

# NERIS Workshop 2017

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## Abstract Template

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Please select one or more topics for your abstract

|                                     |                                                                                                                |
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| <input type="checkbox"/>            | RADIOLOGICAL IMPACT ASSESSMENTS                                                                                |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | COUNTERMEASURES AND COUNTERMEASURE STRATEGIES IN EMERGENCY & RECOVERY, DECISION SUPPORT & DISASTER INFORMATICS |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | SETTING-UP A HOLISTIC FRAMEWORK FOR PREPAREDNESS FOR EMERGENCY RESPONSE & RECOVERY                             |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT AND ENGAGEMENT IN EMERGENCY AND RECOVERY                                               |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | UNCERTAINTY HANDLING ISSUES FOR EMERGENCY AND RECOVERY                                                         |

### Title

**Ethical considerations on the empowerment of people living in contaminated areas after a nuclear accident**

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## Text

Fukushima as previously Chernobyl highlighted the importance of involving the population with the support of national and local experts and authorities to ensure the effectiveness and sustainability of protection actions in contaminated territories.

The empowerment of inhabitants is a key factor for the success of this involvement but it also raises important ethical issues because it can be seen as a strategy to let inhabitants alone to face the post-accident situation and for authorities and experts to be relieved of their responsibilities.

After the Chernobyl and Fukushima accidents, stakeholder involvement processes have been implemented in a few communities in Belarus, Norway and Japan. In these contexts, the availability of measurements devices for the inhabitants was crucial to allow them to assess their own radiological situation. Measurements allow to make radioactivity visible and to talk about it with others. Progressively people build their own reference and regain power to make choices and to retrieve control on their daily-life. Experience shows that to protect effectively the inhabitants living in contaminated areas, experts must work in cooperation with the local actors and develop together a co-expertise process.

But helping people to protect themselves does not mean that authorities and experts have no responsibilities and call for strong ethical principles. First of all is the refusal to take decision for the people about their future. To be helpful, scientists need to understand that, as necessary as radiation protection is, it is not the only issue inhabitants are facing and it cannot handle people's lives. Radiation protection experts must commit themselves to be at the service of individuals and the community and the issues they want to address.

It's the responsibility of authorities and experts to implement the conditions based on a governance involving the inhabitants allowing respect of freedom and justice. They have also the duty to address collective challenges such as ensuring equity between individuals and communities.

The paper discusses the ethical considerations to be addressed by experts and authorities in the empowerment process for people living in contaminated areas after a nuclear accident.