

Final Report
October 2004-October 2006

**Human Rights and Democratization:
Initiatives in Countries with Significant Moslem
Populations Program**

Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor
U.S. Department of State

**Kazakhstan Women's Political
Participation Project**
Grant #:

Earth Island Institute
2828 Cherry Street
Berkeley, CA 94705

PROGRAM CONTACTS:

Francis Macy and Enid Schreibman
cse@igc.org
(510) 883-1177

FINAL REPORT

October 2004-October 2006

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The US project coordinators, Francis Macy and Enid Schreibman, and the Kazakhstan partner who coordinated the project in-country, Kaisha Atakhanova, consider the project to be highly successful. All of the specific short-term goals and outcomes were fulfilled beyond our expectations. We see significant progress towards achieving the long-term general goals and expect progress to continue due to improved government policies and the successful models created under this project.

Kaisha Atakhanova, who knows the realities of Kazakhstan best, considers the major achievements of the project to be the following:

1. The women leading the Regional Initiative Groups (RIGs) created under the project were responsible for the establishment of innovative Public Committees as permanent institutions attached to legislatures in six regions.
2. NGOs have obtained new recognition and respect of local legislators and executive authorities.
3. Legislative sessions were opened to the public and received NGO recommendations on social, economic and environmental issues.
4. Legislators for the first time invited the participation of RIG and NGO representatives in meetings of their five permanent commissions.
5. Transparency of legislative work became a reality and mechanisms were created for providing citizen expertise to legislators on public policies.
6. There was increased citizen political activity in regions of the project and stereotypes about citizen passivity and ignorance have been replaced by trust by mutual respect and trust.

Clearly, we chose an effective strategy of hiring outstanding women NGO leaders as Regional Coordinators in the six regions and helping them to form Regional Initiative Groups of NGOs and government representatives to conduct the educational activities of this project. We are gratified that the work of building communication and cooperation between government and the public has continued after the project's end.

Both the project strategy for increasing participation and the establishment of new channels for public-private exchanges and collaboration provide useful models that are attracting interest in other regions that were not included in the project. This interest will be further stimulated by extensive media attention during the project and the recent publication of the project manual, "The Establishment of Public Committees under Local Legislatures."