

Appendix F-21b

November Report of Activities of the PPA environmental education project Minas Gerais, Brazil (C. Cortes, EYA Intern)

Background of the project

An Environmental Youth Alliance (EYA) intern arrived on October 4th, 2005 to Minas Gerais, Brazil in order to join the World Fisheries Trust (WFT) team that is working on the Peixes, Pessoas e Agua (PPA) project. The task of the youth intern is to work alongside a Brazilian facilitator (Jose de Andrade) in implementing a Youth Environmental Engagement Strategy along the High/Medium São Francisco Watershed Basin.

Partnership Objectives

The role of the facilitating team is to work with at least three different communities and to promote the creation of environmental youth groups in the region. As well, the team will assist communication between the participating communities in order to create an exchange of experiences between the watershed youth groups. The overall objective of all activities is to support any WFT initiatives that are currently active in the region.

Once the Canadian facilitator (Juan Camilo Cortes Aguirre) arrived to the region, a 14-day trip was arranged for the EYA and WFT consultants to begin participatory workshops in several potential participant communities. Over the two week visit to the region, the consultants engaged the interested youth in each city to establish basic project ideas and objectives.

The three cities where the project is being implemented are Barra de Guaicui, Ibiai and Pirapora, all located in the Brazilian state of Minas Gerais. A youth group from the nearby community of Buritizeiro participated in the initial project activities as well. Of over 500 youth that attended the initial workshops, about 110 started work in the different communities. Since then, the job of the facilitating team has been to help the youth groups fulfill their project goals and modify them, where needed, in a participatory process that involved the youth.

Entering the communities

Both of the facilitators come from an area different from the one where the project is taking place, one being from Colombia (currently living in Canada) and the other from the neighbouring state of Sao Paolo. Because of this, relating to the needs and cultural-specific meanings given in the region has not always been easy. Both of the facilitators arrived right at the beginning of the project and so there was not enough time to gain a broad understanding of the communities before starting the project.

In particular, the facilitators noted the lack of time to create groups that would stand strongly on their own. It seems that a period of 5 to 6 months under the current conditions is not ideal to create long-lasting youth groups. By this I mean that a previous introductory period was deemed important for enhancing the success of the projects.

While a strong community may already have a youth group that participates in several activities in the area, the task of this facilitating team is to actually create more youth groups and to engage the existing and the newly created groups in environmental projects proposed by WFT. Better results might come in the future from projects of this sort where time to get to know the community is included in the initial steps of the project.



The facilitating team at Barra de Guaicui

Youth participation

In general, based on the EYA facilitator's experience, group involvement has required a higher degree of guidance than one might expect from a regular facilitating process in Canada. This is due mainly to the lack of active participation from youth in the group process. In particular, this is a result of a lack of participatory spaces for youth within the communities, and of the difficulties in most towns for people to meet basic living requirements. Even youth groups that are supported by municipal government have understaffing and leadership problems.

Nevertheless, there are a significant number of youth and youth leaders that have an interest in encouraging community participation and improving their environments and towns; it is more a problem of inexperience. As one of the participants adequately put it, sometimes "they just do not know how to start." On the other hand, this difficulty did give the facilitating team the interesting challenge of how to encourage youth and youth leader participation when there is no previous history of such community engagement, and how to do this while emphasizing the importance of environmental stewardship, an often neglected issue in South America in general.

Overall project planning

In order to fulfill the youth engagement project objectives the facilitators reached the conclusion that there had to be at least three components to this project:

- Initial phase- in which all the participants (each in their own groups) engage in a group formation process and clarify the basic needs and concepts behind their project objectives. This phase was necessary due to the lack of experience of the youth for group work and communication. The goal of this particular phase was to allow the group members to get to know one another and to assess their knowledge of the area they were planning to work on.
- Second phase- in which the projects would go from a theoretical base into action. By this time, the groups will have achieved a more structured form, with greater levels of autonomy and more leadership roles being taken on by youth within the groups.
- Third phase- At this point, the facilitators expect to find practical and material results from the groups' work. A critical evaluation of the project and the work of the facilitators will be started.

