commercial law framework in Iraq that facilitates foreign trade and investment.

Culture: As part of the Iraq Culture Heritage Project, the Department of State is working with the Iraqi government to make improvements to the Iraq National Museum, to establish a national conservation training institute in Irbil, and to provide training opportunities in the United States for Iraqi cultural heritage professionals. The Department of State is also working with the World Monuments Foundation and the Iraqi State Board of Antiquities on the Future of Babylon project, which aims to develop a site management plan for Babylon.

Economics: The U.S. Department of the Treasury is facilitating Iraq's engagement with the IMF and World Bank. The Department of Treasury also provides technical assistance to improve Iraq's public financial management, Central Bank of Iraq operations, and Iraq's financial sector. USAID-supported microfinance institutions focus on youth entrepreneurship and long-term employment generation. Beyond micro-finance lending, USAID supports the expansion and diversification of the non-oil economy through support for small and medium business lending.

Education: Iraq has the largest Fulbright Foreign Student program in the Middle East, providing opportunities for Iraqi students to study, research and teach in the United States. In addition, the Department of State has established a Fulbright Visiting Scholars Program for Iraq. This summer 25 Iraqi professors, administrators and deans, from a number of universities across Iraq, are spending ten weeks at American universities to participate in programs on Education, Public Health, Linguistics, Science and Technology, and Engineering.

Energy: The U.S. Department of Energy is providing regulatory training to officials in the Iraqi Ministry of Electricity. This initiative is conducted under a cooperative agreement with the U.S. National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners and will transfer best international practices for electricity regulation and pricing to the Iraqi regulatory body. The Department of Energy will also design and implement an initiative with the Iraqi Ministry of Oil to improve Iraq's capacity to capture and utilize associated natural gas currently being flared, including to support the development of a domestic gas market.

Health: The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) has partnered with the Iraqi Ministry of Health in the training of physicians, epidemiologists, and mental health professionals in areas such as mental health, field epidemiology, and drug dependency. USAID provides technical assistance in public administration management to the Ministry of Health. USAID also disburses grants to non-governmental organizations and UN agencies to support maternal and child health, community-based water/sanitation and hygiene, and mobile clinics for vulnerable populations and displaced persons.

Homeland Security: The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) provides executive-level advisory assistance to the Iraqi government to develop comprehensive border, transportation, and critical infrastructure security programs. U.S. Coast Guard personnel are working closely on maritime security initiatives. These include in-country training to Iraqi maritime forces in Engineering and Logistics, Small Boat Operations, and Outboard Engine Maintenance.

Interior: In support of the development of Iraq's energy development, the U.S. Department of the Interior is providing technical and programmatic advice to Iraq's Ministry of Oil to improve the ministry's ability to work on tendering, resource evaluation (both geologic and economic), field operations, information technology, and revenue management.

Justice: The U.S. Department of Justice is helping Iraqis establish an effective, fair and accountable system of justice under the rule of law. Justice attorneys and law enforcement agents are working with Iraqi judges, prosecutors, and investigators to build the capacity of the Iraqi justice system to address major crimes, including terrorism. Justice advisors are also providing assistance and training to Iraqi corrections officials to help Iraq build and maintain a humane and secure prison system.

Transportation: The U.S. Department of Transportation is helping Iraq modernize and secure its air and sea ports. The Department of Transportation is also facilitating the improvement of Iraq's surface transportation network, including road, rail, and intermodal linkages. Personnel from the Department of Transportation are working with Iraqis to rehabilitate the transportation infrastructure. The United States Trade and Development Agency, in coordination with the U.S. Department of Transportation, hosted an Iraqi delegation of officials led by the Iraqi Minister of Transportation earlier this year. The Iraqis visited aviation and maritime port facilities in the Washington, D.C. area, Louisiana and Oklahoma to explore technologies and systems that could be applicable in Iraq.