

MERCURY AWARENESS CAMPAIGN IN BRAZIL

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INTRODUCTION

The lack of awareness, technical knowledge, support programs and information on different aspects of artisanal gold mining in Brazil make the situation precarious. The Awareness Campaign – AC, intends to multiply the number of people and communities aware of environmental and health impact on their habitat, by using the top-down approach: at Brazilian Federal unit, for government institutions and academic levels, and at local level, to elaborate and to perform training-the-trainers. The slogan of the campaign is: **Mercury in Small Scale Gold Mining, to know to solve.**

OBJECTIVES

To present the strategies and special materials designed to increase the knowledge and raising awareness of Brazilian miners, governments, NGOs and the general public on the environmental and health impacts associated with the current artisanal mining practices. The materials proposed were: brochures, local rhymes (cordel) and poems, a cordel theater play especially elaborated, considering the socio-cultural context of gold miners in Tapajos River Region.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Brazilian Federal unit was performed through one-day workshop (April 13th 2005) in Brasília, the capital of Brazil, in order to increase the knowledge of decision-makers about the real situation of gold miners in Brazil. More than 65 persons were present, representing: governmental, non-governmental organizations, universities, research institutes and the general public (Figures 1 and 2).

The next phase was contact stakeholders to presenting next steps (Figure 3). It was performed in September 29th, 2005. In addition, several interviews to local TV stations, about the second phase of GMP – Global Mercury Project in Tapajós were given.



Figure 1 - Participants of AC in Brasília, at Federal level.



Figure 2 - Representatives of Mining and Energy Ministry, AMOT – Gold Miners Association, Itaituba Municipality, UNIDO/ICFP - CETEM and SECTAM - Pará State Agency.



Figure 3 – Representatives of Itaituba municipality, Wall Street Journal, AMOT (Gold Miners Association), (UNIDO/GMP's, CETEM (Center for Mineral Technology) Brazil Awareness Campaign.



Several activities were performed in November 2005, to deliver the results of the mercury analyses, in blood, hair and urine (analyzed in the first phase of the project for the population of São Chico and Creporizinho mines) to volunteers (Figure 4 and 5), as well as, to publicize the Awareness Campaign training course, which represented posterior phase of the Awareness Campaign (Figure 6). It was given 1,000 brochures, 500 T-shirts with Awareness Campaign slogan, 500 Cordel pamphlets and one Cordel Theater play in DVD.



Figures 4 and 5 - Awareness campaign at Creporizinho mining site



Figure 6 - Awareness campaign training program and invitation.

Awareness Campaign local level/Training-the-trainers March and July 2006: 58 participants at the first module and 34 participants at three modules		
<p>The consequences of mercury use for human health and environment Allegria Yallouz, CETEM</p> <p>Mercury sources, uses and pollution</p> <p>Chemical & environment</p> <p>Mercury species toxicology and pollution and health indicators</p> <p>Analytical methods for mercury determination</p> <p>The importance of mercury determination in fish</p> <p>WHO recommendations and the Brazilian Laws regarding mercury level in fish</p> <p>The semiquantitative method for mercury determination: method's applicability; method's advantages and limitations, quality assurance and possible applications</p>	<p>The association of mercury and tropical diseases Iranica Jesus, IEC</p> <p>Review of the concepts presented on I</p> <p>Diagnosis and treatment of mercury intoxication</p> <p>Case studies for mining, urban and riparian populations</p> <p>Association of mercury health effects and tropical diseases:</p> <p>Malaria</p> <p>Leishmaniosis</p> <p>Hepatitis A, B e C.</p> <p>Tuberculosis</p> <p>Hansen's Disease</p> <p>Health surveillance – Why, when and how?</p>	<p>AIDS, HIV & Sexually transmissible diseases & CITIZENSHIP: concepts, rights and duties Rosilene Pantoja and Antonieta Lima, Itaituba's Municipality</p> <p>Female vulnerability</p> <p>Prejudices to STD</p> <p>Prevention actions: general and Itaituba's actions</p> <p>Case statistics in Itaituba 2005/ 2006 urban, rural and at small mining communities</p> <p>Daily application of the concepts</p> <p>Actions and examples applied at Itaituba</p> <p>Third section cense at Para's state: a good example</p>



CONCLUSIONS

The main recommendation can be assumed as the proposed: support and technical assistance for small scale gold mining activities instead of the punishment, and "ludic" approach for presenting the educational materials, looking for a real communication between the local population and the technical team of Awareness Campaign in Brazil.

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