It is important to notice that, even though the facilitators have used many educational tools, one called 'minicurso' should stand out. This tool, developed within the partnership, was proposed to all youth groups in order for them to initiate their own projects. The minicurso was not a fixed tool and therefore allowed for youth themselves to interact and participate. More information from this will be given in the project descriptions but it is worth pointing out that tools with the same name and similar ideas were used in environmental education activities in other projects in São Paulo. The facilitating team learned of this other minicurso from other WFT environmental educators only after having planned all the activities for the minicurso and so any or all activities in the WFT youth engagement projects have nothing to do with the other minicurso tool already in existence.

According to the objectives found on the October report, the main result expected from these projects is an overall implementation of a youth participatory space supported by the local municipalities of every community.

Youth participation by community

Barra de Guaicui- Candeia

Group description

The youth group from Barra de Guaicui consists of roughly 15 youth from that community, along with the participation of two adults; one, a biology teacher, and the other a social worker working on both governmental and non-governmental social initiatives that include the Peti (against child labour) and Projeto Manuelzão (which is working towards the revitalization of the Rio das Velhas).

Comprised mostly of women, this group displayed a strong sense of community. The town is closely related to the river, as many of its inhabitants depend on fishing or other activities that relate to the water body, some of them negatively (e.g. river contamination). Most of the group's participants come from fishing families.

Project outline

The main objective of Candeia is to work towards the restoration of the Rio das Velhas shoreline by developing a native planting pilot project. In order to do this a series of subprojects are planned to acquire the information and the materials necessary for such a task.

The first subproject involved obtaining information needed to begin the project. In this case the minicurso tool was used by the facilitators to get the participating youth more involved in the project. Their role is to set up a presentation for their community and any interested parties (such as the municipal government, WFT facilitators, Manuelzão Project) in order to explain their project, invite any organization or member of the community to join them, and to explain the subproject timeline. Due to timing difficulties from both the facilitators and the youth group, the presentation was postponed for a few weeks. A meeting with the youth group will be set in order to try to solve the timing difficulties that have occurred in the past.

Once that first step is complete, the group will move on with the process of collecting relevant information to their project to pass on to the community and work on starting a recycling initiative in the town. The recycling project has two main goals; the first to provide materials with which to begin their next subproject, a greenhouse; the second is to serve as an income generator within their community.

The greenhouse subproject will be done once the necessary materials and an appropriate location is found. There are ongoing talks with the municipality, the church, and federal agencies in order to locate a suitable place to undertake the recycling project. As well, the Instituto de Estudos Florestais (IEF) and the Ibama will be contacted to provide native plant and seed materials to start the greenhouse. There is the possibility of earning money from the sales of greenhouse products once it is set up, but this has not been discussed at length.

The Margin Restoration Pilot Project is planned to take place near a soccer field about 300 meters from the river and close to the town's most interesting landmark, the Igreja das Pedras. The lot is abandoned and in poor condition. Because so many subprojects need to be completed before the restoration efforts can take place, use of this location has not been discussed thoroughly in the meetings.

As can be seen in Appendix A (although in Portuguese), a series of evaluating activities were set up in the first meeting with the community so as to more accurately plan the practical steps of this project in future meetings.

Ibiai

Group Description

Initially, the Ibiai youth engagement project had the participation of two different youth groups. Due to the similarities present in the Ibiai projects, the groups merged into one this month. As with last month, the number of participants fluctuated due to school time constraints.

During this month, another WFT environmental group, one comprised mainly of Ibiai teachers, was already working on a garbage collection project in which they enrolled the help of students from most of the Ibiai schools. Because this project had marked similarities with the Ibiai environmental youth project a partnership of sorts was suggested by the teachers' group. After debating this proposal with the youth group members it was decided that the group would participate actively in the teachers' activities while maintaining its own objectives and goals.

Project Outline

This month, the group's activities centered around the creation of informative pieces to tell the community about the youth project. This had two main objectives, to have a wider effect on the community by spreading the knowledge learned in the month of October about the river and the environmental problems associated with it, and to invite more people to join the group.

The group decided to base their informative pieces on the river as it is an important part of the life of the town and several of the group members have fished or are descendants of fishermen in the area. The format of preference for the informative pieces was the vinheta, a quick radio add in which information about the group and its goals are explained in 2 to 3 minutes. A series of vinhetas were planned so that every week the community will receive new information about the project.

