



U.S. CIVILIAN RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION

The Iraqi Virtual Science Library, a program of the U.S. Civilian Research and Development Foundation, has forged a new partnership with the Center for International Science & Technology Policy (CISTP) of the George Washington University. Initially launched in January 2006 through sponsorship by the U.S. Departments of State and Defense, and managed by the U.S. National Academies of Science, the IVSL was developed to provide Iraqi scientists with access to research information from the world's leading scientific, engineering and technical publishing houses and societies. The program has been in the trust of the U.S. Civilian Research & Development Foundation (CRDF) since July 2006 and has since developed into a collection comparable to that of any university in the United States or Europe. CRDF has partnered with the CISTP to leverage our in-house capacity to manage and enhance the services available through the IVSL in the coming months.

Designed to supplement the resources already available to Iraq through other international programs, the content of the IVSL is focused primarily on chemistry, engineering, mathematics and physics. Thousands of high-quality publications are available through publishers such as the American Chemical Society, Elsevier, and IEEE. Multidisciplinary resources providing access to leading scientific journals in the social sciences, such as JSTOR, have also been made available through the portal. In 2006, nearly 2,000 registered users downloaded more than 124,000 articles overall. In 2007, both the number of registered users and the number of downloads doubled – representing more than 19,000 article downloads per month.

The technical infrastructure of IVSL is a unique platform built and maintained by the Defense Technical Information Center (DTIC). Due to security and connectivity concerns in Iraq, the IVSL operates on a secure server housed in the U.S. which registered users can access from any internet facility. Each user is vetted through their institution and must keep their own username and password to help ensure the security of the content and the preservation of the legal rights of publishers.

In order to develop a sustainable model, the National Academies of Science and later CRDF negotiated a pricing structure with each of the publishers who provide content to IVSL. Through the cooperation and generous contributions by publishers and scientific societies, deep discounts ranging from 90-100% of the list price of journal databases were provided to help build the content of the library. Pricing has been secured through 2010, so that an effective transition to Iraqi administration can be ensured at the end of 2009.

In 2008, thanks to a grant from the Department of State's Iraq Relief and Reconstruction Fund, CRDF and CISTP will expand the IVSL into the Research & Education Portal for Iraq (REPI). REPI will increase the reach of the





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IVSL beyond the initial 11 partner institutions to cover all public universities in Iraq. A separate grant from the Department of Energy will ensure access for employees of the Iraqi Ministries of Oil and Electricity. CRDF and GW will soon be developing a separate site which make available Iraqi publications, both archives and current articles, available on the web in an open access model, in order to raise the profile of Iraqi research internationally.

For more information, please visit the IVSL website: <https://www.ivsl.org>

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