



For Immediate Release
November 10, 2008
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Success at Al Hillah Hospital renovation measured in heartbeats, non-stop care

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Al Hillah, Iraq — How do you measure success?

“Regarding the \$7 million newly-renovated Al Hillah Maternity and Children’s Hospital, located in Babil Province, it’s more than bricks and mortar — it’s all about saving lives,” said U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Construction Representative Edward Jones.

Like many USACE military, civilian and contract employees serving in Iraq, Jones will soon return home knowing his efforts directly benefitted thousands of Iraqi families.

“There are many stories that I will take away from this project but there is one that will stay with me forever,” Jones said. “On our final site visit to the hospital, I saw a father hurrying in, carrying his small son. The boy appeared to be unconscious and the man was very upset.”

Although worried about the child, Jones said this event gave him an unexpected understanding and closure to the project. “I was concerned for the child but confident that he was going to receive the quality care that could make all the difference. This scene may have played itself out hundreds of times over the four-year span of this project, but for me it was a first, and that image is a memory I’ll keep forever.”

The rehabilitation included new nurses’ stations, doctors’ offices, an operating room, patient rooms, kitchen and cafeteria. “From a construction standpoint, the facility received a face lift that includes new lighting, ceramic tile, ceilings, flooring, paint and more. Upgrades were also made to the mechanical, communications and

electrical systems, including the installation of new oxygen generators, a heating/cooling system, two 1000kVA generators, a reverse osmosis water purifier, and a medical waste incinerator. A new electrical synchronization switch gear allows multiple generators to operate together meeting load requirements of the facility,” Jones said.



U.S. Ambassador to Iraq, Ryan C. Crocker, presents gifts to one of the young patients at the Al Hillah Maternity and Children’s Hospital Oct. 30. (USACE Photo)

“The list of hospital improvements is impressive. But the success of this project, as I see it, is measured by the people this facility helped

during its renovation. This is a maternity and children's hospital. Its name says it all. Iraqi families found quality professional medical care when they needed it, and that's why this project touches your heart," Jones continued. "To my knowledge this facility never closed its doors at anytime during the renovation. Considering the hospital sees an average of 500 people daily, with 300 requiring an overnight stay, keeping those doors open was vital to the well being of the entire community."

Throughout Iraq, USACE has renovated 40 hospitals and an additional 13 are ongoing.



USACE Construction Representative Edward Jones (left) says hello to a young Iraqi patient and her father following a ribbon cutting ceremony at Al Hillah Maternity and Children's Hospital Oct. 30. (USACE Photo)

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