The first vinheta was finished this month. It gives a quick introduction to the group, the project, and talks mainly about the importance of the river to the community. Two CDs of the first vinheta were recorded and given to the environmental group, one of which is in the hands of the facilitating team. The vinheta was on the air in the local radio station three times a day for a week, and some people that were interested approached the group to help out in any way they could.

There were times apart from official group meetings when the group got together to accompany the WFT teachers' environmental project on their work party days. Visual documentation of these activities is available from the teacher project leaders in Ibiai.

Pirapora

Projeto Renascer and Pingo de Luz

On November 9th, the first of the four activities planned for this month was performed. This activity was planned as an introductory meeting for both groups (Renascer and Pingo de Luz) to get a chance to gain familiarity with the facilitating team. The experience with this group allowed for more mixing and interaction of the facilitating team with the monitors of each group. In this particular presentation the introductory activities were prepared by the monitors and the core event, the film *Ihla das Flores* and an activity that followed were prepared by the facilitating team (for more details see previous report). At the end of every meeting a follow up proposal for next week's meeting was done to the youth group in order to assess their willingness (or lack thereof) to participate.



Environmental Gincana day at Projeto Renascer and Pingo de Luz

The second activity, done on November 16th, involved the creation of musical pieces that talked about the youth group's experience as fishermen or simply living by the river. Each group had about an hour and a half to listen to 6 preset music tracks and come up with words for the music. Rap was chosen as the best type of music to use in this activity as it has strong popular ties to this community. A clip of the results of this activity is being prepared to present to the WFT staff and to the youth groups. It is the belief of the facilitating team that this activity is a very effective evaluating tool especially regarding youth and the way they see things in their community. Even with youth being reluctant to participate or never having done any kind of music before, the results were impressive considering that the time was very limited for this activity. There was a strong interest from the youth group to create more music in the future, the facilitating team took this into account for possible future activities regarding WFT youth engagement projects at the beginning of next year or more generally as part of the municipalities continual youth strategy.

The third activity supports a more recreational fourth activity which was planned for the end of November. It had the form of a workshop in which the themes of garbage, river contamination, native, non-native plantings and cerrado (the local dominant biomass) vegetation makeup were discussed. Basic concepts like types of garbage, the '3Rs' concept (reduction, recycling and reuse) and the difference between native and non-native plants were revisited in this activity. Native plantings were encouraged in general and pictures of plants that we could not get were shown while about 9 native plants were passed around in order to discuss the different names given in every region to the same plant. At the end of this activity, the group planted a few of the native species in one of the projects where the activities are being performed.

The fourth activity, the Environmental Gincana, encompassed a series of prepared games that focussed on the environmental themes prepared the previous week. The activities performed were dynamic and fast and were set up in order to make the learning environment more fun and interactive. The youth were asked to bring garbage to use as props in one of the games to help them think about the organic, inorganic, recyclable, and reusable components of typical household garbage. The activities were presented in the format of a contest in which four groups had to fulfill the requirements of every activity in order to gain vouchers. There were three types of vouchers: plant, seed, and garbage. The plant vouchers were given to the winners of every activity while the other two were given to the rest of the groups. In the end all the vouchers were exchanged for native plants, with the plant vouchers gaining more plants, and the garbage and seed vouchers gaining fewer. These native plants were given to the group so they could plant them in their own neighbourhood. All the members of the groups received a Carranca, an indigenous craft from the region, that represented their participation in this environmental Gincana.

Agente Jovem (AJ)

The month of November was used in general to develop and implement steps for each of the projects within the AJ group. Most of the 50 AJ members began work in the WFT youth engagement projects. The AJ members who did not participate in the projects from an early stage did so because they were working on other AJ projects at that time and most of them later joined another group to work with.

At the beginning, meetings with the AJ project were set up only for the Thursday of every week from 1pm to 4 pm. As the work with the groups intensified and implementation of the projects began more and more time was given to the facilitating team on behalf of the municipality and the AJ leaders to assist the youth engagement projects. The process of developing and implementing the activities with the AJ group was different than with all the other groups. The number of people and projects from the AJ project alone required a different approach by the facilitating team. In some ways, these groups demanded more time in order to assess the acceptance of the AJ group towards this type of work, since the facilitating team had no previous knowledge of the AJ individuals' background. As well, the need to have clarity in concepts and in the activities done by the groups made it important to invest more time in the AJ group this month than in all the others.

