

APPENDIX 5C

EXAMPLE OF COMMUNITY ACCEPTANCE PROCEDURE

1. COMMUNITY ACCEPTANCE

No matter how many technical counter-measures shall be incorporated into the sanitary landfill design, construction and operation, not surprisingly the NIMBY syndrome will be difficult to overcome. Much effort will be needed to obtain the community's acceptance for the project.

It will be necessary to obtain the community's acceptance through communication to disseminate information and comprehend their concerns and through community participation. These elements are briefly discussed below.

1.1 Communication and Dissemination of Information

Experience in Japan shows that the public's position on construction of SWM facilities in their areas has gradually shifted from a purely opposition stand, to an active stand where the public backs its opposition with an understanding of the subject in question, and in some cases, a cooperative stand where the public participates in the planning and design of the facility in question.

This change in position is believed to be due to a better understanding of SWM by the public, thanks to the strong efforts exerted by the central and local authorities to communicate with the public.

In the case of Rawang SLF project, the effort to communicate with the public should start at an early stage. One common mistake that may ignite the community's rejection is when the public is approached too late.

In order to communicate with the Rawang community, it is necessary first to conduct surveys in order to identify the background of the targeted community and other existing conditions. After that, the most suitable information dissemination program can be tailored.

Table 1 shows seven rules of risk communications developed in the US and widely in use. These "rules" may be referred to when preparing for the forthcoming public review hearings for the project within the EIA process.

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Table 1 : Rules of Risk Communication

Risk Communication	Guidelines - Relative to Rawang Site
1. Accept and involve the public as a legitimate partner	<u>Demonstrate respect for the public</u> <i>It will be necessary to respect the community's expected objection to becoming the dumpsite for the KL waste and prepare to deal with that. It is also conceivable that most members of the community may not be aware of SWM issues and explanation must therefore be tailored to a diverse audience.</i>
	<u>Involve the community early</u> <i>Efforts should be made to involve the community at the public hearing stages of the EIA process.</i>
	<u>Involve Stakeholders</u> <i>The stakeholders shall include the authorities on the federal, state and local levels, the expected site operator, and the consultants and contractors.</i>
	<u>Emphasize sincerity of effort</u> <i>The Rawang community should be convinced that effort is being made to inform them of the project contents and at the same time listen to their concerns and try to address these concerns.</i>
2. Plan carefully and evaluate effort	<u>Begin with clear objectives</u> <i>Objectives should include obtaining the community's understanding on sanitary landfill (as opposed to open dumping), SWM practices, and understanding the communities concerns and fears. Another objective is to reach the community that will be affected by the construction of the project.</i>
	<u>Evaluate risk information</u> <i>Understanding community concerns will help in prioritizing the information to be disseminated to the community.</i>
	<u>Know own strengths and weaknesses</u> <i>At this point we can expect that the issue of the Taman Pelangi residential development adjacent to the site, the site location in the catchment area of Sg. Selangor and the fact that waste from KL will be disposed of at Rawang are issues that we need to address</i>
	<u>Classify and segment audience</u> <i>A survey of the population will help in understanding their backgrounds and tailoring the message to be easily understood.</i>
	<u>Recruit and train good communicators</u> <i>MHLG, State and local authorities representatives communicating with the community should have a strong grasp of the project plan and design and preferably experience in facing the public and explaining the technical requirements of the project.</i>
	<u>Pretest effort</u> <i>The communication plan may first be tested on a selected group of people representing the community.</i>
	<u>Evaluate effort and learn from mistakes</u> <i>In a project of this nature, a number of opportunities will be available to communicate with the public and it would be helpful to improve the communication skills as well as the message as the process proceeds.</i>

