

**CHERNOBYL HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE  
AND REHABILITATION PROGRAMME  
(CHARP)  
BELARUS, RUSSIAN FEDERATION AND UKRAINE**

**Summary**

International Federation's Chernobyl Humanitarian Assistance and Rehabilitation Programme (CHARP) was launched in 1990. Its primary goal is the provision of health screening and psychological support to the victims of Chernobyl nuclear catastrophe in remote areas of Belarus, Russian Federation and Ukraine.

CHARP's special objective is to quickly identify possible thyroid gland cancer and other pathologies in people affected by the disaster. CHARP focuses on high risk groups, such as children and young people, as well as those who were children at the moment of the accident - still living in contaminated areas of the three countries. The programme supplies multivitamins and some medicaments such as "Levothyroxime", which is used for the treatment of people with thyroid conditions. The services include six Mobile Diagnostics Laboratories (MDLs), as well as psychological assistance provided through the visiting nurses and other Red Cross workers and activists.

**1990 - 2000: A Decade of CHARP Delivered:**

- \* 2,500,000 people were assisted;
- \* more than 496,000 people were screened by the MDL specialists, of which 170,000 were suspected with the thyroid gland cancer and other pathologies. These people were referred to the specialised medical institutions for further examination and treatment;
- \* 45,000 people received psycho-social assistance;
- \* 240 tons of milk powder and 114,000,000 multivitamin tablets were distributed to children living in contaminated areas,

**The Present:**

Medical data confirms general poor state of health in affected areas. Increase in all diseases for both children and adults is noted. The number of thyroid cancer cases detected by the MDLs increased by 34% between 1999 and 2000 -- the peak of the pathology may not have been reached yet. The general state of health amongst 1,500,000 children and teenagers living in contaminated areas is worsening, in particular with regards to tumours, thyroid gland diseases and diseases related to the blood circulation system.

**The Future:**

There is still a great need for the services provided by CHARP. The International Federation will continue the CHARP in co-operation with the Red Cross Societies of Belarus, Russian Federation and Ukraine. We will further develop the medical component of the programme in order to provide more rapid and precise diagnosis. The International Federation expects to provide medical assistance to 90,000 people and psycho-social assistance to 45,000 people annually and also invest more in rehabilitation.

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies calls for international assistance, since the current financial capacities are very limited.