A list of the activities planned per group on November 4th and 11th of 2005 can be seen on Appendix B in Portuguese. This document shows how the participatory process within the AJ project worked as the youth engagement groups had to present their action strategies to the facilitating team. Every meeting, the facilitating team would ask about the development of the work planned, and every group would have to talk about their goals, their results and their obstacles to achieve their goals (if any). This was done for each group one at a time while the other groups listened and were free to ask questions or give constructive criticism. After the preliminary presentation, group time was given to all the AJ members to organize any activity they were working on for that week. During the group time, the facilitating team went around every group as needed to help in any

way they could to construct the group's next step. After the meeting time, the youth groups presented their future actions to everyone again; the facilitating team's task in this step was to help coordinate the final details of every activity planned and propose a series of complementary activities to the youth groups. For example, activities have included a recreational cinema day (which happened the same day as the WFT watershed model arrived in Pirapora) and an AJ visit to all the localities where the projects were taking place.

It is important to highlight the importance of the visit made by all the AJ members and the facilitating team to the areas where the projects are taking place. For one, it was useful for the WFT team to get a better idea of the conditions in which the AJ members live, as well as for the AJ members to understand the connectedness that the city as a whole has on an environmental level; in essence, to show that their problems are not only happening in their neighbourhoods. Interestingly, the real importance of the trips lies in what happened on those days when the group went to visit the localities. On those days, especially the first day of the visits, the rain that fell over the city was so strong that the team was forced to stay in the bus for the last communities visited. The rains filled up the lagoons where many neighbourhoods are located and flooding occurred, with some areas having rains up to the waist of an average person. Many people lost their belongings as the water went into their houses and in some areas visited by the AJ members visited showed crops that were lost and totally covered in water. This unfortunate event was used by the team to emphasize the importance of an environmental conscience among the inhabitants of Pirapora, but it was also a shocking event for all.



AJ members on the second day of the visit to the localities

APPENDIX A (Evaluating activities are underlined)

Outubro 8 de 2005

Planejamento do Projeto Ambiental de Barra do Guaicui

VERSÃO 1

Barra do Guaicui- Poluição do Rio das Velhas

Componentes:

Objetivo geral:

Projeto piloto de recuperação de mata ciliar do Rio das Velhas a través da coleta seletiva que fornecera elementos para produção de plantas nativas

Atividades:

- Diagnostico de Barra do Guaicui (Rio das Velhas)
 - Diagnostico, descoberta e registro de tudo o que acontece em relação ao rio e a região: peixes, animais, passaros, mata ciliar, plantas nativas, etc. Procurar mapa atualizado da cidade na prefeitura , EMATER, etc.
- Campanha para divulgar as informacoes (que, como, quando, porque)
 - Radio
 - Jornal do grupo
 - Etc
- Chamar o IEF (Instituto Estadual de Florestas) para pedir informações sobre a propagação de plantas nativas
 - Contatar pessoas que tenham informação e experiencia sobre o rio e a mata ciliar, coleta de lixo, etc:
 - Pesquisadores
 - Pescadores
 - Pessoas que saibam sobre propagação de plantas nativas
 - Pessoas que saibam de coleta do lixo
- Achar o lugar para separar o lixo
- Achar o nome para o grupo
- Começar com a coleta seletiva nas escolas
 - Começar a separar o lixo
 - 4 tipos de lixo :
 - Organico
 - Vidro
 - Plastico
 - Metais (Aluminio: latas)

Desafios do Grupo:

1. Educar a comunidade (Formar um plan de educação)

2. Educar a prefeitura (Falta de interesse e compromisso)
3. Tempo (O grupo tem que achar tempo para fazer as atividades)
4. Estimular a participação da comunidade (falta de informação, educação e compromisso)
5. Aumentar a equipe: há pouca gente para a implementação do projeto

Recursos que poderão ajudar ao grupo:

1. O grupo mesmo (mais participação e compromisso assumido)
2. Pessoas com mais experiência (pessoas mais velhas, pescadores, pesquisadores)
3. Prefeitura e vereadores (apoio ao projeto e facilitando acesso a informações)
4. Escola, Igreja (fazendo palestras e apoiando o projeto)
5. Projeto Peixes, Pessoas e Água
6. Projeto Manuelzão

Visão Final

Ter uma comunidade limpa, arborizada e linda. Oferecendo mais oportunidades para se ganhar dinheiro !!

