

7-2008

Water Resources Training Needs In Iraq: Experiences Of Some American Water Engineers

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Recommended Citation

Neilson, Bethany and McKee, Mac, "Water Resources Training Needs In Iraq: Experiences Of Some American Water Engineers" (2008). 2008. Paper 10.
http://opensiuc.lib.siu.edu/ucowrconfs_2008/10

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Water Resources Training Needs In Iraq: Experiences Of Some American Water Engineers

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Water Resources Training Needs In Iraq: Experiences Of Some American Water Engineers

The obvious focus in Iraq has been generally on the political instability and violence in the area. However, the Iraqi economy has been largely based on oil for decades, which has left other sectors of the economy to stagnate. In particular, Iraqi agriculture was left by the former régime to become inefficient, and now cannot compete regionally or internationally. In partnership with several other land-grant universities under a cooperative agreement with the US Department of Agriculture, the Utah Water Research Laboratory of Utah State University has had the opportunity to be one of the first water research and training organizations to meet extensively with Iraqi practitioners and learn about the current state of knowledge associated with water resources management in Iraq, especially with respect to irrigated agriculture. Over the last year, a number of training sessions covering irrigation, water resources management, and water quality have been held involving more than 100 Iraqi agricultural extension representatives. The contact with these Iraqis has provided insight regarding their current knowledge and practices, future educational and training needs, and potential political barriers associated with developing and implementing effective water management regulations and institutions. These insights, possible solutions, and future educational outreach in Iraq will be presented.