Preliminary Public Engagement Plan and Typology of Communication Dynamics for CCS Gundih Pilot Project In Indonesia

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Abstract

The Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS) Gundih Pilot Project is currently an upcoming, prominent CCS Project in Indonesia that will be implemented in the Gundih gas field, located in Blora District, Central Java Province. The CCS activities will consist of the CO₂ capture from the Central Processing Plant, CO₂ transport and injection in the storage reservoir. Project commencement is planned for the end of 2019. Around 20,000 tonnes of CO₂ over 2 years will be injected underground. Prior to the injection process, preliminary public engagement and communication studies were carried out. The data were collected through social mapping, including socio-economic characterization, interviews and focus group discussions as the approaches for stakeholder analysis, establishing opinion shaping factors, arguments mapping, CCS messaging framework, identifying local media landscape, and distinguishing appropriate communication actions for local public. At the onset of the CCS Gundih Pilot Project, CO₂ capture and storage was largely unknown to the Indonesian public, including policy developers, community leaders, Non-Governmental Organizations, educators, and communities in Blora. Early stages of the public engagement study revealed little public familiarity and understanding of the term “CO₂ storage”.

Through the stakeholder analysis following key local public were identified: Local Government of the Blora District, including Sub-districts and Villages Leaders and Service Agencies; Community Representatives: including Community Based Organizations (CBOs), Elders/Heads of Community and Local Non-Governmental Organizations; Media: DIVA Blora (Local newspaper) and Community Radio; and State-owned Companies: Local PERTAMINA CEPU and PERHUTANI Regional Jawa Tengah (Forest Management State-owned Company). These stakeholders are influential for the planned CCS Project and strongly determine its course. Communication with the abovementioned stakeholders showed that although most of them are familiar with Climate Change and its impact, they had not heard about Carbon Capture and Storage nor knew how CCS could help in mitigating Climate Change. They have shown great interest in further understanding the CCS technology and would welcome educational materials and tools. Interviews suggest that the opinion about the project will be influenced by the value the project can bring to the local population. Project stakeholders recognize positive project impacts, such as reduction of CO₂ emissions, CCS capacity building in Indonesia and economic and image benefits for the Blora District in particular. The public engagement team suggests that positive framing (especially stressing benefits for the local population) should be the basic principle for future communication by the Gundih CCS project.
leadership. It should be noted that stakeholders have expressed concerns regarding potential negative impacts of the project, such as increased traffic due to CO\(_2\) transport, earthquakes triggered by CO\(_2\) injection in the storage formation, potential CO\(_2\) leakage from the formation and safety risks associated with CO\(_2\). It is important to make sure that all stakeholders’ concerns are addressed in any future public engagement activities. Local leaders have indicated that they would like to be involved in further stakeholder engagement and indicated that they would value support and guidance in doing so. They would like to facilitate a dialogue between the CCS Gundih Pilot Project team and the community, monitor/supervise CCS activities in the area by accompanying the project team on site, and be CCS educators for the local population. In terms of the messaging framework, CCS Gundih Pilot Project communication is framed around the benefit of reducing significant amount of CO\(_2\) emissions from large point sources like power plants, refineries, CO\(_2\) intense industries, etc. to combat climate change and the benefit that early involvement in CCS will have for Indonesia. The project team has organised Focus Group Discussions with key local stakeholders where the team explained what CCS is and which CCS activities are to be implemented in the area. It was aimed to communicate with the stakeholders in an easy understandable manner, avoiding complicated technical/scientific language.

Important lessons obtained from the preliminary public engagement activities in Blora are following:

- The public engagement should be an integral component of project management. Despite that conducting effective public engagement will not necessarily ensure the success of the project, it creates important contributions to schedule adherence, cost controls, and community goodwill and acceptance.
- Effective public outreach in CCS involves listening to individuals and groups of people, sharing information, and addressing concerns through proactive community engagement, this should include advancing Blora’s local resources and local media of communications as channels to communicate about current and future CCS activities.
- Results indicate that the local population highly trusts the government. Currently, the Blora District government has expressed their support to the project. It is important to ensure continued engagement with the governmental bodies in the district and actively involve government in communications with the public.
- In order to ensure local public’s trust, the same project representatives should be involved in further communication activities.

Thus local public’s involvement in the communication and consultation around the planned CCS activities in their area is crucial. Therefore, CCS public engagement and communication studies chalk out and support the project in understands, anticipates, and addresses public perceptions and concerns regarding CO\(_2\) capture and storage in the project area as earliest as possible, especially in mitigating the slow-onset technological disaster risks that may cause.