

My submission is titled, "A potential solution for Iraq, explained." Throughout the fall semester in ENGH 302 (Advanced Composition), I researched how the U.S. invasion of Iraq in 2003 has resulted in chronic instability in the country, and what policy options are available to address the issue. My project is an audio/visual script for a video essay/ explainer video in the style of Vox. I discuss funding Iraqi NGOs through the Global Fragility Act to support development and create much-needed avenues for cooperation between civil society and government.

Client:	ENGH 302	Date:	December 6, 2021
Title:	A potential solution for Iraq, explained	Written by:	Delaney Soliday
Script Version:	01		
Time	Video	Audio	
00:00	U.S. president George W. Bush walks across the deck of the USS Abraham Lincoln toward a podium. [“Highlights of address from US president re: Iraq war” 00:03-00:15]	MUSIC: patriotic fanfare (<i>stops when he reaches the podium</i>)	
00:12	President Bush is speaking at a podium on deck in front of a crowd of Navy sailors. [“Highlights of address from US president re: Iraq war” 00:20-00:30]	BUSH: Major combat operations in Iraq have ended. In the battle of Iraq, the United States and our allies have prevailed.	
00:32	Cut to crowd of military members cheering. [“Highlights of address from US president re: Iraq war” 00:33-00:35]	Crowd claps and whistles.	
00:34	President Bush is speaking at a podium on deck in front of a crowd of Navy soldiers. [“Highlights of address from US president re: Iraq war” 02:22-02:40]	BUSH: The transition from dictatorship to democracy will take time, but it is worth every effort. Our coalition will stay until our work is done. And then we will leave – and we will leave behind a free Iraq.	
00:52	Cut to black screen.	NARRATOR: Unfortunately, that statement would prove to be far from the truth.	
00:55	GFX: A newspaper uncrumples onscreen, revealing a New York Times front-page photograph of President Bush standing a podium onboard USS Lincoln in front of a ‘Mission Accomplished’ banner and a headline that reads “Bush Declares ‘One Victory in a War on Terror’” (photo source: RetroNewsNow via Twitter).	SFX: paper rustles and crinkles NARRATOR: President Bush gave that speech aboard the USS Abraham Lincoln on May 2, 2003, in front of a banner displaying the message ‘Mission Accomplished.’	
01:02	GFX: A cut-out of a 2003 issue of TIME Special Edition magazine is slapped on top of the newspaper; the headline reads, “Mission Not Accomplished: How Bush	SFX: magazine slaps down on top of newspaper	

01:05	<p>Misjudged the Task of Fixing Iraq” (photo source: content.time.com).</p> <p>GFX: Various other newspapers and magazines showcasing coverage of the 2003 invasion, the U.S.’s complex military history in the country, and the emergence of ISIS are piled on top of the original two sources in rapid succession.</p>	<p>NARRATOR: The first Iraq War would continue for another <i>eight years</i>, and the United States would re-enter the country just two years later in 2013 as part of an international coalition to help defeat the Islamic State, which declared a caliphate in Iraq and Syria in June 2014.</p>
01:19	GFX: screen pauses	SFX: click when the screen pauses
01:21	GFX: screen takes on the staticky effect of an old television, then rewinds through footage played thus far in video	SFX: tape rewinds
01:24	GFX: screen completely dissolves into pixelated static noise	SFX: static noise crackles and whines
01:26	<p>President George W. Bush appears onscreen, seated at his desk in the Oval Office, delivering a speech to the camera. [“2003: President Bush announces invasion of Iraq” 00:00-00:12]</p>	<p>BUSH: My fellow citizens– at this hour, American and coalition forces are in the early stages of military operations to disarm Iraq, to free its people,</p>
01:38	<p>U.S. soldiers crouch beneath an underpass, taking cover behind concrete pillars. [“2003 Operation Iraqi Freedom – firefight footage aired on MSNBC – 3rd ID” 00:19-00:24]</p>	<p>and to defend the world from grave danger. On my orders,</p>
01:43	<p>U.S. tank charges out from beneath a concrete underpass. [“2003 Operation Iraqi Freedom – firefight footage aired on MSNBC – 3rd ID” 02:29-02:35]</p>	<p>coalition forces have begun striking selected targets to undermine Saddam Hussein’s</p>
01:49	<p>A soldier fires a long-distance weapon; then the camera cuts to a shot of a group of U.S. soldiers leading a line of prisoners across a parking lot and into a warehouse. [“2003 Operation Iraqi Freedom – firefight footage aired on MSNBC – 3rd ID” 13:12-13:19]</p>	<p>ability to wage war. These are opening stages to what will be a broad and concerted campaign. [2003: President Bush announces invasion of Iraq” 00:00-00:30]</p>

