NERIS-TP
Dissemination Workshop
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BELARUS EXPERIENCE
MINISTRY FOR EMERGENCY SITUATIONS
OF THE REPUBLIC OF BELARUS

Research Institute of Radiology (RIR)

IN Volvement of local population in
post-Chernobyl recovery processes

Presented by: Dr. Viktor S. AVERIN
Director of RIR
Outline

- Evolution of public communication system
  - Stages of public perception of the post-accident situation
- Shift of emphasis
  - Public outreach and training
- Practical radiological culture: the role of CPRCs
  - Ways of involving people in self-management of the local situation
- Conclusions on the present-day situation in Belarus
  - NERIS-TP: Lessons and Benefits
Communication with local stakeholders was not a priority task in the initial period. The Government’s top priority to provide public health safety and protection.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Мероприятия</th>
<th>Сроки</th>
<th>Ответственные исполнители</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Организовать серию лекций и обед специалистов и ученых с населением по вопросам сельскохозяйственной радиологии (по особенно планируемым датам) и выступлениям по радио</td>
<td>1987-1988</td>
<td>Дьяченков А.П.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Выделить целевым назначением для проведения массовой разъяснительной работы в сельских районах, подвергенно опасности загрязнению автоколонн Т-12,02 на массы УАЗ-3303-02</td>
<td>1987</td>
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<td>姉</td>
<td>РСФСР - 5 шт.</td>
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<td>УССР - 5 шт.</td>
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<td>БССР - 4 шт.</td>
<td>1987</td>
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<td>3. Подготовить и обеспечить внедрение программ:</td>
<td>1988</td>
<td>Батыгин Н.Ф.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Институты: &quot;Изотопы и радиация в растениеводстве&quot;</td>
<td>1988</td>
<td>Попов А.А.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Руководства по ведению агробиологического производства в</td>
<td>1988</td>
<td>Корнеев М.А.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ВНИИ сельскохозяйственной радиологии и его филиалы Госагротропрома соженских и публикаций совместно с ВО &quot;Селанье&quot;, ВАХНИД</td>
<td>1986</td>
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Fear of deadly health effects and especially of the safety of children;
Can we live here and consume the food we produce?
Confusing variance of information

1986-1989

Steady belief that living under such conditions is possible;
How to reduce the radiation levels in locally produced food? What recommendations should be used?
What food products should be produced to assure their good sale?

1990-1995

Confidence in food safety (compliance with the standards);
Improved credibility to the affected areas;
Radioecological education of all local residents through children and youth;
Direct access to measuring radionuclide concentrations in food

1996-2013
**Communication and Information Support as a priority task was fully recognized only in the frames of IV National Program on Overcoming the Consequences of the Chernobyl NPP Disaster for 2001-2005**

- **Arrangement of lecture tours with the involvement of experts to raise awareness among the affected population**
- **Communication by means of local and national media**
- **Development and distribution of information handouts on the safe residence in contaminated areas**
- **Production of educational and methodological literature on radioecology and radiological safety for medical staff, specialists in agriculture and school teachers**
- **Production of maps of radiation situation in terms of the republic, its regions and districts**
- **Provision of social and psychological support to the affected population**
- **Training courses for local professionals and governors n the safe living in the context of radioactive contamination**

The main point of Information Work was to provide profound education for the residents of the affected areas in order to change their behavioral pattern so that they could safely live in the context of radioactive contamination.
Public Outreach and Training

Training programs for health-care and education professionals on the methods of information work amongst the population

- Seminars for medical staff relating to implementation of radioecological information activities amongst different groups of population
- Seminars for teachers relating to implementation of radioecological information activities amongst different groups of population, and the teaching methods of promoting healthy lifestyle
- "Peer education" workshops
- Training courses for professionals at higher educational specialist establishments
Outreach and awareness-raising work on the basics of radioecological skills amongst the residents of the affected areas

- Thematic expositions and dissemination of informational print-outs
- Public lectures by specialists and demonstration of thematic films
- Whole-body measurements
- Publication of informational materials and their dissemination among population
Public Outreach and Training

Training for Schoolchildren:
- Radiology basics, and
- Measurements of radionuclide concentrations in foodstuffs, feed, ambient gamma-radiation dose rates

Creation of the Centers for Practical Radiological Culture (CPRC) in the local schools of the affected areas

Improvement of radiological knowledge and practical skills of radiation protection among schoolchildren and other groups of population
The local Centers for practical radiological culture are created and successfully function in schools located in the affected areas.

