

Project Update: February 2016

The regional government has stopped development-related work because of internal and external conflicts in Kurdistan, northern Iraq where our project is centred. Despite this we interviewed locals at our study sites.

Locals said that gravel mining became uncontrolled in the 1990s (when government authority stopped and farmers received less support). Many farmers sold their lands along the river to the miners to survive despite the damage caused to the rivers.

One Goptapa farmer stated, “They changed our landscape, they made a giant hole in the river. We lost all our trees and wild animals.... our water levels declined because of the river’s destruction.”

Attitudes over Basara Dam are more split. One 50-year old shepherd was in favour of the dam, but another, 20-year old Bakhteyar from Khewata Village said, “When this ugly dam is finished, we will lose all these birds and animals.”



Left: Interview with Shepherds at Basara Dam Site. Photo by WI. Right: Interview with farmer Rasul Qader at Gotapa. Photo by WI.



Left to right: Basara Dam; Goptapa area, gravel mine; Interview at Bara Dam; Looking for dragonfly at Basara Dam.