APPENDIX B (Example of how the projects were facilitated in November)

Nov 4, 2005

Atividades dos Bairros- AJ Pirapora

Bairro Cidade Jardim

Projeto Estudo Socio Ambiental (PESA)

- Fazer mutirão de limpeza

- Colocar lixeiras públicas

- Procurar uma parceria com a prefeitura (mobilizar o poder legislativo)

Bairro Cicero Passos

Projeto de Rede drenagem (escoamento para água)

- Levantar provas do problema

- Tirar fotos do lugar

- Pauta para os vereadores (??)

Bairro Aparecida

Projeto Revitalizar praça

- Limpar praça

- Plantar mudas

- Reformar bancos

- Arrumar materiais (tinta, etc) e arreglar iluminação

Bairro Vila Branca

Projeto Reduzir O Lixo (ROL)

- Conversar com a secretaria para propor o projeto

- Buscar parceria

- Dar informação para os meninos (??)

Bairro Santo Antonio

Projeto Valorize o falecimento

- Crear um arquivo base com os problemas ambientais da área

- Comunicar com órgãos públicos e Sesur para fazer parceria

- Fazer panfleto/palestra

Nov 11, 2005

Dificuldades de fazer as atividades planejadas

B. Nova Pirapora/ Stos. D./ Sta. Teresinha/ (Vila Branca tambem?) (ROL)

Tarefa: procurar secretaria e intentar parceria

Wanderley nao chego a reunião e foi o unico responsavel

Falta de tempo e de contato entre os componentes do grupo

B. Nossa Senhora Aparecida (Revitalizar a praca)

Tarefa: Procurar Secretaria

Não deu tempo para arrumar tinta e as outras atividades

Falta de tempo

B. Cicero passos (Rede de drenagem)

Tarefa: Tirar fotos e levantar provas

Os meninos responsaveis da atividade não chegaram a reunião

Falta de apoio (não dobraram tarefas)

B. Cidade Jardim (PESA)

Tarefa: Procurar poder legislativo para conseguir tambores

O responsavel não chegou a reunião

Falta de interesse, compromisso, organização e comunicação

Bairro Santo Antonio (Valorize o falecimento)

Tarefa: Começar o arquivo e tirar fotos da area

Não rolo por que o curso de psicologia não deu tempo.

Falta de tempo e participantes no grupo

Nov 11, 2005

Replanejamento das atividades para a proxima semana

B. São Geraldo

Tarefa: Fazer palestra e placa

A placa va a ter a frase “Não Jogue lixo na lagoa”

Para isto precisam se reunir

Procurar materiais (madera, tinta, pincel, etc)

B. Aparecida/ Revitalizar praca

Tarefas: Procurar vassoura, carrinho de mão, pa, saco de lixo, etc

O grupo vai para o Sesur para procurar materiais

B. Projeto ROL

Tarefas: Reunir na segunda feira para montar o cronograma de atividades

Fazer cartazos para fixar em diferentes locais

Conversar com coord. AJ com o cronograma montado

Buscar panfletos na Sesur

B. Cidade Jardim/ Projeto PESA

Tarefas: Para a prox. Reunião pedir apoio do bairro

Para a prox. Reunião reunir os moradores do bairro para convidar eles a participar e falar que vai a fazer o PESA

Pedir apoio a AJ

Montar o projeto das lixeiras

B. Cicero Passos (Rede Drenagem)

Tarefas: (Pensar nome do projeto)

Para a prox reunião maquina de fotos (precissam o vao a tirar fotos)

Reunir e consultar com os moradores

Apoio AJ para fazer um mutirão de limpeza

Fazer palestra na escola do bairro

B. Santo Antonio/ Projeto Valorize o falecimento

Tarefas: De 3 fases começar com fase #1

Fase # 1 e: Fazer um arquivo dos problemas ambientais da area
Tirar fotos da area afetada

Fase # 2: Panfretos

Fase #3: Palestras, etc