

**Vinnitsa Oblast Youth Ecology League (VOYEL) and Strong - Coley &
Associates**

FARM Responsive Mechanism Project

**Project "AGRICULTURAL ENVIRONMENTAL MITIGATION AS THE WAY TO
SUSTAINABLE RURAL COMMUNITY REGENERATION"**

Final Report Summary

April 2005 – December 2005

Executive Summary

The project “*Agricultural Environmental Mitigation as the Way to Sustainable Rural Community Regeneration*” was focused at elaboration of a sustainable comprehensive approach aimed at the development of rural areas in new circumstances of rural market infrastructure development.

Background and Rationale for the Project

The main focus of the project was sustainable comprehensive approach to development of rural areas in new circumstances of rural market infrastructure development. In order to ensure such approach environmental issues were an integral part of the process.

The project combined educational, public awareness and training components in its implementation. Public awareness was an entry point that will make people aware of the problems that exist as well as their importance of their communities’ development. This included public actions and discussions of different forms throughout all stages of the project implementation. Under the educational component the role of rural consultants (extension) was essential.

The training component was divided into two sub-sections – technical training and training on general water sanitation/agricultural chemicals preservation. The technical training was more relevant to extension offices and communal enterprises personnel, those who are in charge of potable and piped water stations, boreholes. The general training was focused at increased participation of local communities in resolving water and sanitation problems.

Project Goal and Objectives

Long-term objectives:

- To develop and promote replicable methods of improving rural potable water supply and management of rural water and sanitation to maintain water quality and reduce contamination in rural areas;
- To develop and promote approach to reduce risk of handling obsolete and dangerous agricultural chemicals;
- Contribution to development of approaches aimed at income generation and creation of self-employment opportunities for rural people;
- To introduce sustainable development approach for rural areas

Short-term objectives:

- To develop and implement replicable and sustainable approaches for portable water supply and sanitation, and watercourse decontamination in selected pilot communities d pilot communities;
- To develop and implement approaches to handing old agricultural chemicals;
- To complement rural extension offices with new direction of services related to environmental issues in the rural areas;
- To improve water supply and distribution systems in the rural areas.

Anticipated Outcomes and Results Table

Anticipated Outputs and Deliverables	Project Results	Evaluation
1. At least 700 rural dweller of 5 communities received information on environmental aspects of rural development	The project covered members of all pibt communities that are not less than 700 people.	Result achieved and quantitative measure of 700 met.
2. At least 400 rural dwellers improved water supply and sanitation as a result of the project implementation	Result: 300 rural people substantial water supply and quality control system. About 300 people in other pilots changed their culture of water use as a result of educational campaign	Result achieved and exceeded quantitative measure of 400.
3. At least 700 rural dwellers from 5 communities obtained knowledge and received information on handling old hazardous agricultural chemicals	Result: 700 members of pilot villages received basic knowledge about hazardous chemicals – types, storage requirements, disposal requirements, etc.	Result achieved and q uantitative measure of 700 met.

<p>4. At least 700 rural dwellers from 5 rural communities have access to consultations on tackling ecology issued in the rural area and on adhering ecological standards</p>	<p>All members of pilot communities (not less than 700 people) receive access to consultations on water supply and use, as well as some other environmental issues (according to those defined as their priorities).</p>	<p>Result achieved and quantitative measure of 700 met.</p>
<p>5. Consultation offices acquire 2 new types of services</p>	<p>Result: Based on priorities identified several new services were introduced:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental awareness/information provision; • Water quality standards; • Water consumption tariffs; • Communal enterprises creation; • Old and hazardous chemicals disposal. 	<p>Result achieved and exceeded quantitative measure of offices acquiring 2 new types of services.</p>
<p>6. At least 2 rural communities improved terms of handling of agricultural chemicals</p>	<p>Result: This output was the most difficult to achieve tangible progress. The main obstacle was lack of corresponding legislation on the subject. Also, it requires substantial amount of funds to handle and moreover dispose the old chemicals. Therefore the main focus of the project was on educational campaign so that make rural people aware of dangerous chemicals. The recommendation put forward to oblast authorities by VOYEL specialists was to develop and update regulations concerning the agricultural chemicals. Project output was mainly about more knowledge about chemicals in all five pilots.</p>	<p>Tangible progress and quantitative result not achieved but still made inroads to improve handling of agricultural chemicals</p>

