

ADB President Reaffirms Partnership with Kazakhstan

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) emphasized its commitment to strengthen partnership with Kazakhstan in a meeting with Kazakhstan President Nursultan Nazarbayev and other senior officials.

On 31 October–1 November 2004, ADB underscored its role in knowledge transfer through technical assistance to ensure effective use of the country's resources. ADB noted priority areas for ADB's collaboration with Kazakhstan—rural development support, transport, trade, financial sector support, and private sector development.

ADB reaffirmed also its commitment to continue supporting Kazakhstan's efforts toward closer cooperation among neighboring countries in the region.

In meetings with Danial Akhmetov, Prime Minister of Kazakhstan; and Arman Dunayev, Minister of Finance and ADB Governor for Kazakhstan, ADB officials discussed ADB's collaboration with Kazakhstan and highlighted the importance of regional cooperation to the future development of and poverty reduction in Central Asia.



COLLABORATION Kazakhstan President Nursultan Nazarbayev (right); then ADB President Tadao Chino (second from left); and Director General Muhammad Tusneem (left) of ADB East and Central Asia Department, agree on the need to promote regional cooperation in Central Asia

During his visit, President Chino delivered the keynote address to open the 3rd Ministerial Conference on Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation (*see page 2*).

Taking the opportunity to meet with leaders of the participating client countries, ADB assured the country that it will continue to strengthen the collaboration between ADB and Central Asian republics. ■



PARTNERS Kazakhstan Prime Minister Danial Akhmetov (left) and then ADB President Tadao Chino (right) discuss Kazakhstan's development

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In this publication, \$ refers to US dollars.

Ministers Seek to Foster Regional Cooperation

Ministers from Azerbaijan, People's Republic of China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Mongolia, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan have agreed to accelerate integration in Central Asia by strengthening joint efforts towards regional cooperation. "Regional cooperation provides strategic means for achieving sustainable and inclusive growth, and for reducing poverty in Central Asia," the ministers said in a joint statement issued at the close of the 3rd Ministerial Conference (MC) on Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation (CAREC) on 1 November 2004 in Astana, Kazakhstan.

In his keynote address, then Asian Development Bank (ADB) President Tadao Chino emphasized that regional cooperation offers the fastest route to expanded opportunities and improved living standards for the people of Central Asia. "Regional cooperation will help Central Asia maximize the potential of its unique combinations of assets to accelerate economic growth and reduce poverty. It is a way forward," he added.

The opening session of the conference was chaired by Kazakhstan Prime Minister Danial Akhmetov and ADB President Chino. The MC was hosted by the Government of Kazakhstan with support from ADB as Secretariat of CAREC. More than 100 delegates including high-level of-



HIGH-LEVEL MEETING Arman Dunayev, Minister of Finance and ADB Governor for Kazakhstan; and Tadao Chino, ADB President (fourth from right) with Ministers of CAREC participating countries and development partners at the 3rd Ministerial Conference in Astana

ficials from seven member countries of CAREC and observing countries, and senior representatives of multilateral

Regional cooperation provides a strategic means for achieving sustainable and inclusive growth, and for reducing poverty in Central Asia

institutions—ADB, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, International Monetary Fund, Islamic Development Bank, United Nations Development Programme, and World Bank—attended the conference.

At the conference, delegates reviewed progress under CAREC since the Second MC held in November 2003 in Tashkent, and underscored the significant achievements in the priority areas—trade facilitation, transport, and energy. During discussions, ministers highlighted the importance of establishing trade and transport links with neighboring countries, and welcomed a presentation by ADB outlining the improvement of road corridors that will connect Central Asia with South Asia through Afghanistan, providing crucial access to seaports and external markets for the Central Asian republics.

They also agreed to address several challenges to ensure full realization of regional economic potential: improve infrastructure—energy, power, road, rail, civil aviation, and telecommunications systems; upgrade basic services such as education and health care; support private sector development; modernize agriculture; remove tariff and nontariff barriers to trade; and ensure the effective use of the region's water and energy resources for mutual benefit.