01:56	<p>NBC news clip from Colin Powell’s 2003 address to the United Nations; on-screen text reads, “Secretary of State Colin Powell addresses the United Nations Security Council on possible weapons of mass destruction in Iraq.”</p> <p>[“From 2003: Colin Powell Addresses United Nations Security Council On Iraq” 00:09-00:18]</p>	<p>BUSH: The people of the United States and our friends and allies will not live at the mercy of an outlaw regime that threatens the peace with weapons of mass murder.</p> <p>[2003: President Bush announces invasion of Iraq” 02:57-03:06]</p>
02:05	<p>GFX: A bar graph titled, “US and Foreign Deaths in Post 9/11 Wars” from the Costs of War Project, Watson Institute, and Brown University shows the total numbers and locations of casualties in the U.S.’s Middle Eastern post-9/11 conflicts. A second horizontal bar graph portrays the monetary costs of these wars.</p> <p>(source: USA Today News)</p>	<p>NARRATOR: So, how did we get here? The United States has had a long and checkered history in the Middle East, and its relations with Iraq have suffered as a result. Its wars in the country have stretched on for decades, costing hundreds of thousands of civilian and military lives and trillions of dollars.</p>
02:21	<p>GFX: A white timeline scrolls across the middle of a black screen, stopping at 1979. Above it is an archival edition of the New York Times with the following article highlighted– “Bakr Quits in Iraq, Names Hussein.” The camera zooms in on the article.</p>	<p>NARRATOR: The United States supported Saddam Hussein when his Baath Party seized control of Iraq in 1979,</p>
02:26	<p>GFX: The timeline scrolls to and then stops on 1980 before slowly sliding from 1980 to 1988 while the NARRATOR speaks. Above the date is a front page from the New York Times with the following article highlighted– “U.S. Secretly Gave Aid to Iraq Early in Its War Against Iran.” The camera zooms in on the article.</p>	<p>NARRATOR: ...and again during the Iran-Iraq War between 1980 and 1988– even providing Iraq with chemical weapons.</p>
02:31	<p>GFX: The timeline scrolls to and then stops on 1990. Above it is a page from the New York Times with the following article highlighted– “Arab of Vast Ambitions: Saddam Hussein.” The camera zooms in on the article– a profile of Hussein detailing his invasion of Kuwait.</p>	<p>NARRATOR: In 1990, the US went to war with Iraq for the first time as part of an international coalition to oust Saddam Hussein’s forces from Kuwait in the first Gulf War.</p>
02:40	<p>GFX: The timeline scrolls to and then stops on the date September 1, 2001.</p>	<p>NARRATOR: Then came 9/11, and with it–the start of the War on Terror.</p>