<p>7. At least 100 consultants trained in water supply and sanitation issues</p>	<p>Result: As a result - 110 consultants can now provide consultations on water supply and sanitation; since introduced 80 people from the pilot communities used the new type of consultations.</p>	<p>Result achieved</p>
<p>8. Increased awareness of water and sanitation good practices amongst rural populations in pilot areas</p>	<p>Result: water supply and sanitation together with water consumption tariffs were identified among key priorities of the pilots. At the last stage of the project raising awareness meetings took place in other rayons of Vinnitsa oblast. There was a lot of interest and some requests to VOYEL from non pilot rural communities.</p>	<p>Result achieved</p>
<p>9. Specific action plans to overcome local environmental problems</p>	<p>Result: Each pilot developed environmental action plans that had links with sustainable development plans and social and economic strategies.</p>	<p>Result achieved</p>
<p>10. Increased awareness by rural communities and local administrations of their region's problems</p>	<p>Result: The project structure envisaged full involvement of communities in identification of its needs, priorities, developing plans and formulating actions. Local authorities were either informed or involved to the process. An important result is to enhance rural people's ability to improve life of their community. At the same time to know that environment problems are essential; such problems affect people's lives as well as agricultural production cycle.</p>	<p>Result achieved</p>

<p>11. Participation of local communities in resolving water and sanitation problems</p>	<p>Result: It was important to achieve rural community understanding that basic services such as water supply and sanitation can be improved at the local (community) level. The first step in this process should be education on proper water quality as well as existence of water tariffs.</p>	<p>Result achieved</p>
<p>12. Decrease in the incidence of infectious diseases caused by unclean water</p>	<p>Result: It was very difficult to have any proper statistics within short period of time but based on the tests done in VOYEL laboratory it is clear that measures applied will result in decrease in infectious diseases.</p>	<p>Deliverable not met as the length of project did not allow for substantial testing.</p>
<p>13. Safe storage of agricultural chemicals assured</p>	<p>Result: All five pilot communities improved storage conditions of agricultural chemicals as it was indicated as action point in environmental action plans. Conditions were improved based on requirements stipulated by Ukrainian regulatory acts</p>	<p>Result achieved</p>
<p>14. Increased awareness by rural population on the risk of the use of outdated and banned agricultural chemicals</p>	<p>Following educational work undertaken by VOYEL people from all five pilot communities as well as neighbouring rayons received general update on main types of agricultural chemicals, terms and duration of storage. Rural people were informed on consequences of using outdated and banned agricultural chemicals.</p>	<p>Result achieved, awareness increased</p>

Canadian Partner Contribution

From July 11th to 19th 2005 Ron Coley visited VOYEL. Ron Coley's presentations in Obodivka and Britavka villages were well received and useful to enhance importance of water supply and use for rural people in two communities.

Also, following discussions with Ron Coley VOYEL developed a study on sewage disposal plan creation in Kryzhopol rayon. The study contained estimations of job creation number, investments required, etc.

The Canadian specialist visit contributed greatly to successful implementation of the project. Ukrainian specialists were introduced to different approaches and methods of water purification; and many technical issues were discussed. At the same time the Canadian specialist visit contributed to a general increase of awareness on environmental issues and attraction of public attention towards the importance of environmental mitigation in the region. Canadian and Ukrainian specialists agreed to exchange information and experience in future.

On-going communication with the Canadian partner and discussion of plans for future joint project (the new project concept is being discussed between the Canadian and Ukrainian partners now) create a good basis for partnership sustainability.

Conclusion

A key priority for all pilots and the project were to inform on basic principles of water supply and management and its peculiarities in the rural area. Obviously many problems can be resolved at the national level only, but substantial changes can be made at the local and community level. It is essential to report on the changes to regional (oblast) and national level. The latter is difficult but it should always be envisaged.

Generally sustainable community development approach contributed a lot to strengthening communities, improving strategic planning at the local level. Attempts to improve water system resulted in issue of management of system, adherence to tariffs in particular. Community enterprises are the most accepted form and their creation will contribute to employment opportunities for rural people.

Five pilot communities develop sustainable development plans as the first stage sustainable development approach. Sustainable development indicators are very useful tool for implementation of sustainable development approach. Obviously, rural areas are not the same but the approach is inclusive and applicable for all communities. VOYEL tried to connect community sustainable development plans with social and economic strategies so that ensure funds allocation.

Following information and educational campaigns practical steps were undertaken to improve water supply in the pilot villages. Two village communities initiated repairing of system and raised community funds to do this.

New environmental services were introduced by VOYEL. The task now is to develop them and to make sure they are required by rural people or NGOs.