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Risk Communication	Guidelines - Relative to Rawang Site
3. Listen to people's concerns	<u>Listen carefully and attentively</u> <i>The Rawang community may have fears other than those anticipated by the technical experts involved in the project. Some may be valid while others may be groundless. It is necessary to listen to all these fears and understand them.</i>
	<u>Take time to find out what people are thinking</u> <i>During surveys and public meetings sufficient time should be allocated to the people to enable them to express their opinions.</i>
	<u>Implement interviews, surveys, etc.</u> <i>During the EIA process interview, surveys were implemented. The scale and data obtained from these surveys should be analyzed to determine their sufficiency. For example, the surveys may not have covered the future residents of Taman Pelangi.</i> <i>Another important survey is on the existing conditions of SWM in order to be in a position to explain to the community the benefits that may be expected from the project in the form of improved SWM conditions.</i> <i>A third survey would involve surrounding land use in order to identify the community needs and plan the SLF post closure land use plan accordingly.</i>
	<u>Identify with the audience</u> <i>There will be a number of venues for communicating with the community and the audience racial mixes, educational background, etc. may differ for each. The composition of the audience at each venue should be understood.</i>
	<u>Recognize people's emotions and hidden agendas</u> <i>This is an emotional subject and it is necessary to treat it with caution, However it is also important to identify early on "hidden agendas" by certain groups which may sway the public opinion one way or another. It will however be always difficult to allay the public's fears on the falling of land value and this needs to be recognized in the forefront.</i>
4. Be honest, frank and open	<u>State credentials</u> <i>At each meeting with the community, it is necessary to make known the professional and educational background of the communicators.</i>
	<u>If you don't know, say so and get back with answers</u> <i>It is better to ask for time and get back with answers instead of making erroneous statements.</i>
	<u>Admit mistakes</u> <i>While we do not intend to make any mistakes in the coming stages of the project (design, construction, operation, closure), members of the community may have grievances on such issues as no information was disclosed at the site selection process, the draft local plan designated the area selected for the site as housing, and the lack of an approved master plan for SWM which identifies the function of the project in relation to other SWM facilities.</i> <i>While these may be more properly classified as overlooked items, rather than mistakes it is necessary to provide plausible explanation for them and rectify as possible.</i>

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Risk Communication	Guidelines - Relative to Rawang Site
	<p><u>Disclose risk information</u> <i>The fears of the community may be partially valid. However, the risks associated with each phase of the project should be identified and explained in an understandable manner and the countermeasures for each risk also explained.</i></p> <p><u>Speculate with great caution</u> <i>Design criteria for quality and quantity of leachate and landfill gas, extent of odor, soil conditions, hydrological drainage and others should all be made based on technically sound surveys in terms of scope coverage, implementation, and knowledge of local conditions. Speculation, with a lack of sound basis should be avoided.</i></p> <p><u>Discuss data uncertainties, strengths and/or weaknesses</u> <i>Continuing the explanation of the above item, where there are unavoidable cases where estimates had to be made without sufficient data basis than these should be explained.</i></p> <p><u>Identify worst-case scenarios</u> <i>This item falls with the risk management scheme that has to be developed. Scenarios should be identified showing both the likelihood that such a scenario would take place and the extent of its impact.</i></p>
<p>5. Coordinate and collaborate with other credible sources</p>	<p><u>Develop good working relationships</u> <i>The project developer, other concerned government agencies, technical consultants, contractor and operator should coordinate together within the forums related to this project, such as the Technical Committee at this stage.</i></p> <p><u>Coordinate with other organizations</u> <i>Coordination of the above bodies with interested parties such as society groups, NGO's and others is required.</i></p> <p><u>Use credible and authoritative intermediaries</u> <i>The GOM has invited members from the universities to participate in the project discussions at the Technical Committee and also the DOE panel. These members may serve as intermediaries.</i></p>
<p>6. Meet the needs of the media</p>	<p><u>Be open and accessible to reporters</u> <i>At present, almost daily, there are some articles on SWM in the Malaysian newspapers. The media reporters may not be experts in that field and therefore it is necessary that they be provided with information to understand the difference between the proposed SLF project and the open dumpsites often criticized in the newspapers. Also the role of the SLF in the SWM scheme and its nature as an environmental project should be highlighted.</i></p> <p><u>Provide risk information tailored to media needs</u> <i>In pursuit of the above, in order to assist the reporters' knowledge of the project, information should be provided to them.</i></p> <p><u>Establish long-term media relationships</u> <i>The SLF site shall be operated for around 20 years and it is therefore necessary to maintain a long-term relation with the media.</i></p>

