

Kiev–Chop road rehabilitation

The EUR 200 million loan for the “Rehabilitation of Kiev–Chop road” (phase 3)¹ project was signed by the EBRD in 2006. Equal co-financing was provided by the EIB in 2007². The project sponsor is Ukravtodor, the State Road Service of Ukraine.

For more information

Olena Miskun
National Campaigner for Ukraine
miskun@bankwatch.org

The project was supposed to rehabilitate the M06 Kiev–Chop Highway to European standards. Moreover this was the third EBRD road project in Ukraine. Although the project was rated Category B – without significant adverse environmental impacts, it has seriously affected the life of the villagers of Bolyarka and Berezivka (Vasilivsky district, Zhitomir region) that are located along the rehabilitated road.

Before the road rehabilitation the roadsides served as sidewalks for pedestrians and allowed horse-drawn carts (a crucial part of local subsistence households) to move in parallel with car traffic. In the framework of the road rehabilitation protective fences were installed along the curbs, but no special sidewalks were constructed. Part of the previously existing sidewalks were destroyed during the construction works and never duly rehabilitated. This has created serious inconveniences for the local community:

The pedestrian crossings are unsafe.

The ground-level crossings are not equipped with traffic lights, resonators, or with any other markings, and there are no pedestrian bridges in Bolyarka. One of the existing crossings has seen dozens of accidents since the road was rehabilitated.

Due to the lack of sidewalks the pedestrian crossings are inaccessible, cutting the village into two.

Because of the missing sidewalks people are forced to walk on the carriageway, in particular children going to school. Due to this some of them do not go to school at all.

The speed limit is inadequate.

During the rehabilitation works the speed limit in the village was put at 60 km/h, and after the rehabilitation it was changed to 110 km/h. Taking into account the absence of pedestrian bridges, or properly equipped crossroads this speed regime is inadequate and creates a dangerous situation for the local community.

The fences undermine the local community's subsistence way of living.

The protective fences have been installed in such way that in some cases they totally block access to private households and land plots, preventing people from cultivation of their gardens.

CEE Bankwatch Network's mission is to prevent environmentally and socially harmful impacts of international development finance, and to promote alternative solutions and public participation.

¹ <http://www.ebrd.com/pages/project/psd/2006/36547.shtml>

² <http://www.eib.org/projects/press/2007/2007-076-first-eib-financing-in-ukraine-eur-200-million-for-the-m-06-road-from-kiiev-to-chop.htm>

This has also created difficulties for the horse-drawn carts owned by the villagers. Apart from the fact that it is mostly impossible for them to move safely along the road (as the movement of horse-drawn carts is forbidden by traffic rules) and there are no sidewalks, there are only two turning points at the side of the road, that are very far from each other (about 8 km), a considerable distance for such transport.

The drainage systems are not installed properly.

This causes regular shallow flooding of two houses where elderly people live. This affects the buildings and the gardens and prevents them from growing vegetables, which otherwise constitutes a considerable part of their income.

Lack of protection measures.

No noise protection shields have been installed in Berezika or Bolayrka in spite of being planned in the Environmental Action Plan of the project.

Public transport stops.

None of the stops for the public transport is equipped with benches or waste containers. In some places toilets are missing, so car drivers use the public transport stops as toilets.

In the village of Berezivka the pedestrian bridge has been left unfinished by the construction workers. It has been closed for about a year. All this time children from the two nearby schools have been crossing the highway right by the unsafe crossroad. After the intervention of journalists handrails were constructed and the bridge was opened, but it is still missing the roof that was promised to local people as in winter it will be impossible to walk on it because of the heavy snow showers that are common in this region.

The Environmental Action Plan for this project addresses all the above mentioned issues, but only on paper.

According to the construction company, Gulsar, all the works that were foreseen in the project have been

implemented. The shortcomings of the project, according to them, are due to the low quality of the blueprints elaborated by the Ukrainian State Institute Ukrhiprodor and Zhitomirhiprodor.

The local authorities – the village council of Vasylivka – have approached the project sponsor, Ukravtodor, many times starting from 2009, attracting its attention to the deficiencies in project implementation. But only after the intervention of journalists from a national TV news channel the chief engineer of Ukrdorinvest visited the village in March 2012 and met the construction company and local authorities. He assured everyone that all the problems would be addressed by the beginning of June.

The National Ecological Centre of Ukraine approached in parallel the EBRD Environment and Sustainability Department. Despite Ukravtodor claiming that it is in contact with the local community and is elaborating a plan to address all the problems, the head of the council of the village of Bolyarka reports that he has never been approached and consulted. As of May 14, 2012, none of the issues is solved.

The first Kiev-Chop rehabilitation project foresaw technical assistance for project preparation and implementation, however the performance of Ukravtodor puts under question the results from this technical assistance and Ukravtodor's willingness to implement best practices.

We consider that the poor implementation of this project undermines the transition impact that such a project should bring as the life of local communities has deteriorated considerably and created unsafe living conditions.

The EBRD now needs to ensure that Ukravtodor makes the necessary adjustments in the project to ensure that local people are able to safely cross the road and travel by horse and cart to the destinations they need to reach in order to ensure their livelihoods and community cohesion.