Water supply and sanitation

EU support helps community initiatives in Ukraine to gain momentum

Local community inspired to continue improving their living conditions after successful work on water pipeline.

“It is always difficult to motivate people to be more active, but these are our problems and nobody else will solve them for us. The situation is changing: more and more people now understand the importance of being socially active and taking part in local development projects.”

Nadiya Chunikhina, head of Kolomyichykha Village Council

Context

Large towns and oblast centres have more staff and money to solve infrastructure problems and urgent community needs. The smaller the community, the smaller the local budget. The lack of access to clean water represents a serious problem for residents of Kolomyichykha village (Lugansk oblast). According to official sources, only 20% of villages in Ukraine have access to drinking water supply. Limited local budgets means that needs can only be met through alternative funds and the joint efforts of local businesses and community organisations.

Objectives

- To create a favourable environment for social and economic development at local level and improve living conditions.

Impact

- Residents of Kolomyichykha village have access to a clean water supply at home.
- The local community jointly identified and agreed upon future priority needs: support the local library and make the energy supply system of important social facilities more efficient, run on alternative fuels.
- Local businesses joined in; the biggest sponsor of local initiatives was a private company called Lan, which is the largest employer in the village.

For more information: www.cba.org.ua
For residents of Kolomyichykha village, a centralised water supply system is the only way to access clean water - for both drinking and household use. The mixed geological structure of the region makes it impossible to build wells to draw on natural water resources. The old water pipeline, which was built more than 40 years ago, is constantly “under repair”. There have been numerous complaints about pipe breakages and parts of the village have been left with no water supply for days.

“In the past when the old water pipeline was broken the only source of water was the milk lorry that would bring water for villagers and our school,” recalls Valentina Shapovalova, a resident of Kolomyichykha and the local school principal. “Now we have water round the clock, and can even drink it from the tap, as it comes through new pipes from the artesian well located on the outskirts of the village - and the water meets all modern sanitary norms and standards. Clean drinking water for children and grown-ups is simply vital.”

Some 4.5 km of water pipeline, costing 584 000 UAH (€ 55 000), was built in Kolomyichykha village - thanks to EU-UNDP support.