Integral Communication Activities as a Support to the Site Selection for LILW Repository

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Slovenia
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Site selection process in Slovenia

• A new site selection process was started in 2004.
• This time a mix-mode approach was selected.
• It equally takes into consideration both technical criteria and social aspect, and presumes a high involvement of the public in the process.
How to reach a “social acceptability”?  

- NIMBY syndrome also in Slovenia  
- The first condition for a social acceptability: the site selection process takes place only in the municipalities which bid for the location voluntarily which is ensured by the mixed-mode approach.

Other factors that enhance social acceptability:  

- communicating all the relevant information and scientific facts on the topic  
- transparency of the site selection procedure  
- involvement of the local public in the site selection process from the beginning  
- providing financial incentives and other benefits bound to the placement of the repository  
- siting near existing nuclear locations
The ARAO communication strategy objectives were to:

- provide all the relevant information on the topic and dissemination of knowledge
- enable the local public to take part in the discussions, to express opinions, demands
- involve the local public in the decision making process within the legislation provisions from the very beginning
- build trust in ARAO and among participating parties

Participation of local communities – consideration of Aarchus Convention

- Program for preparation of national spatial plan for LILW repository:
  - 1. phase: ARAO invites local communities to participate
  - 2. phase: prefeasibility assessment of the technical aspects and public acceptability in local communities
  - 3. phase: establishment and implementation of local partnership

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Invitation LC to participate</td>
<td>End of biding process</td>
<td>Theses for local partnership</td>
<td>Pre-feasibility study</td>
<td>Govern. decision on 3 LP</td>
<td>Commun. activities</td>
<td>Signing and operation of LP</td>
<td>Regulation, passed by the government</td>
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Phase 1 | Phase 2 | Phase 3
General scheme of LP

Local partnership (Community and ARAO)

CITIZENS - participation

STEEERING COMMITTEE - coordination role

SECRETARY

- committees
- working groups
- presentations
- round tables
- workshops
- suggestions
- claims
- independent studies and opinions
- presentations of study results
- additional documentation

Local partnership

- LP has an advisory role. The decision making process stays with local council and other bodies of local autonomy.

- Funds for each LP per year:
  - 96,000 € administration costs, secretary, excursions, visits, reviews,
  - 41,000 € independant studies
Examples of local partnerships work (1)

- Presentations of site selection process and topics on radioactivity, RW for municipality council and local councils and citizens groups,
- Workshops, round tables
- Visits to nuclear facilities in Slovenia and abroad for specific groups of local residents,
- Cooperation with the local media – 3 to 4 articles per month,

Examples of local partnerships work (2)

Requested independent studies:

- Occurrence of cancer in municipality Brežice compared to the rest of Slovenia,
- Measurements of specific radionuclides in food samples harvested on the area of municipality Brežice and environmental radioactivity measurements,
- Feasibility study to assert citizens’ rights to get a just compensation for negative impacts of the nuclear facilities by legal means
- Independent review of the Study of the variants of the LILW repository in Krško municipality
Experience with LP performance

- The majority of the population do not participate
- Members of the LP with strong opinion – for or against and personal interest (don not change their mind, but give the authenticity);
- Strong influence of local politics;
- High local appetites for financial compensation;
- Loose structure of the LP gives the opportunity for realisation of personal interests under the cover of public interest;

How would you decide on referendum regarding the construction of LILW repository? KRŠKO

<table>
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<th>12/05</th>
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<td>3,0</td>
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Public Opinion Poll, Krško, May 2009

- Not the repository, financial incentives are the problem!
- The public is interested in the topic and well informed
- The site selection procedure is perceived as legitimate by the majority of people
- The public is satisfied with the possibility of participation in the procedure (not in the 1500 m zone!)
- Low trust in institutions: ARAO, municipality

Recommendations (1)

- The public should be involved in the site selection process from the very beginning; it reduces dislike
- Regarding cooperation with the local public, accommodate to the expectations of the local community, but define clear objectives, rules of operation, competences (and the questions that can not be discussed - safety, total finance)
- Define the decision-making process clearly (the advisory and the decision-making role)
- Transparency of the procedure; the proposals of the public have to be treated seriously: accepted, if possible; never ignored or rejected without arguments.
Recommendations (2)

- Identify all relevant stakeholders and involve them in the siting process (representativeness of the actors)
- Everyone can participate, but focus on the most important stakeholders (not the loudest)
- Define clear and precise communication programmes (contents, forms of communication, schedules, … so that all relevant questions are discussed)
- Build and maintain trust in your organization with all activities
- Foreign communication models can be followed, but must be adapted to the specific culture and circumstances