



<Back | 

For Immediate Release
Jan. 30, 2007
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Iraqi village shows what working together can accomplish

by Norris Jones
Gulf Region Central District
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Baghdad, Iraq— A small town in north Baghdad Province provides a positive glimpse of Iraq's future. Assriya Village, located outside Camp Taji, has about 4,600 residents representing all sects.

"Assriya" in Arabic means "modern" and its name exemplifies the way residents treat each other. They worked together to build a Women's Center that officially opened in August and today that facility is producing apparel for children.

The \$230,000, 400-square-meter facility includes 12 sewing machines and 12 computers to encourage female business opportunities. Local residents have sewn dozens of dresses, sold many in the local market, and are now looking to expand their business enterprise.

They are working with Camp Taji to open a store there. They also are contacting Baghdad merchants about the possibility of selling their apparel.

Col. Debra Lewis, commander of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Gulf Region Central District, recently visited the facility and talked to those operating it. "It's great to see the community's positive outlook and pride in what the Center represents," she said.

Lewis brought with her 16 boxes of fabric, thread and other sewing items donated by Americans wanting to help. (The Daughters of the American Revolution and Seattle churches are among those supporting the effort.) Six of the local women who are part of the work force all expressed their sincere appreciation.



[USA]

Lewis plans to continue seeking stateside support for this facility, and doing whatever else she can, after seeing the impact that it has on that community, she said.

On a sad note, the local village's leader, Sheik O'Rahman Hama Raheem, was kidnapped on a trip into Baghdad in December and later killed. He was the town's biggest advocate to get the Women's Center up and running. His son, Sheik Luqman Raheem, has taken over and is continuing his work. Luqman thanked Lewis for the donations saying it helps local families better their lives.

The 414th Civil Affairs Battalion at Camp Taji was responsible for getting the project funded through the Commander's Emergency Response Program. USACE oversaw the construction of the facility. Cpt. William LeFever with the 414th says Luqman has done a great job getting the Women's Center going and also has plans to open an Internet cafe there to generate even more revenue for the

Note: For additional information, contact Norris Jones, Public Affairs Specialist at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Gulf Regi District at (540) 665-2644 or Norris.Jones@tac01.usace.army.mil. For more information on the U.S. Army Corps of Engine email cegrd.pao@tac01.usace.army.mil or visit ourWeb site at www.grd.usace.army.mil

[Privacy and Security Notice](#) | [Contact Us](#)

