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Report

Documentation of planetGOLD Programme: Communication Interventions in Burkina Faso

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Abbreviations/Acronyms

Abbreviation/Acronym	Definition
AFEMIB	Burkina Women Miners' Association
AEM-BF	Association of Mining Students of Burkina Faso
AGC	Artisanal Gold Council
ANEEMAS	National Agency for the Employment of Artisanal and Semi-Mechanized Miners
ARM	Alliance for Responsible Mining
ASGM	Artisanal and Small-scale Gold Mining
DGPE	The General Directorate of Environmental Protection.
GEF	The Global Environment Facility
Hg	Mercury
MFPS	Mercury Free Processing System
MTR	Mid Term Review
NAP	National Action Plan
NGOs	Non-governmental Organizations
NTA	Applied New Technologies
PIR	Project Implementation Report
PSC	Project Steering Committee

Executive Summary

The Burkina Faso project, initiated in 2019, is part of the Global Environment Facility (GEF)'s multi-country planetGOLD programme and is implemented by the Artisanal Gold Council (AGC). The project aims to formalize the ASGM sector in Burkina Faso, improve miners' financial access to gold, and enhance the traceability of artisanal gold to support sustainable development. The project focuses on four main components:

1. **Policy and Legal Framework Review**
2. **Revolving Fund Development**
3. **Establishing Vocational Training Curricula**
4. **Global Knowledge Management**

The planetGOLD Burkina Faso project's knowledge-sharing strategy aimed to promote widespread understanding and adoption of mercury-free processing technologies and formalization within ASGM sector using the development of written, oral, and visual materials on the risks associated with mercury use and its alternatives, formalization, access to formal financing, and human rights due diligence. This was achieved through the development of written, oral, and visual materials addressing the risks of mercury use, its alternatives, formalization, access to formal financing, and human rights due diligence. Most communication activities were designed to highlight the achievements of the project components, particularly those related to formalization, capacity building, and access to formal financing.

Based on the background above, the following communication interventions were selected for their pivotal role in reinforcing awareness-raising efforts and sharing results from the project components. They include:

1. Awareness raising and capacity building through in-person training workshops, public events, and Project Technical Steering Committee¹ (PSC) discussions on ASM formalization and mercury-free processing,
2. Production and publication of communication materials including educational booklets, newspaper articles, TV and radio debates, short videos, social media, blogs, and resources published on the global website.

Key outcomes of the communication actions included informing a broad audience—beyond ASGM communities—about the benefits of formalization and educating artisanal mining communities in the Dano district on mercury-free gold production. Most importantly, these efforts focused on guiding miners in accessing financing to meet the criteria for entering the formal market, aligning with planetGOLD's objectives.

¹ Project Technical Monitoring Committee stands for Comité technique de suivi.

The project has positively impacted various areas. It contributed to shifting stakeholders' perceptions of ASGM formalization through media engagement and strengthened capacity by collaborating with actors during vocational training sessions at the Applied New Technologies (NTA) training center.

1 Introduction

The planetGOLD Burkina Faso project, initiated in 2019, is part of the Global Environment Facility's multi-country planetGOLD programme and is implemented by the Artisanal Gold Council (AGC). The project aims to formalize the ASGM sector, improve miners' financial access, and enhance artisanal gold's traceability to support sustainable development. The main interventions are centered around four key components: policy and legal framework review to enhance ASGM formalization, development of a revolving fund to facilitate access to formal finance for miners, vocational training for nationals on mercury-free processing systems, and global knowledge management.

The knowledge management intervention focused on leveraging lessons learned and project results to facilitate information sharing at the country and global levels. The knowledge management component was applied in a transversal approach, and the communication actions were implemented to support ASGM formalization, mercury-free processes, and realizations of financial accessibility. Therefore, the project did not carry out communication interventions on a standalone basis.

The strategies employed by the project to complete these interventions include:

- Project information management, focusing on sharing information through workshops, online platforms, publications, and constant stakeholder engagement.
- Producing and advocating communication materials on the project action point to ASGM stakeholders.
- Sharing information on the global knowledge platform of the planetGOLD programme².