Ministers instructed senior officials of the CAREC Program to develop a comprehensive plan of action for regional cooperation to 2007. The plan will include proposed results-oriented initiatives to overcome the main impediments to growth in the CAREC member countries, and will be ready for consideration and adoption at the Fourth Ministerial Conference in Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic in 2005. ■



MEDIA BRIEFING Batyrkhan Issayev (right), Vice Minister of Economy and Budget Planning and ADB Alternate Governor for Kazakhstan; Joseph Eichenberger (center), ADB Vice-President (Operations 2); and David Kruger (left), ADB External Relations Specialist, meet journalists after the 3rd Ministerial Conference

ADB to Focus on Inclusive Growth in Kazakhstan

The country strategy and program (CSP) update for Kazakhstan for the period 2005–2007 focuses on rural development and regional cooperation, and introduces the financial sector as a priority area.

This was disclosed in a joint press conference to announce the CSP update for Kazakhstan. ADB was represented by Kazuhiko Higuchi, Country Director for Kazakhstan, while the Government was represented by Batyrkhan Issayev, Vice Minister of Economy and Budget Planning and ADB Alternate Governor for Kazakhstan.

The document updated ADB's CSP for 2004–2006, which was prepared after consultations with the Government, non-government organizations, civil society stakeholders, and development partners of Kazakhstan. The event was held in Almaty on 29 November with support of the Kazakhstan Press Club.

Journalists from major Kazakhstan media were briefed on the primary objectives of agencies supporting the Government's medium-term priorities and current development programs in harnessing strong economic growth for balanced, sustainable development.

The CSP update for 2005–2007 will continue to support Kazakhstan's efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals through (i) human development; (ii) private sector development; (iii) sustainable environmental management; and (iv) regional cooperation. Knowledge transfer



OPERATIONS (From left) Batyrkhan Issayev, Vice Minister of Economy and Budget Planning and ADB Alternate Governor for Kazakhstan; Kazuhiko Higuchi, Country Director of ADB Kazakhstan Resident Mission (KARM); and Aliya Mukhamedyarova, KARM Economics/Programs Officer, announce ADB's country strategy and program update 2005–2007 for Kazakhstan

through technical assistance grant and loans remains the key instrument of collaboration.

Mr. Issayev reaffirmed Kazakhstan's commitment to broaden and deepen cooperation with ADB. He also acknowl-

Knowledge transfer through technical assistance grants and loans remains the key instrument of collaboration

edged ADB's significant contributions to the country's development and poverty reduction efforts. Mr. Issayev briefed media on the CSP update, which aims to

sharpen its focus on (i) sectors that support rural development, such as regional/rural development, rural water supply, and water resource management; and (ii) sectors that promote Central Asian regional cooperation, such as transport and trade. Support to the financial sector was highlighted as a new priority area of collaboration.

"ADB will maintain technical assistance grants of \$1.9 million a year. ADB is also planning to prepare one to two loans a year for government consideration," said Mr. Higuchi. "ADB is planning a multiyear technical assistance to support the financial sector, including microfinance and small and medium enterprises," he added. ■

ADB Starts Private Sector Operations in Kazakhstan

The assurance letter of the Asian Development Bank's private sector operations in Kazakhstan was signed on 27 November 2004 by Kairat Kelimbetov, Minister of Economy and Budget Planning, on behalf of the Government. This was announced on 29 November at a press conference in Almaty. The signing finalized the agreement and set the stage for ADB to start private sector investments.

ADB shares Kazakhstan's approach in tapping the private sector as a key driving force for development and, thus, considers private sector development to be an essential pillar of collaboration.

Veronica John, Senior Investment Officer, ADB Private Sector Operations Department, visited Kazakhstan on 27 October–3 November to hold initial discussions on investment opportunities.

She met with representatives of the

National Bank of Kazakhstan, international banks in Kazakhstan, and local banks, as well as development partners and international audit and consulting agencies.

ADB is planning a full-scale project finding and formulation visit to Kazakhstan in February–March 2005, during which more specific investment discussions will be held with prospective private sector partners. ■

Ongoing ADB Loan Projects in Kazakhstan

(as of 31 December 2004)

Project Title	\$ Million		Date	
	Lending	Disbursement	Approval	Closing
Water Resources Management and Land Improvement	40.0 ^a	24.2	17 Dec 97	30 Jun 05
Almaty-Bishkek Road Rehabilitation	52.0	16.3	31 Oct 00	30 Jun 07
Rural Area Water Supply and Sanitation	34.6	-	29 Sep 03	31 Dec 09
TOTAL^a	126.6			

^a Of the total, \$30 million came from ordinary capital resources and \$10 million from the concessional Asian Development Fund.