02:43	<p>A video clip above the timeline plays a news clip from CNN showing the second plane hitting the South Tower of the World Trade Center. [“9/11: Second plane hits South Tower” 01:14-01:24]</p> <p>GFX: The timeline scrolls to and then stops on October 7, 2001.</p> <p>A video clip above the timeline plays a clip from CNN showing bin Laden walking in the middle of a crowd of soldiers dressed in religious garb pointing machine guns at the sky. [“CNN: The life of Osama bin Laden” 02:07-02:11]</p>	<p>NARRATOR: The United States invades Afghanistan in pursuit of Osama bin Laden on October 7, 2001.</p>
02:47	<p>GFX: The timeline scrolls to and then stops on 2003. A map of the Middle East appears above the timeline; Iraq is highlighted with a bold, white outline. The camera zooms in on Iraq.</p>	<p>NARRATOR: 2003. The War on Terror continued, and President George W. Bush set his sights on Iraq. Why? The goal of <i>this</i> war was to:</p>
02:54	<p>GFX: animation of bald eagle flying over map and George W. Bush giving a thumbs-up from the side of the frame</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • impose democracy in Iraq and
02:56	<p>GFX: animation of American soldiers handcuffing rebel jihadist fighters waving machine guns</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • remove threats to American security–
02:58	<p>GFX: animation of American soldier removing Saddam Hussein from Baghdad on the map and throwing him out of Iraq</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • including Saddam Hussein and
03:00	<p>GFX: animation of U.S. soldiers confiscating RPGs and large bombs, packing them into American trucks</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the weapons of mass destruction top American national security officials believed he possessed.
03:04	<p>A U.S. military vehicle drives out of Iraq at sunrise. [“Final U.S. troops leave Iraq” 02:00-02:03]</p>	<p>NARRATOR: The last U.S. troops left Iraq on December 18, 2011 after occupying the country for eight years.</p>
03:09	<p>A montage of ISIS fighters firing weapons and waving the group’s black flag. [“A brief history of ISIS” 00:06-00:10]</p>	<p>NARRATOR: An international coalition would be created to counter ISIS less than three years later–</p>

03:13	<p>GFX: Timeline scrolls backwards, showing the U.S.’s history of involvement in the Iraq and accompanying media previously shown in the video.</p>	<p>a threat which many say emerged as a direct result of U.S. “hyperinvolvement” in Iraq and in the broader Middle East. (source: “Promoting Democracy or Pursuing Hegemony? An Analysis of U.S. Involvement in the Middle East.”)</p>
03:19	<p>U.S. soldiers use an American tank to pull down a statue of Saddam Hussein in a public square. [“How the US Stole Iraq” 13:06-13:13]</p>	<p>NARRATOR: After the United States deposed Saddam Hussein and completely restructured Iraq’s government, it had no plan to deal with an Iraq that collapsed essentially overnight.</p>
03:26	<p>Iraqi military soldiers march in the street. A photograph shows a crowd of angry men arguing with line of U.S. soldiers. Bold white text across the screen reads, “Disbanded the Iraqi army overnight.” [“ISIS: Created by the Invasion of Iraq” 01:35-01:42]</p>	<p>NARRATOR: The U.S. disbanded the Iraqi military, leaving thousands of disenfranchised and unemployed Iraqi soldiers who would eventually join anti-American rebel groups across Iraq.</p>
03:32	<p>An ISIS flag flies from the back of a white pickup truck. A group of ISIS fighters stand in front of the camera, machine guns pointed to the sky. [“The fall of Islamic State” 01:39-01:43]</p>	<p>NARRATOR: One of those groups was al-Qaeda in Iraq, which would eventually become the Islamic State. (sources: “How the US Stole Iraq” and “Yes, Bush Helped Create Isis - and Set up the Middle East for a Generation of Chaos”)</p>
03:36	<p>A group of Iraqi soldiers in green fatigues march in formation, rifles over their left soldiers. [“ISIS: Created by the Invasion of Iraq” 02:00-02:02]</p>	<p>NARRATOR: So, that’s the military piece to this puzzle.</p>
03:39	<p>Aerial footage of a camp home to 45,000 internally displaced Sunnis, outside Fallujah. [“What 2003’s invasion did to Iraq – BBC News” 02:51-02:53]</p>	<p>NARRATOR: But there’s a whole other side to this– the human aspect.</p>
03:43	<p>Iraqi children chase a water truck. Iraqi families ride into Fallujah refugee camp in the back of a truck. [“What 2003’s invasion did to Iraq – BBC News” 03:08-03:17]</p>	<p>NARRATOR: What happened to the 40 million people caught in the crossfire, to the country– countries actually, if we count Syria here– that paid the ultimate human costs in this War on Terror?</p>

