

AFTER YEARS IN TURMOIL, IRAQ DEVELOPS

Categories: Hygiene Assistance/ Education Assistance/ Culture/ WASH

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Hygiene Assistance

For the Children in Iraq



Above: Students of Al Etemad Intermediate Girls School.

Did you know that during the 1970s and 1980s Iraq had one of the best education systems in the Middle East? Unfortunately, the Gulf War and Iraq War deteriorated the education system and left very little budget allocated for bettering the schools. It is important that the children receive proper education in a safe environment. For this reason, JEN's projects on renovation school facilities and promoting hygiene education gives hope to the Iraqis.

Currently we are working on renovating the 10th and last school for our current project. This school, called Al Etemad Intermediate School, is located in Babil Governorate, which is south of Baghdad. At the school, we have removed old plasters and toilets in order to install new toilets, sinks and pipes. Because we have already provided workshops on hygiene education for the teachers, the students will now learn the material in school. We are excited to see the outcome of the hygiene education promotion and hope that many students will begin to practice proper hygiene behaviors.

Education Assistance

Engaging Parents in Our Projects

A meeting was held with parents and the headmaster from Al-Etemad Intermediate Girls School in Babil Governorate. So far the headmaster is very pleased with the school's renovation work done by JEN. He has heard from the cleaning staff that the once dysfunctional and dirty latrines are now very clean and easy to use. To JEN staff members, he said, "School repair assistance from JEN allows students to improve their health conditions, and as a result, the level of their education will also improve."

The parents were also very happy with the improvement in their children's health and hygiene awareness. One parent said, "The school's latrines were so dysfunctional before, and now that they are so clean, my child says that she likes the toilet facility at her school better than the one in our home." Many parents expressed their appreciation for JEN for providing cleaning materials and hygiene kits to the school because it is apparent that they have succeeded in raising awareness for hygiene.

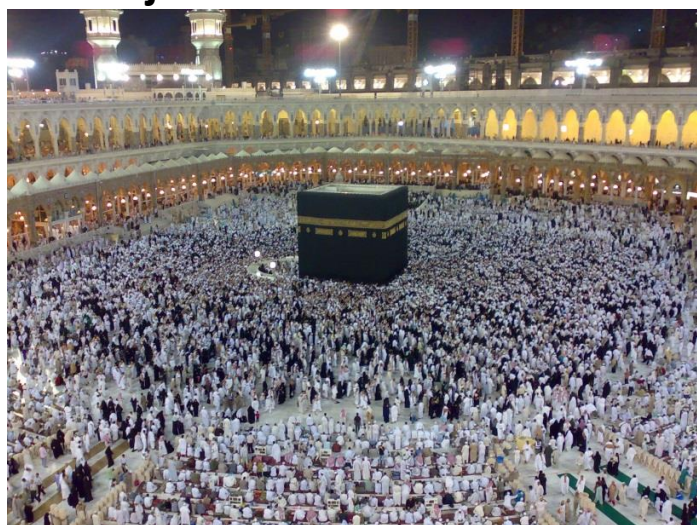


Above: Parents attend a meeting to discuss the school.

COUNTRY: IRAQ

Culture

The Haj



Above: Millions gather to for The Haj in Mecca, Saudi Arabia.

Every year Muslims from all over the world try to take part in Al-Haj, which is an Islamic Pilgrimage to Mecca, Saudi Arabia and the largest gathering of Muslims in the world. This year the gathering took place on October 14, 2013. Al-Haj is one of the five pillars of Islam and a religious duty that must be carried out by every Muslim, who has the ability and financial resources, once in his/her lifetime.

The selection of pilgrims in Iraq is done by a nomination and results in about 30,000 pilgrims every year. Due to construction in Mecca, Saudi Arabia asked that each Muslim country decrease the number of pilgrims by 20% this year. Therefore, this year around 6,000 Iraqi pilgrims were unable to take the journey.

Al-Haj is a demonstration of the solidarity of the Muslim people and their submission to God. During this gathering, men dress in ihram, which is a garment of two white sheets with sandals, and women dress in a white dress and cover their head with Hijab. Around 3 million pilgrims gather for the week of Al-Haj to perform a series of rituals. Each person walks counter-clockwise seven times around the Kaaba building then runs back and forth between two hills called Al-Safa and Al-Marwah. Then they drink from the Zamzam well and go to Arafat Mountain to stand in vigil to throw stones in a ritual throwing of stones on the Devil. The final stage is shaving their heads, perform a ritual of animal sacrifice, and celebrate the four days of Eid Al-Adha which is a big celebration for Muslims.

WASH

Safe and Comfortable Latrines

Om Salama Intermediate School for Girls in Diyala Province has changed drastically thanks to JEN's project. During the assessment of the school, there were girls returning to their homes to use the bathroom and other girls, whose homes were too far, would go to the school fence and use water bottles in place of a toilet.

The headmaster explained that the school has been suffering from this situation for a very long time and that she asked the Department of Education for assistance. However, there is a long waiting list and a limited amount of resources.

Because of the situation, the headmaster did not believe that JEN would renovate the school. When JEN completed the project, which included fixing the electrical network system, latrine, door, and roof, the headmaster was very grateful.



Above: A newly renovated bathroom facility in the Om Salama Intermediate School for Girls.

DONATE NOW AND HELP THE CAUSE!

NGO JEN (Japan Emergency NGO)

7/F, Daini Tobundo Bldg, Ageba-cho, Shinjuku,
Tokyo, JAPAN 162-0826

Phone: (81) 3-5225-9352 / Fax: (81) 3-5225-9357

Email: info@jen-npo.org / web: www.jen-npo.org

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