Outcomes of the communication strategy include the following:

- Educational materials about the impacts of mercury use in mining communities,
- Two short videos, Dispatches from the Field³ and Voices from the Field⁴, were created for Burkina Faso,
- Booklets highlighting the adverse health effects of mercury use on artisanal miners and summarizing the key findings of the legal framework analysis,
- Two mini-documentaries focusing on the legal framework and financial training were produced,

²Knowledge & Learning available on: <https://www.thegef.org/what-we-do/topics/knowledge-learning>

³ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1VpHLe7cE8k>

⁴ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nwRuaIZUihA>

- A blog addressing the legal framework and financial needs, offering significant value to the miners

A core achievement of the project is the engagement of ASGM stakeholders at all relevant levels of its activities. The project communication activities involved diverse stakeholders in Burkina Faso's ASGM sector, including government agencies, universities, NGOs, and artisanal miners federations, ensuring broad reach and credibility.

This report highlights key lessons learned and knowledge-sharing interventions realized under the fourth component of the Burkina Faso project related to global knowledge management.

2 Background on Communication Interventions

Background and Context

Burkina Faso is the fourth-largest gold producer in Africa, with over 200 ASGM mine sites employing more than 700,000 people directly.⁵ The planetGOLD project's communication strategy focused on raising awareness and distributing educational materials on key components, including ASGM formalization, access to formal financing, and mercury-free processing systems. The knowledge management component focused on sharing information and project outcomes to advance the ASGM formalization agenda and support the country's commitments to the Minamata Convention.

Burkina Faso is a major mercury user in the ASGM sector, as noted in the project approval documentation. The widespread use of mercury under uncontrolled conditions exposes large ASGM communities to its harmful effects. Despite the large number of artisanal mining communities, there is a significant lack of awareness regarding mercury use's health and environmental risks and the ASGM formalization process. This knowledge gap was highlighted by the policy and regulatory assessment conducted at the project's inception. Most ASGM practitioners lack awareness of the best practices for adopting mercury-free and reduced-mercury technologies. To address this, the planetGOLD project implemented a communication strategy to raise awareness of the project components. The project's communication efforts primarily highlighted the formalization and miners' access to financial resources components, rather than being treated as an independent initiative.

The communications strategy included periodic engagement with stakeholders (artisanal miners, government, mining associations, vocational training centers) and sharing information on the global knowledge platform. Key actions focused on creating awareness materials highlighting core components' outcomes, including policy assessments to integrate ASGM into mining policies, improving access to formal financing, and providing vocational training on mercury-free processing systems.

⁵ GEF-6 REQUEST FOR PROJECT ENDORSEMENT/APPROVAL. Unpublished

The project's knowledge-sharing interventions resulted in several key interventions including:

- In-person workshops to raise awareness on ASM and mercury-free processing
- On-site public awareness sessions (small groups and general public)
- Radio talks and television debates involving various participants, including ASM trade unions and mining sector experts in Burkina Faso
- Producing and advocating communication materials on the project action point to ASGM stakeholders
- Sharing information on the global knowledge platform of the planetGOLD programme.

The integration of communications, aligned with the Burkina Faso project's key achievements, served a dual purpose: informing a broad audience (beyond ASGM communities) about the benefits of formalization and educating artisanal mining communities in the Dano district on mercury-free gold production. Most importantly, it focused on guiding them in accessing financing to meet the criteria for entering the formal market in line with planetGOLD's objective.

3 Communication Interventions Chosen

Global knowledge management interventions focused on formalization and mercury-free processes in ASGM communities. The following interventions prioritized the sustainability of the project's outcomes and effective knowledge transfer, highlighting the essential role of communication in achieving the project's objectives.

- **Intervention 1:** Awareness raising and capacity building through in-person training workshops, public events, and Project Steering Committee⁶ (or PSC) discussions on ASM formalization and mercury-free processing. Comprehensive training workshops on planetGOLD Criteria and PSC meetings involving key stakeholders sustained their engagement with the project and fostered a consistent interest in formalization concepts.
- **Intervention 2:** Production and publication of communication materials including educational booklets, newspaper articles, TV and radio debates, social media, short videos, blogs as well as resources published on the global website.

