

Models for Impact: Civil Society Engagement in Support of Nuclear Security

Nuclear security impacts everyone. Just as a nuclear accident anywhere is an accident everywhere, so too would a nuclear security incident anywhere be an incident everywhere. Though governments maintain that nuclear security is the responsibility of the state, the reality is that multiple stakeholders hold responsibility for nuclear security, from the legislators establishing laws that support nuclear security, to the regulators developing and implementing regulations, to the industrial, commercial and medical operators of nuclear technology. In that context, civil society can play an important role in supporting governments to strengthen nuclear security around the world. Civil society can provide valuable links between government and industry, raise awareness of the importance of nuclear security amongst different levels of stakeholders, and keep governments accountable to their commitments and for their actions.

The Nuclear Threat Initiative (NTI) has developed an impact model that enables it to work with governments around the world to reduce global threats, including nuclear security. This model involves four approaches, which can be conducted in different orders or simultaneously. The first is developing open source expert analysis about key nuclear security issues. This analysis can help identify good practices, gaps in activities, and potential methods to address those gaps. It also provides unclassified information that can be used to fuel discussions around the world. The second approach is to engage global stakeholders through meetings, workshops and seminars. These seek to stimulate collective self-interest and align essential forces worldwide to accomplish key goals and objectives. The third approach is to use direct action in specific circumstances that demonstrate innovative solutions to persistent problems. One example of the kind of direct action NTI has taken in the past includes providing the seed money to what became the Nuclear Security Fund, as well as initiating a project to assure supply of low enriched uranium (LEU), which is now the LEU Fuel Bank in Kazakhstan. Both of these projects started as a small input from civil society that then had large impacts and function self-sufficiently. Finally, the aim of our activities are to drive systemic change through institutional adoption of proven programs and practices.

Civil society activities using the approaches outlined above is an important contribution to international nuclear security. Civil society can bring creativity, innovation and flexibility to challenging problems, and provide opportunities for action that may not be available to governments. Additionally, civil society is an important link between governments, industry, and the general public, and help build strong support for nuclear security across sectors.

Gender

Female

State

Other

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