



Overview

Tracing its origins back to the end of the 7th century AD, Wassit is situated on Iraq's eastern border with Iran. The governorate is an important trade route for goods being transported to Iran, north to Baghdad or south to Missan along the Tigris River. Clashes between local militias and government forces persisted in the latter half of 2008, but the situation became calmer during 2009.

Wassit has potential for growth and diversity in its agricultural and industrial output. Agriculture has suffered from increased water salinity, low utilisation of modern farming techniques, urban-rural migration and the use of farmland for military purposes. 38% of jobs in the governorate are in the agricultural sector, which may be a factor behind the low unemployment rate in rural areas (10%, compared to a 15% national average). However, many of these jobs are unpaid and 17% of rural children aged 5-14 are in employment. This implies that, while the agricultural sector is labour-intensive, it is largely informal and lacks in profitability. Industrial activities like the textile factory in Kut (the governorate capital), Al-Na'maniya's district's food-packaging plant and Badra's gravel quarries could provide a basis for industrial expansion, but lack of regulatory framework and investment incentives hinder the sector's development. Currently, unemployment in the governorate capital, Kut, is 15% and higher in other urban areas at 18%.

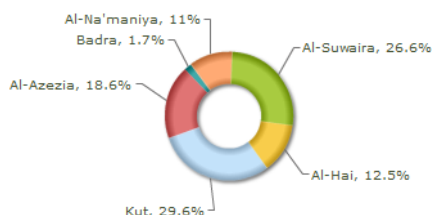
Wassit lags behind in many key aspects of development. 35% of the population lives below the national poverty line. All districts apart from Badra and Al-Suwaira suffer from high poverty levels. Male and female illiteracy is above the respective national averages of 11% and 24% in all districts. The primary school enrolment rate in urban areas (88%) is in line with the national urban average (89%). However, rural enrolment rates (66%) are well below the national rural average of 77%, and primary school enrolment among rural girls is just 58%. Badra and Al-Suwaira suffer from poor access to the water network, poor sanitation and chronic malnutrition. Wassit's electricity supplies are reliable compared to the rest of Iraq.

Wassit hosts a large number of post-2006 IDPs, most of which were displaced from neighbouring Baghdad and Diyala. Access to employment opportunities is a priority for 81% of these IDP families, while 71% require food. 89% of IDP families have no income source through employment. Access to the Public Distribution System varies widely according to location. 52% of Wassit's IDP families intend to integrate into their current location.

Al-Suwaira, Badra, Al-Na'maniya and Al-Hai have been selected as priority districts for the UN's 2010 Iraq Humanitarian Action Plan.

Demographics

- Governorate Capital:** Kut
- Area:** 17,153 sq km (3.9% of Iraq)
- Population:** 1,064,950 (4% of total)
Source: GoI COSIT (est. for 2007)
- Gender Distribution:** Male: 50% Female: 50%
- Geo Distribution:** Rural: 48% Urban: 52%
Source: GoI COSIT (est. for 2007)



Iraq Millennium Development Goals

Indicator	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
Proportion of population below National Poverty Line (\$2.2 per day) (%)	22.9	34.8							
Poverty gap ratio at National Poverty Line (%)	4.5	19.0							
Prop. of pop. below min. level of dietary energy consumption (%)	7.1	n/a							
Net enrollment ratio in primary education (%)		84.8	79.5						
Net enrollment ratio in secondary education (%)		36.7	13.8						
Enrollment ratio of females to males in primary education (%)			84.8	91.5					
Share of women in wage emp. in non-agricultural sector (%)			7.4	5.2					
Proportion of seats held by women in national parliament (%)			27.3	33.3					
Under-five mortality rate (for every 1,000 live births)				41.0	45.0				
Proportion of 1 year-old children immunised against measles (%)				81.0	88.0				
Proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel (%)					88.5	77.5			
Proportion of TB incidence for every 100,000 of the population						12.4	42.0		
Proportion of detected TB cases cured under direct observation treatment (%)						86.0	90.0		
Proportion of population using an improved drinking water source (%)							79.0	71.0	
Proportion of population using an improved sanitation facility (%)							83.9	77.0	
Cellular subscribers per 100 population (%)								78.0	78.5
Proportion of families owning a personal computer (%)								11.8	3.4

■ Current National [Total] ■ Current Sub-National [Wassit]