03:52	Coalition forces walk through a bombed Islamic State compound. [“What 2003’s invasion did to Iraq – BBC News” 00:56-01:00]	NARRATOR: Why is Iraq still such an unstable place, 18 years after the initial invasion?
03:56	World Food Programme volunteers organize boxes and bags of food in an Iraqi IDP camp. [“Iraq: Aid groups set to massively scale-up assistance” 00:42-00:47]	NARRATOR: During the almost two decades that the United States was in Iraq, U.S contractors, military personnel, and aid
04:01	Young girls carry water and women fill up containers at an outdoor water pump. [“Iraq: Aid groups set to massively scale-up assistance” 00:16-00:22]	agencies were responsible for a vast majority of the essential services that the Iraqi government was not able to provide to its citizens
04:07	Rows of tents in a desert IDP camp. [“Iraq: Aid groups set to massively scale-up assistance” 00:27-00:30]	after the U.S. essentially rendered it nonexistent in 2003.
04:10	GFX: Animation of a pyramid divided up into sectors, labelled (from bottom to top) government, social services, and civil services. U.S. soldiers and aid workers maintain security, administer vaccines, and teach schoolchildren. U.S. tanks prop up the pyramid.	NARRATOR: After the U.S.’s two subsequent withdrawals– in 2011 and again after the defeat of ISIS– Iraq’s civil society infrastructure still hadn’t really developed, because it had been forced to rely upon external support.
04:20	GFX: The U.S. tanks drive away, and the pyramid crumbles into its constituent parts. The activities formerly depicted are no longer taking place.	NARRATOR: Now, that support is no longer there to do things like provide healthcare, organize humanitarian relief services, and oversee community development.
04:26	GFX: Animation of Iraqi civilians cleaning up bombed houses, distributing food, waiting for medical care at a hospital, standing in long lines at a bank, and protesting outside of a government building.	NARRATOR: What’s left is a country struggling to rebuild after nearly two decades of war, decimated by a brutal jihadist regime and lacking the support from the international community necessary to recover.
04:35	Aerial footage of decimated, smoking Fallujah after it was liberated from ISIS control by coalition forces. [“What 2003’s invasion did to Iraq – BBC News” 00:01-00:08]	NARRATOR: So, whose responsibility is it to fix the chronic instability we see in Iraq today, and what can be done about it?

04:41	Stock footage of the White House front lawn on a sunny day. [“White House Front Lawn – Background” 00:00-00:02]	NARRATOR: Many point the finger at the United States,
04:43	Clip from 2014 CNN report announcing U.S. authorization of airstrikes in Iraq to counter ISIS. [“Obama authorizes airstrikes in Iraq” 00:00-00:04]	claiming that it should be liable for the consequences of its actions. Let’s explore one possible solution.
04:48	GFX: Handwritten white text on a black screen reads, “*according to the 2019 Civil Society Organization Sustainability Index for the Middle East and North Africa (8 th Edition)”	NARRATOR: There were approximately 5,000 non-governmental organizations listed under Iraq’s Federal NGO Directorate as of December 2019.
04:53	A screen recording scrolls through a report titled, “Iraqi NGOs: Profiles of National NGOs, 2019,” which provides details on a variety of NGOs active in Iraq as of 2019. (source: NGO Coordination Committee for Iraq)	NARRATOR: These NGOs represent a commitment already made by Iraqi civilians to harness the existing human capital in their country, to taking advantage of the resources available in the communities they know best and transforming them into opportunities—into a new Iraq.
05:05	A collage of images appears onscreen, showing images of Iraqi NGOs in action. Images are featured from organizations including the Iraqi Children Foundation and the Free Yezidi Foundation. (sources: https://www.iraqichildren.org and https://freeyezidi.org)	NARRATOR: Investing in these NGOs— who have already demonstrated an interest in improving the security of their country through work in civil society and the provision of social services— would allow Iraq to rebuild more permanent institutions that are less reliant on unreliable external aid, generate millions of jobs, and create opportunities for cooperation between civil society and government.
05:23	GFX: Handwritten white text across a black screen reads, “Global Fragility Act (2019)” and then beneath it, “to combat international extremism by addressing global fragility and violence and stabilizing conflict-affected areas... *(according to congress.gov)”	NARRATOR: This suggestion would involve adherence to and expansion of the Global Fragility Act— a law passed in 2019 “to combat international extremism by addressing global fragility and violence and stabilizing conflict-affected areas...” (source: congress.gov)
05:32	GFX: Beneath the definition of the GFA, more handwritten text writes out, “makes	NARRATOR: According to the United States Institute of Peace, the Act