The following sections delve into each of these interventions, offering comprehensive details about their implementation and impact.

⁶ Project Steering Committee stands for Comité technique de suivi.

Communication Intervention 1

The project implemented awareness-raising and capacity-building strategies targeting key ASGM sector stakeholders, including government technical services, to ensure effective adoption of the MFPS. These training sessions reached 150 learners⁷, while public event campaigns engaged a broader audience across the country.

Description of the Intervention

Comprehensive training workshops, public events, and PSC discussions on ASM formalization and mercury-free processing characterize the first communication intervention. In collaboration with professional training centers, including the New Applied Technologies Institute (NTA), the project developed two (2) curricula on mercury-free processing technologies approved by stakeholders in March 2022 ([Workshop YouTube link](#)).

As part of the program's outreach strategy, an information workshop with stakeholders was held on July 21, 2023, at the NTA. Forty-four (44) participants representing universities and training institutions at the national, regional, and local levels attended this workshop⁸. Following the vocational training curricula development, the project teams have conducted education and training activities—both in-person and virtually—on mercury-free processing technologies, access to finance, formalization, occupational safety and health, due diligence, gender equity, and more. Emphasis was placed on the sustainability of project achievements and knowledge transfer, notably through training 150 youths in mercury-free processing technologies and supporting them in establishing a formalized cooperative.

Figure 1 - Training of ASM on mercury-free processing technologies at NTA



⁷ GEF Burkina Faso Progress/Final Report No. 09: Assessment report on expansion of training network, Output 3.1.4

⁸ GEF Burkina Faso Progress/Final Report No. 09: Assessment report on expansion of training network, Output 3.1.4

Another notable event was the working group discussion held in April 2023, organized by the Ministry of Environment through the DGPE. The project team participated in the event to highlight planetGOLD’s key role in advancing mercury reduction systems. This initiative focused on the national action plan for reducing mercury use as part of Burkina Faso’s implementation of the Minamata Convention on Mercury. The project team’s involvement in such outreach activity allows for direct contributions to shaping policies and strategies that address mercury use in the ASGM sector in the country.

An additional public event included the team's participation in the second edition of the forum organized by the Association of Mining Students of Burkina Faso (AEM-BF). The mining stakeholders organized this event, including the Burkina Faso Chamber of Mines, the Ministry of Mines, and the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research in May 2023.

This event provided an opportunity to showcase the planetGOLD project once again and, most importantly, to highlight the training program for 150 nationals in mercury-free ore processing technologies. The project participated in Burkina Faso's National ASM Day (JAM 2023), where numerous visitors, including government officials, visited the booth to learn about mercury-free ore processing technologies and the planetGOLD activities at the global level.

Figure 2 - Mining Students Day



Chart 1 - Knowledge-sharing and capacity-building interventions of the Burkina Faso project

Period	Interventions	Products
July 21, 2023	Educational workshop with stakeholders	Forty-four (44) participants attended this workshop
Between 2020- 2024	Educational interventions	150 ⁹ miners supported including 52 female miners and 98 male miners
Facebook page Planet-GOLD Burkina Faso	Old page created to present the project	588 likes • 754 followers
New Facebook page Planet-GOLD Burkina Faso	New page created to present the project	195 likes • 443 followers

Although not directly linked to communication actions, the discussion platforms with key stakeholders contributed to promoting knowledge sharing effectively. These included the creation of a technical monitoring committee and a grievance management committee. The monitoring committee, comprising members from diverse backgrounds, supervised the implementation of project activities and served as a regular dialogue platform for immediate stakeholders.

The grievance management committee was formed to address community concerns, with its members selected from local communities to ensure accessibility and trust amongst project stakeholders. Representing villages surrounding the Gnikpière site, these committee members were tasked with receiving and reporting complaints related to ASGM operations. Additionally, the project supported the consultation frameworks to facilitate the participation of artisanal miners. This engagement enabled community leaders and local authorities to gain a deeper understanding of ASGM dynamics.

The different training sessions were positively received by beneficiaries, many of whom initially had very limited knowledge of mercury-free processing and the merits of ASGM formalization. The outreach and educational interventions have globally contributed to shifting how the wider communities perceive the ASGM sector in Burkina Faso, particularly regarding the implications of formalization.