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Risk Communication	Guidelines - Relative to Rawang Site
7. Speak carefully and with compassion	<p><u>Use simple non-technical language</u> <i>The message and technical content should be tailored to a diverse audience.</i></p>
	<p><u>Use vivid concrete images that communicate on a personal level</u> <i>Presentation should include photographs and conceptual images of existing open dump sites and the proposed Rawang SLF.</i></p>
	<p><u>Acknowledge the public view as important in evaluating risk</u> <i>Prioritization of the risks may differ from the viewpoint of the experts and the public. The experts may be more concerned on the risk of liner failure and consequent pollution of the groundwater while the public may have more concern over the risk of generation of vectors.</i></p>
	<p><u>Discuss actions that are underway or that can be taken</u> <i>It is important to explain to the public as necessary the actions that are being taken or planned concerning the discussed risks.</i></p>
	<p><u>Promise only what you can do</u> <i>Most of the public opposing the project will do so out of fear of what may happen in the next 20 to 50 years. Their concern is that the project developer and the consultants may not be around 10 or 20 years later. In that sense it is important to discuss the measures that will be taken in the risk management process in the future and what we can do at present.</i></p>

Source: Covello and Allen (1988) (with some modifications)

1.2 Public Participation Methods

The Environmental Impact Assessment process calls for public display of the Terms of Reference (TOR) for Detailed Environmental Impact Assessment (DEIA) and a second public display during the review of the DEIA Report. These are two forums for public participation.

However, experience with other similar projects shows that more opportunities for public participation would assist in the smooth implementation of SWM projects.

Table 2 shows some approaches to public participation methods and their effectiveness, in its relation to the Rawang project.

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Table 2 : Public Participation Methods

Method	Effectiveness - <i>Relative to Rawang Site</i>
1. Press notices	<p><u>Already required under the EIA process.</u></p> <p><i>Due to lack of local newspapers, the immediate community may not notice or read the press notice. Furthermore, due to space limitations, the information provided may be too little.</i></p>
2. Leaflets, pamphlets & brochures	<p><u>Direct delivery to houses and made available at public places. May be at different stages in order to update the public on the progress of the project.</u></p> <p><i>So far, this method has not been used for the Rawang project. It is expected that groups objecting to the project will resort to this method to reach a wider audience. For Rawang a 4-page leaflet should be prepared to address general audience and also some detail for more interested readers. These leaflets should be used at public hearings as well as hand distributed to households.</i></p>
3. Questionnaires	<p><u>Effective use for understanding the nature of the community, determining their concerns and gathering comments.</u></p> <p><i>The EIA consultants have implemented some socio-economic surveys and this included a questionnaire survey. The level of confidence in the survey results should be evaluated in order to answer the question: "Is there a sufficient understanding of the community and their concerns as we go into the public review stage?"</i></p> <p><i>It is also worthwhile to note that at the time of the questionnaire survey the project information was still quite limited and therefore, a second survey after the Design Brief preparation may be more valuable in designing the questions and searching for the public's comments.</i></p>
4. Open public meetings	<p><u>Can provide a venue for explaining the project content but requires careful preparation in terms of the presentation content and those responsible for making the presentations</u></p> <p><i>This may be the most effective method, but also the most difficult one. Although it is difficult in a project of this nature to gain the acceptance of all the meeting attendants, it is necessary to gain the understanding of most of those present and furthermore not allow a small group of opposing attendants control the proceedings. In addition, the materials presented must address the diverse groups in the meeting.</i></p> <p><i>In spite of their obvious disadvantages, it may be useful to hold 1 or 2 such meetings for the Rawang project after careful preparation. The materials presented should not only cover the Rawang project but should address the solid waste management in the entire area in order that there is an understanding on the improvement measures this project will introduce.</i></p>
5. Site visits, e.g. to similar sites	<p><u>Good for providing explanation on operation and visualisation of the issues at hand.</u></p> <p><i>Site visits are of particular importance in this project. At present, the community members only know the surrounding disposal sites, which are mostly open dumping sites with little environmental consideration in construction and operation. It is necessary to explain to the participants how different the Rawang sanitary landfill will be from these sites and the potential for closing these polluting sites once Rawang comes into operation.</i></p>

Appendix 5C**1.3 Theme of Public Communication****(a) Sanitary Landfill Project**

In principle, the public should be informed of issues related to the various stages of the project, from the time when it is determined that a sanitary landfill is required, through the selection of the site, facilities design, construction, operation, landfill completion and closure. These issues have been identified based on the experience in Japan and are shown in **Figure 1**.

