



SNAPSHOT

Smashing a Social Media Milestone



The USAID-Foras Facebook page recently surpassed 100,000 Likes, which gives the project significant power to reach out to a key demographic—young, tech-literate Iraqis.



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In two months, the Iraq Opportunities Project (USAID-Foras) has garnered 100,000 “Likes” on its Facebook page.

When Facebook users “Like” a page, that page’s posts and updates will appear on the user’s news feed. This means USAID-Foras can shoot job announcements, training videos, and similar content to more than 100,000 news feeds.

Facebook allows USAID-Foras to open a direct channel to a crucial demographic—young, tech-literate Iraqis. Of those who have “Liked” the page, 90 percent are 34 years old or younger.

The Facebook page has directly contributed to an increase in traffic on the project’s jobs portal, www.foras-jobs.com. When the page first launched, portal traffic hit around 600 unique users on peak days. Currently, that figure has doubled, with more than 1,200 unique users on peak days.

The page has also succeeded in kick-starting a dialogue on the private sector. One post in particular—a profile of Moby Group, a Baghdad-based IT group that advertises open positions on the jobs portal—generated a slew of comments and questions. Because swift and attentive responses are needed to sustain the conversation, USAID-Foras has hired an Iraqi social media expert.

Going forward, the project will seek to encourage Iraqis to communicate about the private sector, using the Facebook page as a venue to air their aspirations, concerns, frustrations, and successes. Ideally, the page will become a forum of knowledge and awareness about the private sector in Iraq.

The USAID/Iraq mission, recognizing the significance of this milestone, celebrated the project’s efforts with an event at the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad. Mission Director Sarah Ann Lynch recognized the project’s outreach efforts, remarking specifically on the growth of the jobs portal.

“I’m told *Foras* now has the biggest employment portal in Iraq,” she said.

USAID-Foras will now explore branching into other forms of social media—like LinkedIn, for example, which will allow the project to network with Iraqi businesses, recruitment agencies, and professionals.