Partners and Key Stakeholders

At the national level, the project created significant synergies with government technical agencies responsible for ASM management, such as ANEEMAS, the Department of Environment, as well as mining organizations like the Women in Mining Burkina (AFEMIB).

The stakeholders involved in the training framework include:

- The Ministry of Environment, Water, and Sanitation (General Secretariat, DGPE, and the Minamata Convention focal point)
- The Ministry of Sports, Youth, and Employment (DGFP, SP/CNC)

⁹ planetGOLD 2022 – 2023 ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT: https://www.planetGOLD.org/sites/default/files/planetGOLD_22-23_Annual_Progress_Report.pdf

- The Ministry of Energy, Mines, and Quarries (General Secretariat, ANEEMAS, and DEMAS)
- Federations and trade unions of artisanal miners
- NGOs active in the mining sector (AFEMIB, ORCADE, ARM, etc.)
- The Ministry in charge of Women's Promotion
- The Ministry in charge of Higher Education
- Professional training institutions, including NTA.

At the Loba province level, the project maintained regular connections with the authorities including the prefect, the mayor, and the ANEEMAS representative. The members of the consultation framework are the local and traditional leaders from the Dano municipality. They held regular meetings to discuss how the planetGOLD project could contribute to formalizing the ASGM sector.

Main Outcomes, Outputs and Impacts

The training sessions significantly contributed to building the capacity of ASGM stakeholders and raising public awareness about the project's achievements.

- The vocational workshops benefited 150 nationals, and the project team noted increased interest in continuing the training with NTA beyond the project's conclusion.
- The forum organized by the Association of Students in Mining Burkina Faso¹⁰(AEM-BF) provided an opportunity to present the planetGOLD project and highlight the training program, which trained 150 nationals in mercury-free ore processing technologies.
- The planetGOLD stand presentation during Burkina Faso's National ASM Day in July 2022 was an opportunity to showcase the project's efforts in formalizing the ASGM sector. This annual national event attracts thousands of participants from across the country and beyond.

Supporting stakeholder forums and public events, such as ASM Day (JAM 2022) and the AEM-BF forum, provided valuable platforms to promote the project and engage broader audiences, including students, government officials, and industry stakeholders.

Communication Intervention 2

The production of audio and visual communication materials was tailored to address the informational needs of ASGM communities. With guidance from planetGOLD communication standards and AGC expertise, the project created different materials, including short videos, printed and digital publications, posters, and T-shirts, to highlight its key achievements. By utilizing these tools, the Burkina Faso project raised awareness, reaching thousands¹¹ of individuals through digital platforms alone.

¹⁰ Amical des Étudiants Miniers du Burkina Faso (AEM-BF)

¹¹ The videos on YouTube Training gold miners to eliminate toxic mercury in Burkina Faso <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2AM5G7bY3hE&t=14s> reached 7,7k viewers, while the video Film documentaire sur le traitement du minerai sans mercure au Burkina Faso <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rZtaM-zM9Cc&t=1181s> was visualized 340 times.

Description of the Intervention

The project communication materials played a significant role in facilitating knowledge sharing among stakeholders. With guidance from planetGOLD communication standards and AGC expertise, the Burkina-Faso project created different materials, including short videos, printed and digital publications, posters, and T-shirts, to highlight its key achievements.