	preventing internal conflicts a U.S. foreign policy priority and articulates a set of peacebuilding and do-no-harm principles that federal agencies should adhere to (*according to USIP).” The United States Institute of Peace logo appears beneath the quote.	“makes preventing internal conflicts a U.S. foreign policy priority and articulates a set of peacebuilding and do-no-harm principles that federal agencies should adhere to.” (source: United States Institute of Peace)
05:42	GFX: Camera pans to the right, leaving the definition of the GFA on the left-hand side of the screen. White handwriting writes, “Global Fragility Act” at the top of the screen and draws three branching lines from the word to form a word web. Underneath the first line, the acronym, “USAID” is written. “Department of State” is written under the second line and “Secretary of State” is written under the third. Doodles accompany each word.	NARRATOR: The United States Agency for Aid and International Development– USAID– is responsible for overseeing and implementing GFA programs, while the Department of State oversees foreign policy objectives related to conflict reduction, violence reduction, and diplomatic relations with the GFA’s priority countries. The Secretary of State sets the policy objectives for the Department of State.
05:58	GFX: An excerpt of Sec. 5 of the Global Fragility Act (2019) from congress.gov– Selection of Priority Countries and Regions– highlights the following text from the bill: “(1) on the basis of– (A) the national security interests of the United States (B) clearly defined indicators of the levels of violence or fragility in such country or region, such as the country’s or region’s– (i) ranking on recognized global fragility lists... (ii) ranking on select United States Government conflict and atrocity early warning watch lists; and (iii) levels of violence	NARRATOR: Priority countries are selected based on U.S. national security concerns, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • levels of instability in those countries of interest, • ranking on global fragility watch lists such as the Fragile States Index, • and overall levels of violence–making Iraq a prime candidate for priority status. (source: congress.gov)
06:10	GFX: An animated eraser erases the on-screen text. It is replaced by bold white letters on a black screen that read, “Why NGOs?”	NARRATOR: So, why focus on NGOs? You might be thinking, ‘Iraq is a mess; what can a non-profit do to fix it?’
06:16		

<p>06:24</p> <p>06:31</p>	<p>GFX: An animation depicting a diverse crowd of people wearing a variety of traditional and Western-style clothing (some wearing T-shirts with ‘NGO’ written on the front) supporting the country of Iraq.</p> <p>Montage of footage from the 2011 Arab Spring in Tunisia. Ends with a map of the MENA with on-screen text reading, “Arab Spring.” [“How did the Arab Spring start in Tunisia – BBC What’s New” 00:03-00:10]</p> <p>Excerpt of news clip from CGTN Africa announcing the 2015 Nobel Peace Prize. [“The Tunisian Dialogue Quartet awarded Nobel Peace Prize 2015” 00:17-00:32]</p>	<p>NARRATOR: Civil society is the backbone of any functioning society, especially one with a weak or struggling government, such as Iraq.</p> <p>NARRATOR: After the Arab Spring uprisings in 2011, Tunisian civil society organizations were instrumental in negotiating and guiding the formerly authoritarian country’s transition to democracy.</p> <p>NARRATOR: The Tunisian National Dialogue Quartet went on to win the 2015 Nobel Peace Prize for their historic work as mediators and agents of change. This case is often cited as the Arab Spring’s only true success, and a prime example of the potential for civil society to unite parties across sectarian and political divides. (source: “The Tunisian Dialogue Quartet awarded Nobel Peace Prize 2015”)</p>
<p>06:47</p> <p>06:54</p>	<p>GFX: Animation of two bubbles– one containing a stack of bills and sack of coins, the other containing a machine gun and ammunition. The bubble containing the money slowly expands, while the bubble containing the gun and bullets slowly shrinks as the NARRATOR speaks.</p> <p>GFX: White text at the top of the screen reads, “World Bank Development Projects in Iraq, organized by the Iraq Emergency Operation for Development”</p> <p>A line of water tankers distribute water to Iraqi civilians in a village. [“Investing in Iraq Through Reconstruction of 7 Cities” 01:28-01:38]</p>	<p>NARRATOR: Experts have called on the United States to consider a more holistic view for Iraq’s development– one with a more economic, rather than security-based, focus.</p> <p>NARRATOR: Anthony H. Cordesman, policy advisor and Emeritus Chair in Strategy at the Center for Strategic & International Studies, stated that, “The U.S. has never seemed to realize that Iraq’s economic stability and development</p>