Ongoing ADB Technical Assistance Projects in Kazakhstan

(as of 31 December 2004)

Project Title	\$'000	Date	
		Approval	Closing
Capacity Building of National and Local Governments in the Implementation of Poverty Reduction Program	676.0	19 Dec 02	28 Feb 05
Regional Rural Development	677.0	17 Sep 03	Mar 05
Supporting Local Government Reforms	250.0	6 Oct 03	31 Dec 05
Strengthening Government Program Performance	200.0	6 Oct 03	31 Dec 05
Environmental Monitoring and Information Management System for Sustainable Land Use	600.0	16 Aug 04	11 Apr 06
Financial Sector Governance	800.0	8 Nov 04	Nov 06
Formulation of State Roads Development Plan	150.0	3 Dec 04	3 Apr 05
TOTAL	3,353.0		

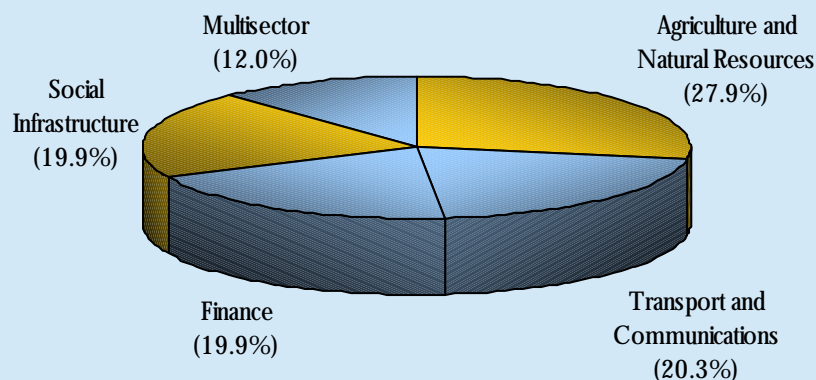
Regional

Improvement of Shared Water Resources Management in Central Asia (Phase III)	700.0	15 Feb 03	Jun 05
ADB-OSI Central Asia Education Cooperation Network	200.0	6 Oct 03	30 Sep 05
Capacity Building in Environmental Information Management System in Central Asia	800.0	15 Dec 03	25 Aug 06
Sustainable Food Fortification Program	300.0	23 July 04	31 Oct 06
TOTAL	2,000.0		

ADB Loan Approvals to Kazakhstan, by Sector

(as of 31 December 2004)

Total: \$501.6 Million



Regional Rural Development

Development Workshops Held

Two workshops were convened on 28 October in Baidibekskiy district of Southern Kazakhstan and on 11 November in Taiynshinskiy district of Northern Kazakhstan.

The workshops aimed to (i) discuss the scope of the current rural development planning process; (ii) identify improvements toward better coordination and integration of planning and development activities; and (iii) review the content and recommendations of the current oblast rural development plan.

The participants identified priority investments for a future Asian Development

Bank (ADB) loan project on regional rural development.

In Taiynshinskiy district Anatoliy Okhotnikov, Deputy Head of the district government, chaired the workshop; and in Baidibekskiy district, Sanat Tungyshbekov, Committee on Rural Area Development (CRAD) Head led discussions. Representatives of CRAD, local governments, private sector, and consultants attended the workshops. ■

Assessing Rural Development

A review of the implementation of the technical assistance (TA) project a re-

gional rural development project was carried out on 7–9 December.

John Whittle, Principal Project Economist, ADB East and Central Asia Department, participated in a tripartite meeting with representatives of the Ministry of Agriculture, Committee on Rural Area Development, and ADB, on 8 November. Detailed recommendations on TA implementation were summarized.

Royston Brockman, TA team leader, outlined the proposed objectives and scope of potential investments on regional rural development, and identified major factors, including (i) settlement rehabilitation; (ii) small business development; and (iii) institutional strengthening. ■

Rural Area Water Supply and Sanitation

Capacity Building for Better Management

The Board of Directors of the Asian Development Bank (ADB) approved a technical assistance (TA) project “Institutional Strengthening of the Committee for Water Resources” in December 2004. The TA is estimated to cost \$180,000. The grant project will be financed by the Japan Special Fund, funded by the Government of Japan. ADB will provide \$150,000.

