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Capacity-Building to Achieve Sustainable Security: Successful International Cooperation in the Dominican Republic

The U.S. Department of Energy/National Nuclear Security Administration's Office of Radiological Security (ORS) cooperates with partner countries throughout the world to enhance the security of radioactive sources used for legitimate purposes. The IAEA and member states recognize that sustainability and capacity-building with partners is the foundation for a successful security program. There are a myriad of factors that can impede sustainability and capacity-building; nevertheless, a number of partner countries have enjoyed significant success in moving toward long-term security training initiatives and security culture development. The Dominican Republic is one country that has embraced its radiological security mission and taken remarkable strides toward establishing a sustainable radiological security structure. In addition to its development and enactment of the regulatory structure necessary to underpin its security efforts, the National Energy Commission (CNE) has been proactive in ensuring operators, regulatory staff, and response stakeholders in the country possess the tools and capabilities to properly implement their respective security responsibilities at fixed sites and have begun expanding these efforts to sources in transport. CNE not only convenes workshops to direct and assist operators in the development of site security plans, it also collaborates closely with law enforcement entities to develop and deliver training to response personnel to improve the effectiveness of a law enforcement response to an attempted theft of radioactive materials, and has convened stakeholders from across the response spectrum to maximize efficiencies and eliminate confusion during a multi-agency response effort resulting from the loss of control of radiological material. CNE recently evolved to a greater level of capacity building through its development of a curriculum for targeted training sessions to raise awareness of the threats, risks, and consequences associated with radiological or nuclear material; explain security management and related performance expectations; teach principles of security and security system design through hands-on instruction using physical security equipment in the training environment; ensure stakeholder awareness of the security requirements codified in national regulations; and emphasize security culture development among operators.

The example of the Dominican Republic offers several lessons that can be applied by other countries seeking to achieve similar success in capacity-building efforts. Analysis of the underlying conditions that have lent themselves to success in the Dominican Republic also helps identify areas where efforts can be focused to foster an environment where capacity-building can be more fruitful and sustainable security truly achievable. This paper will review the actions undertaken in the Dominican Republic, identify the circumstances that facilitated success and the hurdles overcome in the process, and seek lessons and best practices that can be applied in similar efforts elsewhere.

Gender

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