In principle the issues identified in **Figure 1** may be summarized into the following three items:

- Storage and treatment function
- Environmental conservation function
- Returning benefit to the community

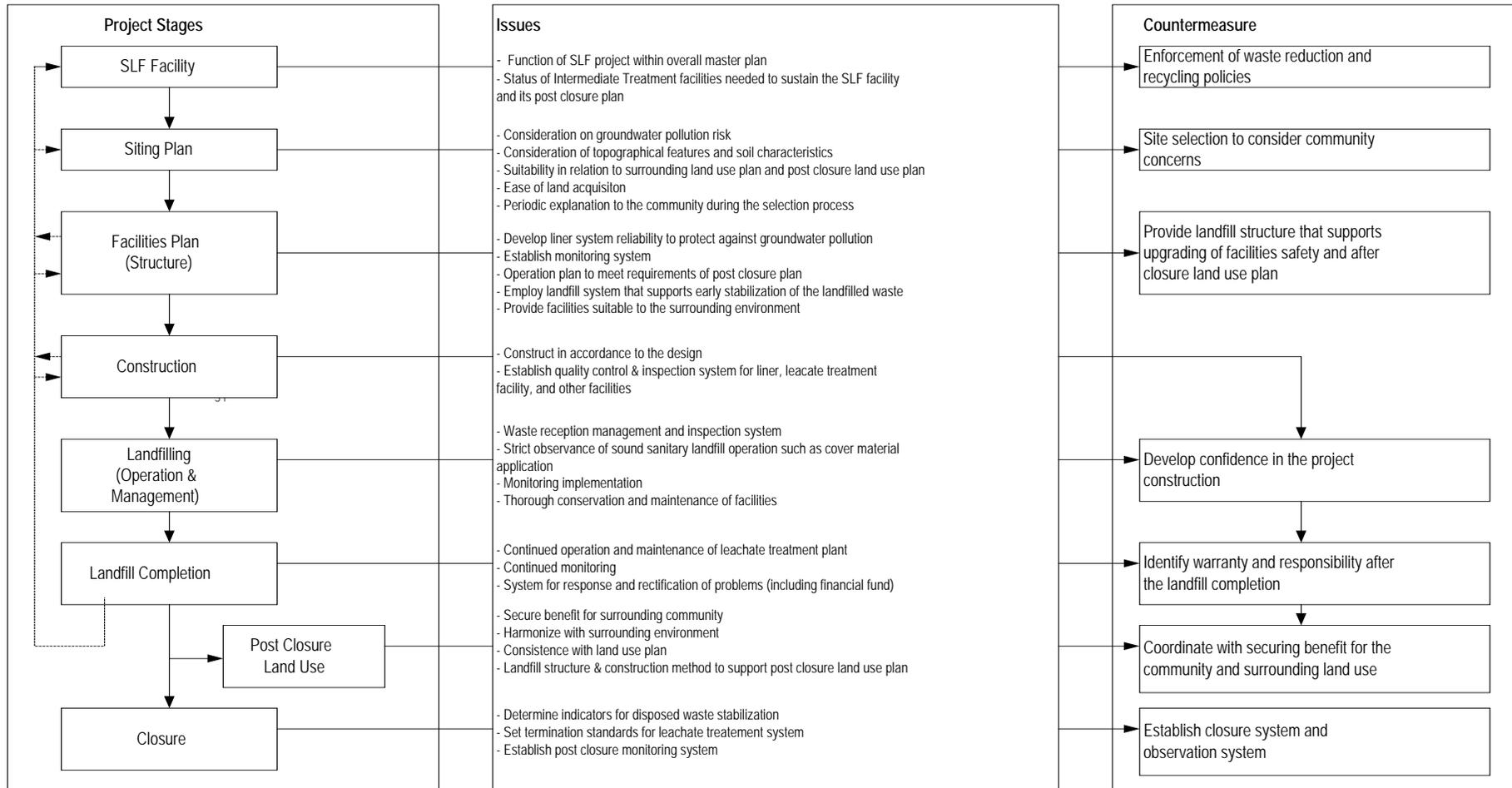
(b) Issues of Specific Relevance to Rawang SLF

The preceding explanation shows that in order to gain community acceptance for the Rawang SLF project, the following issues need to be studied:

- Identify the function of Rawang SLF project within the context of an overall master plan for SWM in the surrounding area
- Identify the conformity of having a sanitary landfill at this location with the existing surrounding land use
- Identify the conformity of the conceptual post closure land use plan with the local land use development plans
- Identify the benefits to return to the community from the implementation of this project.

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Figure 1 : Issues of Public Concern



Source: Solid Waste Planning – Plan Formulation and Community Acceptance, Furuishi Tooro