The TA aims to strengthen the capacity of the Committee for Water Resources (CWR) to support implementation of the Drinking Water Sector Program 2002–2010.

The main objectives of the TA are to (i) review current policies on water tariff setting, sector planning, and budgeting; (ii) propose measures to strengthen CWR’s capacity to oversee water sector reforms; and (iii) promote capacity building for CWR at the central and regional levels.

The TA implementation is expected

in January 2005. The project will be completed in 4 months. ■

Final Workshop on Institutional Strengthening

Outstanding institutional issues in implementing an advisory TA project on institutional strengthening for rural water supply and sanitation were addressed at the final workshop in Astana on 27 October.

The workshop was opened by Nurlan Atshabarov, Deputy Chairman of the CWR of the Ministry of Agriculture. He expressed appreciation for the efforts undertaken by the advisory TA team. Following the consultants’ presentations, the outcomes of the discussions were incorporated in the advisory TA final report remitted in November 2004.

During the TA implementation, 17 workshops in Akmola, Northern Kazakhstan and Southern Kazakhstan oblasts on project preparation, engi-

neering design, procurement practices, financial management systems, loan disbursement, and community development were held for stakeholders. ■

Expanding the Water Supply Program

Representatives of the ADB Kazakhstan Resident Mission, Ministry for Economy and Budget Planning, and Committee for Water Resources discussed the requirements of the proposed technical assistance (TA) totaling \$150,000 for strengthening Drinking Water Sector Program (DWSP) 2002–2010 on 25–28 October in Astana.

The objective of the TA is to upgrade the DWSP to supply drinking water for the entire population of the country.

The TA will assist the Government in assessing the technical and financial requirements of the expanded DWSP 2002–2010. ■

Strengthening Capacity Building for Effective Information Management

A proposed technical assistance (TA) project on institutional strengthening for project management information system was discussed in Astana on 1–5 November, confirming the need to improve information management. Kazuhiko Higuchi, Country Director, Asian Development Bank (ADB) Kazakhstan Resident Mission, conducted the series of meetings.

Discussions were held with Natalya Korzhova, Vice Minister of Economy and

Budget Planning; Aidar Arifkhanov, Vice Minister of Finance; and officials from the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Transport and Communications. They confirmed the importance of establishing an external assistance management system for maximizing its efficiency. A memorandum of understanding was signed between ADB and the Ministry of Economy and Budget Planning (MOEBP).

The TA aims to enhance MOEBP's capacity for external assistance coordina-

tion, programming, and monitoring. The TA will review existing organizational structure and functional responsibilities of the departments concerned within MOEBP, develop an information management system for external assistance activities, and capacity building and training to ensure the use and maintenance of the new system.

The TA project is estimated to cost \$430,000, and will be implemented in the second quarter of 2005. ■

Applying Best Practices for a Competitive Economy

A workshop on the competitiveness of Kazakhstan's economy stressed the importance of knowledge transfer of the best practices in the Asia and Pacific region. The workshop was organized by the Ministry of Industry and Trade (MIT) and convened in Astana on 1 December with the participation of MIT officials, research centers, and domestic producers.

The workshop was chaired by Gosman Amrin, First Vice Minister of Industry and Trade. In his opening remarks, Mr. Amrin appreciated and underscored the importance of transferring knowledge and applying best practices in the Asia and Pacific region.

Presentations were delivered by sector think tanks, professional unions, contract agencies, and the Small Enterprises Support Committee of MIT. Representative of the Small Business Program of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development in Kazakhstan briefed on the importance of small and medium enterprises (SME) for country development.

Ganeshan Wignaraja, Senior Economist, ADB East and Central Asia Depart-

ment, joined two sessions of the workshop dedicated to the competitiveness and SME development. He made presentations on "Benchmarking Competitiveness: Recent Approaches" and "Helping SMEs to Compete in Global Markets."

Mr. Wignaraja visited Kazakhstan on 26 November–2 December to conduct a series of consultations with officials of the Ministry of Economy and Budget Planning, MIT, and Presidential Administration.