07:04	<p>Orange garbage trucks collect trash in an Iraqi village. [“Investing in Iraq Through Reconstruction of 7 Cities” 01:59-02:02]</p>	<p>have been the critical second half of any meaningful security effort.</p>
07:07	<p>Footage of an Iraqi electrical plant. [“Investing in Iraq Through Reconstruction of 7 Cities” 02:36-02:42]</p>	<p>Economic reform and aid is as important – if not more – than the [Iraqi] security force’s reform and aid.”</p>
07:13	<p>GFX: Two arguing silhouettes appear on a black background, yelling at one another.</p>	<p>NARRATOR: Opponents to these kinds of investment projects argue that they’re too expensive, but so is war.</p>
07:17	<p>GFX: On a map of the continental United States, “\$2 trillion” appears in bold lettering, and then disappears. The map is filled with a variety of figures representing the American public. Each one then turns into an ‘\$8K’ to represent the cost of the war. On-screen text in the bottom right-hand corner reads “*according to the Costs of War Project.” (source: Business Insider)</p>	<p>NARRATOR: Brown University’s Costs of War Project calculated that the United States spent over \$2 trillion on the Iraq War, which comes out to roughly \$8,000 per American taxpayer! (source: Business Insider)</p>
07:25	<p>Screenshots of articles from thinktanks criticizing the U.S. government for trying to act as a hegemon in the MENA.</p>	<p>SFX: Computer mouse clicks as we move from article to article.</p> <p>NARRATOR: Policymakers generally agree that the United States has been far too involved in the Middle East, and the region is now paying the price for America’s hyper-involvement.</p>
07:33	<p>GFX: White hand-written text on a black background writes out, “How?” The word gently wiggles back and forth.</p>	<p>NARRATOR: The question remains, how?</p>
07:36	<p>GFX: A doodle of two groups firing at one another with machine guns and U.S. tanks driving through the desert are connected by cyclical arrows to create a loop.</p>	<p>NARRATOR: What policy options will the U.S. pursue to amend its prior mistakes in order to avoid perpetuating the cycles of violence that necessitate constant intervention?</p>
07:43	<p>GFX: A white doodle on a black background depicts a diverse crowd of American voters dropping ballots into a ballot box.</p>	<p>NARRATOR: Vote– support candidates that advocate for cooperation rather than conflict.</p>
07:46		

<p>08:02</p> <p>08:13</p>	<p>Footage from a U.S. Department of State video– “The Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS”– detailing the Coalition’s major successes. On-screen text reads, “The Global Coalition to defeat ISIS has achieved extraordinary success. Through a unified and comprehensive campaign, the Coalition destroyed the so-called “caliphate,” removing many of ISIS’s senior leaders from action...”</p> <p>[“The Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS” 00:00-00:16]</p> <p>GFX: A map of the Middle East on a black background; Iraq is highlighted with a bold white outline. Peace signs that originate within Iraq spread outward to neighboring countries.</p> <p>GFX: Animation of Iraqi NGO workers helping civilians, government, and military personnel. Idea bubbles emerge from various people’s heads and float above the crowd. A timeline along the bottom of the screen fast-forwards from 2021 to 2100 and beyond, with an arrow to the right demonstrating endless possibilities for the future.</p>	<p>NARRATOR: If the past decade has taught the international community anything, it’s that we work best when we work together. A Middle East capable of solving its own problems is one that makes for a more stable international system– one in which we will see less terrorism, less severe refugee crises, and fewer civil wars.</p> <p>NARRATOR: An Iraq that is better equipped to support its own people is one that is better situated to act as a stabilizing force in a region that is in desperate need of a civic role model.</p> <p>NARRATOR: Supporting domestic civil society is one method of empowering Iraqis to become the authors of the next chapter in their country’s story.</p>
<p>08:20</p>	<p>Fade to black.</p>	

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