

**Appendix F-21c**  
**December Report of Activities of the PPA**  
**environmental education project for EYA**  
**Minas Gerais, Brazil**



AJ group at the watershed model viewing

Prepared for: Susan Kurbis, EYA consultant to WFT

Prepared by: Juan Camilo Cortes Aguirre, EYA Intern

## **Project Background**

Since the beginning of October, a team of WFT facilitators has been working in the High/Medium area of the São Francisco River in the implementation of youth environmental initiatives in three different riverside communities Barra de Guaicui, Ibiai and Pirapora. In December this work continued and the facilitation of WFT supported initiatives in the area that target youth organization and the fisher community in these areas also began. This report is an update of the work performed in the last month of 2005 along with the activities planned for the beginning of 2006.

A discussion of the youth activities will be given first and a follow up of other activities related to the project will come second.

## **Facilitation activities- An overview of youth projects**

At the beginning of the month of December most of the group projects, the ones from the Agente Joven program in Pirapora, had began the third phase of the project (see previous reports). At this point these groups were able to show a series of “practical and material results” that signaled the finalization of the group’s activities at least for this year. While other groups were not at this similar stage of the project, the facilitating team decided to start an evaluating activity with all the groups to assess the acceptance of the projects among the participants and to begin the steps needed to close group activities for the month of December. Even if some groups were not finished with their projects by the end of December, there was the overall feeling that the work done in 2006 would be different, maybe because of the time break between the two work periods.

The general evaluation started with an internal assessment process of all the projects underway and of the facilitator’s work. A second assessment came from the youth groups via letters written by every member of the group projects. The letters are slowly being read in order to improve future work done by the facilitators in this project and any others.

## **Youth Projects by community**

Environmental Watershed model (for all communities)

At the beginning of December the PPA team that is working on environmental education in the area of 3 Marias brought a watershed model of that area into the communities where our facilitating team is working. The idea was to show and invite the youth from the area to participate as well as to look for possible partners in these endeavors. For a week the 3 Marias team toured around Barra de Guaicui, Ibiai and Pirapora. We accompanied the 3 Marias team in Ibiai as their activities happened at the same time as the GT pesca community meeting in Ibiai and in Pirapora as well with the participation of the AJ group.

Barra de Guaicui

Candeia

Due to the weather and timing difficulties between all the parties, meetings were not scheduled or members were unable to come to most encounters. On the last meeting day a tremendous 4 hour storm isolated all the members of Candeia apart from each other and there was not much to do except plan another meeting for January.

A continuing concern among the group is the lack of a physical space to both gather the selected recyclable materials and to begin the greenhouse plantations. A meeting will also be scheduled by the youth group with André, Varzea da Palma's secretary in Barra de Guaicui to ask for a place he had unofficially offered to Candeia.

Luza, the community leader that is acting as a resource person for the youth group commented with the facilitators the interest from governmental organizations to help the project improve. Because federal laws dictate that once a community reaches a certain number of inhabitants, in this case Varzea da Palma, they have to have a controlled garbage collection site, these governmental agents have invited close by areas to make use of the garbage site. In fact Barra de Guaicui makes part of the Varzea da Palma municipality so the proposal actually will go through in Barra more than in other places. In general, garbage sites in small communities like Barra are unplanned and uncontrolled. This proposal has the potentiality of including the Candeia into a federal or municipal action plan at least initially to begin separation of garbage material and recyclables. A meeting with the coordinator of the future garbage site in Varzea da Palma, Paulo Barreto will be schedule for January with the participation of the Varzea da Palma's secretary in Barra de Guaicui, Luza, the PPA facilitating team and members of Candeia.

Ibiai

Amigos da Natureza

Ongoing work from November continued on this month. The group worked on completing a second radio vinheta, a set of 3 plaques that talked about the importance of the river and invited the community to take care of it. The youth group decided on which themes were most important for the vinheta, the text and the images for the plaques.

The group met without the facilitating team in order to finish the vinheta and the plaques. The facilitating team's main task at this point of the project was to provide any materials needed and document the youth activities. At the final meeting an evaluation activity was conducted in which an anonymous letter was written towards the youth group. Because there were very few participants anonymity was not asked for strongly but it was mentioned. The youth was supposed to judge the overall project, the help they got from the facilitators and what things could be done differently for a better project next year.

The next steps will be to place the vinhetas in the radio, have a work party day with the community in order to put the plaques near the river, and specifically for the facilitators, to meet with the environmental secretary in Ibiai, who was part of most meetings with the youth group in order to integrate this activity or into the municipality's agenda or see what other alternative can the municipality offer to the youth in Ibiai.





Plaques being drawn by Ibiai youth

## Pirapora

### Projeto Renascer and Pingo de Luz- Salvando a Natureza

The last activity of November was the Environmental Gincana in which all the themes worked on during the past month were incorporated. For December several activities were still within the interest of the facilitating team and the program leaders to do. Because we wanted the youth to achieve a sense of proprietorship from the knowledge and the activities they were participating in, we decided it would be a good idea to ask the kids to give a name to the activities that were being implemented and that would also recognize them as part of the group that was making part of the activities.