Workshop participants discussed and deepened understanding of the main obstacles for local producers in accessing the global markets. Participants also developed a set of recommendations to increase the competitiveness of domestic commodities. ■



MONITORING RESULTS Ganeshan Wignaraja, Senior Economist of ADB East and Central Asia Department, presents recent approaches to benchmarking competitiveness

Global Forum Cites Regional Cooperation in Central Asia

Regional cooperation is not an option, but a necessity for Central Asia. This was highlighted at the Global Economy Forum held at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace in Washington, DC on 4 October 2004. *Foreign Policy* magazine and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) organized the event to examine the rising economic potential of the Central Asian republics and discuss ways to improve the region's integration into the global economy.

Regional integration offers Central Asia the prospects of greater access to new resources and markets, and more rapid growth and poverty reduction, ADB Vice President Liqun Jin (Operations 1) told the forum. "Integration of Central Asia into the global economy is central to its future prosperity," he added.

The forum brought together high-level officials from Central Asian countries, members of the Washington diplomatic community, scholars, journalists, US officials, and representatives of major multilateral and donor organizations.

Participants examined the region's significant shared assets, the challenges to ensure that those assets are effectively harnessed to improve living

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Haruhiko Kuroda is ADB President

Japan's former Vice Minister of Finance for International Affairs, was unanimously elected President of the Asian Development Bank (ADB) by its Board of Governors on 18 November 2004.

Mr. Haruhiko Kuroda will take over as ADB President on 1 February 2005, succeeding Tadao Chino. Mr. Kuroda is currently Special Advisor to the Cabinet of Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi and a professor at the graduate school of economics at Hitotsubashi University, Tokyo.

In a career spanning nearly 4 decades, Mr. Kuroda has represented Japan's Ministry of Finance at a number of international monetary conferences as Vice Minister of Finance for International Affairs.

"It is a great honor to be elected President of ADB," said Mr. Kuroda. "I am determined that the Bank should remain flexible in its approach to the many challenges facing its developing member



countries. ADB must also continue to strive for greater effectiveness in its operations".

Born in 1944, Mr. Kuroda holds a BA in Law from the University of Tokyo and a Master of Philosophy in Economics from the University of Oxford. He joined the Ministry of Finance in 1967. Eight years later, he was seconded to the International Monetary Fund. After returning to the Ministry, Mr. Kuroda assumed several senior posts in the Ministry's international finance and taxation bureaus.

While Deputy Director-General of the International Finance Bureau, he was responsible for Japan's official development assistance as well as relations with multilateral development finance institutions, including ADB.

He has authored several books on monetary policy, exchange rates, international finance policy coordination, international taxation, and international negotiations. ■

Improving Monitoring and Evaluation System of Food Fortification Discussed

A 10-day training workshop to improve the monitoring and evaluation of micronutrient fortification of salt and flour in the Central Asian republics was launched in Almaty on 11 October 2004.

The workshop was sponsored by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), US Center for Disease Control and Prevention, and the Asian Development Bank (ADB). It complemented the recently completed first regional project "Improving Nutrition for Poor Mothers and Children in Asian Countries in Transition" to sustain its benefits. The project was financed by the Japan Fund for Poverty Reduction (JFPR).

In his welcome remarks, Kazuhiko Higuchi, Country Director of ADB

Kazakhstan Resident Mission, highlighted the importance of the workshop in sharing knowledge among international, regional, and country experts; and in laying the foundation for future food fortification programs. He also summarized achievements on the JFPR nutrition project, and underscored the usefulness of nutrition.

"Mitigating micronutrient deficiencies is a key area for poverty reduction—ADB's overarching goal. With the help of the Japan Fund for



TRAINING Kazuhiko Higuchi, KARM Country Director (center) delivers the welcome remarks. With him are Ibrahim Parvanta (left), Program Division Director, US Center for Disease Control and Prevention; and Toregeldy Sharmanov (right), President of Kazakh Academy of Nutrition

Poverty Reduction, ADB teamed up with UNICEF to tackle the challenge," Mr. Higuchi said. ■

Regional Cooperation *(continued from page 6)*

standards in the region, and ways to promote regional cooperation and to achieve sustainable economic growth and reduce poverty in Central Asia.