Various informational events are held there with participation of wide range of stakeholders.
Direct involvement of population in activities related to control and management of radiological situation is an effective method of working out the residents’ skills necessary for safe living and environmental management in contaminated areas;

Practical radiological culture should be spread amongst different groups of population and in the first place among health care and education workers;

Involvement of public representatives contributes to higher credibility to the radiometric measurement results.

- The main objective of the CPRCs is to increase the level of radiological knowledge and practical skills of radiological protection of the residents of contaminated areas providing them access to measuring radioactive contamination of foodstuffs and feed

- The CPRCs are established in rural schools located in the affected areas
CPRCs IN THE AFFECTED AREAS
What are the Centers’ roles?

- Measure cesium contents in food produced on private farm plots and in forest products
- Organize Information Days which imply dissemination of information materials, dialogues with the relevant specialists, and also demonstration of topic-related videos
- Perform whole-body examinations of the local population
- Analyze the results of whole-body measurements and provide the risk families where high doses were detected respective individual consultation and determine the potential sources of such excess contamination

National recognition of the local needs. Involvement of local population

Reassurance and higher credibility in food safety and safe living conditions

Health protection. Dose reduction. Sustainable radiation control system
DIFFERENT WAYS OF INVOLVING LOCAL POPULATION
Improvement of communication with population is an integral compound of international projects implemented in Belarus

- NRPA: Norwegian Radiation Protection Authority
- Centre d’étude sur l’Évaluation de la Protection dans le domaine Nucléaire
- UNDP: United Nations Development Programme
- SDC: The Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
- Association pour le Contrôle de la Radioactivité dans l’Ouest
- Institut de Radioprotection et de Sûreté Nucléaire
NERIS-TP: Lessons and Benefits

After 27 years of post-Chernobyl management, Belarus is now at the last stage of finalizing this process, moving away from the concept of "post-accident recovery" towards economic development of the areas, which is an official national policy at the present time.

Being part of the NERIS-TP Project, we have learnt and shared much and come up with one major conclusion:

- Although the value of Belarus experience in the long-term post-accident management of contaminated territories can hardly be overestimated, our attention must be turned now to the importance of emergency preparedness providing stakeholder participation, especially in view of our first NPP construction – something that we didn’t take much into account while being focused on the post-accident recovery.
Bragin is a district area in Gomel region located within 45km from Chernobyl NPP. For this reason, we chose it as a project area to implement the project activities as a subcontractor to NRPA in the frames of NERIS-TP WP3.

The Bragin Workshop held during the exchange visit of the Slovak delegation was focused on the issues of post-accident management and, importantly, accident preparedness and stakeholder involvement.

The Workshop identified a number of weak points in the local-regional system of nuclear emergency preparedness.

Considering the area heavily affected by the Chernobyl disaster which has been struggling for its recovery for decades, such results on its preparedness state were quite unexpected.
NERIS-TP: Lessons and Benefits
Lessons from the Bragin Workshop

- It is vital to not only consider the fact of absence of contamination (radiation safety), but also the state of emergency preparedness.

- Lack of obvious threat doesn’t give rise to necessity of radioecological knowledge. There’s no reason to involve all population in preparedness and response: special target groups must be identified (apart from the designated emergency units and teams), which potentially could be involved in the response, e.g. security guards, drivers, medical stuff, who live in the NPP area or in the area of other facilities of potential threat.

- According to the Belarus experience, involvement of local stakeholders in the processes of post-accident management and emergency preparedness and response, especially those who directly live in the area of hazardous installations, should be continuously initiated and motivated "from above-level", meaning from the national and regional authorities, with the assistance of science, NGOs, and, what was found most effective, within global initiatives, international programs and projects.
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THANK YOU FOR YOUR KIND ATTENTION!

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