- **Educational booklets**

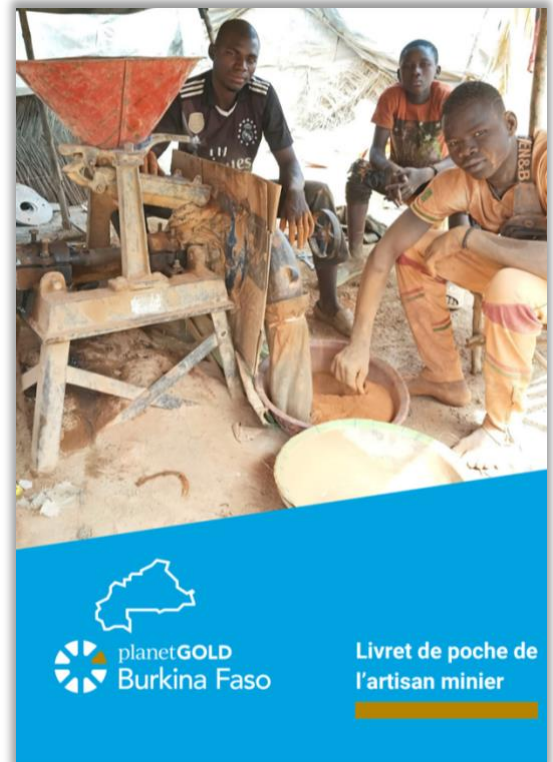
The project produced three booklets on the project's interventions regarding the formalization of ASGM, the accessing formal financing initiative, and the MFPS benefits. The general project pamphlet¹² summarizes the main outcomes of the policy and legal framework assessment. It highlights the key findings in the Burkina Faso mining policy and the project's recommendations regarding ASGM formalization. The recommendations address several key points, including the decentralization of ASGM governance and the development of transitional solutions for the use of mercury and cyanide.

The artisanal miner's booklet, [Livret de poche de l'artisan minier](#), was developed to enable artisanal miners to systematically record details of their activities over time, preserving an accurate and comprehensive account. The artisanal miner's pocket booklet is used to record sociodemographic information, equipment details, production data, and more.

The project developed another booklet on health and safety measures: [Contribution à l'élimination du mercure et à l'amélioration de la chaîne d'approvisionnement de l'or issu de l'exploitation minière artisanale et à petite échelle](#). The health booklet highlights the negative health effects of mercury use on artisanal miners. The booklet captures information on the negative impacts of mercury use and serves as a practical tool for conveying key information about environmentally friendly and health-conscious practices.

The three (3) booklets have been reprinted multiple times over the year and distributed widely, ensuring accessibility at the national, regional, and local levels.

- **Production of two mini-documentaries**



¹² Améliorer la formalisation, l'accès au financement et la traçabilité de l'or artisanal. Accessible on : <https://www.planetGOLD.org/sites/default/files/Am%3%A9liorer%20la%20formalisation%2C%20l%27acc%3%A8s%20au%20financement%20et%20la%20tra%3%A7abilit%3%A9%20de%20l%27or%20artisanal.pdf>

The project supported by planetGOLD produced two mini-documentaries reflecting the realizations, as part of the series of short films named Dispatch from the Field, published on the global planetGOLD website. The mini-documentary *Dispatch from the Field: Burkina Faso* ([Training gold miners to eliminate toxic mercury in Burkina Faso](#)) showcases the perspectives of miners from the Gnikpière ASGM site regarding the mercury-free processing plant. The third episode of planetGOLD's *Dispatches from the Field* series (*Dispatch from the Field: Burkina Faso*) features a visit to the Gnikpière site and highlights the benefits of the mercury-free processing system (MFPS).

- **TV and radio coverage**

The national TV station RTB covered the commissioning of the mercury-free processing system (MFPS) unit; the segment is accessible [here](#). The project team has received outstanding feedback from the audience. The team organized a few debates on local radio shows to discuss ASGM formalization, featuring ASM trade unions and mining sector experts in Burkina Faso. However, the scheduled airing of the documentary on the MFPS on national television was delayed as authorities took additional time to thoroughly review the footage. According to the project team, the radio discussions played a key role in raising public awareness about ASGM.

The visual materials included a blog¹³ which was also published on the legal framework and financial needs in the ASGM sector.

- **Newspapers and paper publications**

The project team actively engaged journalists who were initially reluctant to visit the Gnikpière site or interact with miners. To address this, the team organized several trips to provide firsthand exposure to the realities on the ground, challenging common misconceptions about artisanal mining. These initiatives helped journalists understand that artisanal miners are capable of improving their practices when provided with appropriate awareness-raising efforts.

As a result, many journalists independently continued engaging with site workers beyond the project's scope. Notably, *Mines Actu Burkina*, a local media outlet specializing in mining activities, along with several other agencies, expressed increased interest in the artisanal mining sector. These media organizations interviewed project staff to learn more about program activities, training sessions, and mercury-free technologies. This collaboration with the media on ASGM was unprecedented before the implementation of planetGOLD.

