

Helping individuals address their fears, problems and risks in Chernobyl-affected communities



UN Trust Fund for Human Security



Fast Facts

Country: Ukraine

Duration: March 2004 to March 2007

Implementing UN Agencies: UNDP

Other Implementing Partners: Ministry of Emergencies

Budget: \$1,214,249.49

Key Words: Nuclear disaster; capacity-building; community empowerment

BACKGROUND

Almost two decades after the 1986 Chernobyl disaster, the state of human security in the affected areas of rural Ukraine remained urgent. The two main economic engines in the area had ceased to function with agriculture coming to a halt in the contaminated areas and nuclear power generation ceasing to function after the closure of the Chernobyl plant itself. At the same time, resettlement programmes initially planned under the Soviet-era were never completed and hundreds of thousands of Ukrainians still lived in contaminated zones, suffering from the health consequences of low-dose radiation exposure. In spite

of national and international aid programmes intended to help those affected by the disaster had generated dependency among beneficiaries and undercut the motivation and capacity of individuals and communities to make active and meaningful contributions toward improving their conditions. As a result, those living in the Chernobyl affected areas remained unable to seize control over improving their livelihoods and lacked the necessary skills to comprehensively address the underlying challenges for living safely in a contaminated environment.

PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Under the auspices of this project, efforts were made to reorient post-Chernobyl assistance programmes away from previous models and into a new model that was built on self-sufficiency, empowerment and local ownership. In this regard, the project strategy intended to (i) build local capacities and self-reliance in order to

promote community-based decision-making; (ii) create new livelihoods and economic opportunities through community-led improvements of infrastructure; and (iii) protect people living in contaminated zones by supporting local radiation awareness and risk reduction initiatives.

BENEFICIARIES

In Ukraine's four most Chernobyl-affected provinces, namely Kyivska, Zhytomyrska, Chernihivska and Rivnenska, more than 50,000 people benefited directly from community-based recovery and development interventions. These included: improvement of water supply systems, school facilities, heating systems and the set-up of ambulatory health services. Furthermore, the project was instrumental in forming community-

based organizations and in offering capacity-building training and support to these organizations. As a result, these organizations were equipped with the skills to lead community development initiatives and to mobilize local resources to address the needs and problems of the participating communities. Lastly, more than 6,000 people benefited from radiation-awareness activities.

