

WATER SUPPLY PROGRAM IN SOUTH KAZAKHSTAN REGION

Central Asia and the Caucasus

Kazakhstan

Water Supply Program in South Kazakhstan region

The Center for Introduction of New Environmentally Friendly Technologies Public Fund (CINEFT), which has been monitoring the ADB-funded water project in Kazakhstan, faced difficulties in accessing project-related information from state bodies. They had contacted the regional administration (Akimat) for the list of villages in the project area. After several discussions with the Department on Energy and Municipal Economy of Karaganda oblast akimat, they were able to receive requested information. Another important state body that provided the relevant information was the General Office of Public Prosecutor based in Astana and also its regional branches. They got information on the project only from the South Kazakhstan Public Prosecutor's Office.

The project violated Kazakh laws. To name a few:

- There are 900 settlements in South Kazakhstan region and only 363 of them were provided access to drinking water: 8 cities, 10 towns and 345 villages (only 40.3 %) . In some districts, only 39% have access to drinking water supply. Drinking needs in 425 villages have been satisfied by in-yard and common wells and the surface water of rivers and small water sources. In 42 villages, people use delivered water. Majority have been exposed to risk of infections and poisoning due to muddy water.
- The examination made by the South Kazakhstan Public Prosecutor's (PP) office found that there were violations of national laws in 14 out of 15 settlements involved in the water project and examined by the PP office. 12 water supply units were accepted by the State Commission, but three of them are still unused: money spent but people having no access to drinking water.
- There were criminal cases regarding the receipt of water supply units. In one case, the water pipe from Kemberbastau to Tulkubas village of Tulkubasski rayon should have been constructed by "Yug-Aqua" LTD according to results of the contest on public purchases. The examination made by South Kazakhstan PP office together with the State Sanitary-and-Epidemiologic Institution found out many cases of violations of the state building, architectural and sanitary standards. The pipeline were constructed using corroded materials and has not been functioning until now. The PP office brought a suit against the State Commission of the Committee for Water Resources of the Ministry of Agriculture for its decision. The court came out with a decision cancelling it in 24 January 2006.

The ADB also found the following violations during its project monitoring:

- In Karazhal village in Karaganda Region, the contractor ("Zheztehmet" LTD) under fulfilled the works for 2,200,000 tenge (approx. \$9,500). Despite this, the acceptance report was signed by the state representative. Civil society groups believe this is a case of corruption.
- In Shet and Ulytau districts, there were cases of deviation from the project documentation and unfounded acceptance of unfinished water supply systems by the state committees.
- The Prosecutor of North-Kazakhstan region, Khamit Bekishev, stated in his report there were gross violations of Kazakh budget and water laws in the "drinking water" program. According to state acceptance report in Sergeevka village (Shal-akyn district) 42.8 million tenge were spent for reconstruction of water supply and distribution of pipes, and construction of 18 water pumps. But at the time of the prosecutor's examination seven of the 18 constructed pumps were not