The issue of transposition and/ or revitalization has been very strong for the last months in Brazil, a debate/ discussion was prepared for the youth group in order to assess their knowledge around the issue and to give them more information on both sides of the debate for them to make up their own minds. Three people were chosen from within the facilitating team and the program leaders for each side, the transposition of the São Francisco River into the Northeast of Brazil or revitalization of the river as a whole. A map and an interactive CD that talked about revitalization were shown to them, afterwards the debate went on with youth being able to ask questions and state their opinion at any time. At the end of the activity the group was asked to vote on the issue of transposition of the River with unanimous vote against this proposal. The main purposes of this activity were to empower youth in a current issue that involved them directly and to let them decide for themselves what the best use for the river was. Most of the facilitators and program leader's point of view on the transposition of the river are that it should not happen, but other ideas were admitted within the debate in order to balance the amount of information that the group was being given.

The last activity done was a small evaluating activity that allowed the team to assess acceptance of the project and of the facilitating team within the group.

Next year, the Pingo de Luz and the Renascer projects will change drastically so that it will not be viable to continue the same activities as now. The idea now is to incorporate these types of activities that are based on popular education more into the municipalities youth programs. Along with the Agente Joven program this two projects have up to now the biggest support from the municipality and that could guarantee its continuity next year.

#### Agente joven (AJ)

The month of December was the closing month for the activities the AJ groups had planned for the past two months. In total out of 7 groups that started the project, 5 closed activities this month and one will finish on January of 2006. There was one group that decided not to go through with their objectives.

Most of the groups decided to use pamphlets and brochures as a means to get information about the project through in their neighbourhoods and work areas. Some other groups, in particular the groups Barde and PRP centered did different work; Barde doing a community survey and PRP working on revitalizing the plaza in their neighbourhood.

After the planning meetings were through for every group, the rest of the time was left for the groups to do their work. Two specific days were used by the facilitating team to accompany and document group activities but previous work had been done. In order to conclude all activities with the AJ youth, the facilitating team created a get-together day in which tokens and certificates will be given to the youth that participated of the activities and a general evaluation will be filled by the youth.

The youth group projects were deemed by the facilitators as the short and medium results that were aimed at since the beginning of the project. In order to contribute with a longer term strategy, the facilitating team decided to propose the inclusion of some of the ideas worked on this project into the municipality's curriculum. A meeting with the municipality was not achieved until the middle of January, time in which this idea will be discussed with the youth program leaders and coordinators.



The above designs were all made by different groups from every neighbourhood. They used them in their brochures and will be included on T-shirts that the PPA facilitating team and the municipality will provide the youth at the final meeting.

### Community Reporters

On December 5 a meeting was held with the Community Reporters group in Pirapora and members from the Beira Rio Community Reporters group that was accompanying the watershed model, as well as with the PPA Pirapora facilitating team and Sarah Bryce, a PPA coordinator that works in 3 Marias. The objective of the meeting was to compare experiences between both groups of reporters given their different attitudes, successes and difficulties regarding journal startup. In particular, the Pirapora group has had difficulties with fund raising and member participation so the meeting centered around those two issues and future meetings were planned once the Pirapora group has solved those issues, ideally for the middle of January.





Beira Rio's and Pirapora's Community Reporter meeting

### **Community Development and GT Pesca**

Along with the youth environmental groups the facilitators are working on, the team is also supporting Community developing initiatives going on in the communities of Barra de Guaicui, Buritizeiro and Ibiai and working on boosting the Community journal initiative in the city of Pirapora. That work will only begin in full force in January but some preliminary meetings were set up in December to begin planning of the activities with these groups, particularly with the Community journal group and the Ibiai Community Development group which is made up mostly of fishers.



GT Pesca and Community Development meeting - Ibiai

GT Pesca (GT Pesca stands for grupo de trabalho da pesca or fishery work party) is formed from a partnership between national and international NGOs, the Brazilian Government and fisher colonies from the surrounding areas. It invited members of the colonies in a joint effort to better the current policy regarding fishing and to minimize the conflicts between the regulatory fishing bodies and fishers. The last GT Pesca happened at the end of November and the facilitating team participated only as observers of the process. At the same time, we took this opportunity to approach some of the Community Development colony members that participated of the event to talk about the different projects going on in the region; we discussed past work and future opportunities for the facilitators to help the projects.

Of particular interest was the meeting with the Ibiai community developing members, the Corvina project, which are working on adding value to this somewhat untargeted fish. A next meeting with all the members was planned for the beginning of December in order to begin the organization process and the distribution of work between the members of the groups. This did not turn out as expected and the meeting served more as a general colony discussion of the project than a project startup meeting. More meetings were not scheduled for this month as the inability to find enough time among all the parties and the closing of many youth activities impeded our attendance to Ibiai.

On December 5<sup>th</sup>, a Canadian fish processing expert came to Ibiai in order to exchange information with some of the fisher colony's members. Different ways of processing fish, among other things, were exchanged in the process and this potentially be used as part of the Corvina project.

The two other Community Development projects Barra de Guaicui and Buritizeiro do not have a specific date to open activities as of yet, but work on the development of this is expected to begin in January.