Among the region's key assets are a geographical location that provides land links between Europe and the Middle East and the growing markets of East Asia and Japan, as well as between Russia and South Asia; signifi-

cant oil and gas reserves; a rich mineral base; and a highly literate and well-educated population.

Experts outlined the vast economic potential of the region and identified four issues that challenge that potential: poverty and the related income disparity in Central Asian economies; environmental concerns; the need for a policy environment that fosters entre-

preneurship and private sector development; and the need for improved physical infrastructure to support trade and transport.

"Overcoming these challenges is of fundamental importance to Central Asian countries," Mr. Jin said. "The countries in this region cannot act alone. They must think regionally, and act as a team." ■

News in Brief

Loan for Improved Rural Water Supply Ratified

Kazakhstan President Nursultan Nazarbayev signed a law ratifying a loan agreement with the Asian Development Bank (ADB) on the Rural Area Water Supply and Sanitation Sector Project on 6 December 2004.

ADB will provide \$34.6 million, Kazakhstan will cofinance \$14.4 million from the republican budget and \$4.0 million from local budgets.

The project is aimed at improving water supply and sanitation in Akmola, Northern Kazakhstan, and Southern Kazakhstan oblasts. It is due for completion on 31 December 2009.

Expanding Business Sector Involvement in Central Asia

The ADB East and Central Asia Department sent Peter Brimble, consultant, to Kazakhstan on 5–12 December to prepare a regional business roundtable (RBR) in Central and South Asia, under the Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation (CAREC) Program. The roundtable is expected to be held in the second quarter of 2005.

Mr. Brimble held a series of meetings with representatives of the Kazakhstan business community in Almaty.

In Astana, he met with Gani Uzbekov, Vice Minister of Finance and National Focal Point for CAREC; and Gosman

Amrin, First Vice Minister of Industry and Trade, to obtain Kazakhstan perspectives on regional cooperation initiatives and on the role of the business community in contributing to policymaking and other forms of public-private sector cooperation.

The RBR aims to enhance the role of the business sector in regional cooperation initiatives and to stimulate the investment climate in participating countries of CAREC.

The RBR will involve CAREC member economies (People's Republic of China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Mongolia, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan) and three South Asia states (Afghanistan, Pakistan, and India). ■

ADB Faces in Country Projects

Veronica John

Senior Investment Officer, Private Sector Operations Department

Ms. John's primary focus is on arranging investments into private equity funds that operate throughout Asia. She is responsible for Central Asia, Afghanistan, and Pakistan.



Prior to joining ADB, Ms. John worked for Carana Corporation from 1994 to 1998. She was responsible for the USAID funded small scale privatization and enterprise support project. During 1998–2002 Ms. John worked for the Central Asian American Enterprise Fund where she was in charge of Kazakhstan investment portfolio.

Currently, Ms. John is also working to establish private equity funds and facilitate investments in bank and nonbank financial institutions throughout Central Asia.

Ms. John has a Bachelor of Arts in International Studies and Political Science from Elimira College and a Master's Degree of Business Administration from George Washington University.

In 2005 she will work on implementing ADB's private sector operations in Kazakhstan.

John Whittle

Principal Project Economist, Agriculture, Environment, and Natural Resources Division, East and Central Asia Department

Mr. Whittle has worked in ADB since 1992. His area of focus is agriculture, microfinance, capacity building, and rural area development. He worked for 10 years in Central Asia,

particularly Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, and Tajikistan.

Prior to joining ADB, he worked for the Australian Agency of International Development for 12 years, serving as Advisor to government planning agencies in the Pacific developing member countries (Solomon Islands and Vanuatu) for 5 years.

Mr. Whittle has a Master's degree in Agriculture Development Economics and a Bachelor's degree in Commerce (economics) and Economics (statistics/econometrics).

Currently, Mr. Whittle is responsible for technical assistance on regional rural development.



NEWS FROM

Kazakhstan

This issue of the quarterly newsletter of the Asian Development Bank (ADB) Kazakhstan Resident Mission (KARM) aims to enhance communications between ADB and its client groups. *News from Kazakhstan* disseminates information on ADB activities and provides a forum on development issues in Kazakhstan. Articles in the newsletter, however, do not necessarily reflect the official ADB view. We welcome readers' comments and suggestions.

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