



Overview

Located on Iraq's southern border with Saudi Arabia, Muthanna is Iraq's second largest governorate, but also the second least populated. The landscape is dominated by desert, with natural water sources confined to the northern areas around the Euphrates River. The capital, Samawah, lies near the site of the ancient city of Uruk, which dates back to the 4th millennium BC. Uruk was one of the world's first major cities, and is the source of the oldest known script.

Although the Provincial Governor was assassinated in August 2008, the security situation remains generally calm. The Provincial Council attributes the lack of violence to the common tribal and religious heritage of Muthanna's population and the lack of unresolved territorial issues in the governorate.

The governorate has potential for economic growth in agriculture and manufacturing of salt, cement, bricks and textiles. Manufacturing and agriculture combined provide 44% of jobs in the governorate. The Provincial Government aims to develop these sectors further and take advantage of the border with Saudi Arabia to make the governorate a major thoroughfare for trade and pilgrims. Unemployment in the governorate is high at 25%, rising to 28% in rural areas, while female labour force participation is very low at 10%. In addition, 40% of jobs in the governorate are unwaged, half of which are in agriculture. The underdevelopment of the governorate's economy may be contributing to the large proportion of the population (49%) living below the national poverty line, the highest in Iraq.

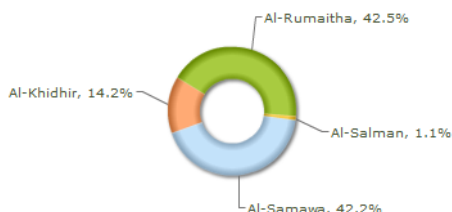
Having suffered from chronic underdevelopment since the 1980s, Muthanna consistently fares poorly according to humanitarian and development indicators. Illiteracy, particularly among women, is widespread, averaging 36%. The youth illiteracy rate (29%) is one of the highest in the country. Primary and intermediate education enrolment rates in rural areas are far below average, with just 7% of rural girls aged 12-14 enrolled in intermediate education. Connection to the general water network is poor compared to the rest of Iraq, but electricity supplies are relatively reliable.

Muthanna hosts few IDPs compared to other governorates, but they are also among the worst off in Iraq. The majority of post-2006 IDPs are Shi'a Arabs who fled the violence in Baghdad and Diyala. Over half (57%) are under the age of 18. Over three quarters of IDPs cite shelter as a major need, while two thirds require access to employment and over half require food.

Al-Salman and Al-Kithir have been selected as priority districts for the UN's Iraq Humanitarian Action Plan 2010.

Demographics

- Governorate Capital:** Samawah
- Area:** 51,740 sq km (11.9% of Iraq)
- Population:** 614,997 (3% of total)
Source: WFP VAM (2007)
- Gender Distribution:** Male: 50% Female: 50%
- Geo Distribution:** Rural: 56% Urban: 44%
Source: GoI COSIT (est. for 2007)



Iraq Millennium Development Goals

Indicator	Current National [Total]	Current Sub-National [Muthanna]
Proportion of population below National Poverty Line (\$2.2 per day) (%)	22.9	48.8
Poverty gap ratio at National Poverty Line (%)	4.5	14.0
Prop. of pop. below min. level of dietary energy consumption (%)	7.1	n/a
Net enrollment ratio in primary education (%)	84.8	75.3
Net enrollment ratio in secondary education (%)	36.7	9.8
Enrollment ratio of females to males in primary education (%)	84.8	83.0
Share of women in wage emp. in non-agricultural sector (%)	7.4	4.3
Proportion of seats held by women in national parliament (%)	27.3	40.0
Under-five mortality rate (for every 1,000 live births)	41.0	43.0
Proportion of 1 year-old children immunised against measles (%)	81.0	80.7
Proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel (%)	88.5	84.7
Proportion of TB incidence for every 100,000 of the population	12.4	53.0
Proportion of detected TB cases cured under direct observation treatment (%)	86.0	91.0
Proportion of population using an improved drinking water source (%)	79.0	53.1
Proportion of population using an improved sanitation facility (%)	83.9	76.4
Cellular subscribers per 100 population (%)	78.0	73.1
Proportion of families owning a personal computer (%)	11.8	4.9

Legend: ■ Current National [Total] ■ Current Sub-National [Muthanna]