The need to reach out to the wider communities in the country, including a large portion of illiterate artisanal miners, has motivated the use of communication platforms including national television channels, and radios, to communicate key messages from the project.

¹³ Is ASGM legal in Burkina Faso? Workshops provide clarity and recommendations for the country's legal framework <https://www.planetGOLD.org/asgm-legal-burkina-faso-workshops-provide-clarity-and-recommendations-countrys-legal-framework>

Partners and Key Stakeholders

The Communication materials were distributed to various stakeholders throughout the project's implementation. Key partners of the project included:

- The Ministry of Environment, Water, and Sanitation (General Secretariat, DGPE, and the Minamata Convention focal point)
- The Ministry of Energy, Mines, and Quarries (General Secretariat, ANEEMAS, and DEMAS)
- Federations and trade unions of artisanal miners
- NGOs active in the mining sector (AFEMIB, ORCADE, ARM, etc.)
- The Ministry in charge of Women's Promotion
- The Ministry in charge of Higher Education
- The provincial authorities of LOBA, the municipality of Dano and the community leaders of Gnikipiere
- Professional training institutions, including NTA.

Main Outcomes, Outputs and Impacts

Knowledge-sharing strategies highly encouraged stakeholder adoption of the project's components. The project reported¹⁴ the following outputs:

- Production and publication of the Newsletter for January, February, and March 2023, including flash Info Newspaper publication¹⁵: artisanal gold mining: 150 artisanal miners learn mercury-free ore processing technologies https://www.energie-mines.gov.bf/accueil/details?tx_news_pi1%5Baction%5D=detail&tx_news_pi1%5Bcontroller%5D=News&tx_news_pi1%5Bnews%5D=242&cHash=e0795a7d2253367383b828cfd1e7b1bb.
- Nationwide publication of recruitment notices for 150 learners for training in CQB and BQP chemical-free mineral processing technologies (radio announcements, social networks, government services, etc.).
- Publication of recruitment results via radio, social networks, etc.
- Summary of advice provided to ANEEMAS in establishing its gold buying operation
- Report on selection committee establishment
- Training report on applications screening targeting financial institution staff

Additionally, digital and visual materials were vital to the widespread project results.

- The footage of videos produced on the MFPS training sessions and the project's actions were posted via social media such as Facebook, Twitter, and the planetGOLD homepage. The project team indicated that they were visualized over 8000 times, and the two Facebook pages of the project totaled nearly one thousand (1000) followers.
- Copies of posters and booklets were distributed at key locations in Ouagadougou, the Dano municipality, and the Gnikipière site, reaching a large public.

¹⁴Project Implementation Report (1 July 2022 – 30 June 2023)

¹⁵ Project Implementation Report (1 July 2022 – 30 June 2023)

4 Sustainability

The sustainability strategy incorporated a global knowledge management component centered on communication initiatives designed to effectively share the project's objectives with stakeholders and a wider audience.

The planetGOLD project's achievements, particularly the implementation of mercury-free technologies, are being highlighted in awareness campaigns by other Organizations for mining initiatives including the World Bank. As a result of planetGOLD's efforts, other projects are now collaborating with partners or assisting in awareness-raising activities, contributing to the sustainability of the project's impact beyond its completion.

5 Cross-cutting Issues

Gender

Although the communication actions did not explicitly target gender sensitivity, the inclusive approach indirectly supported gender equality. Additionally, the vocational training provided women with greater opportunities for financial and social empowerment within the ASGM sector.

The interventions adopted a gender-sensitive approach, ensuring that each video featured female participants sharing their perspectives on the project. The project's general booklet incorporates recommendations from the mining sector evaluation, emphasizing the need for equitable measures and gender quotas to support women's participation in ASGM.

Figure 3 - Female miners training



The women-only cooperative benefited from vocational training programs, which equipped them with skills to engage in mercury-free mining practices. This likely enhanced their economic opportunities within the sector.

6 Findings, Experiences and Lessons Learned

Highlights of Communication Interventions

The project's knowledge management interventions included the development and dissemination of educational materials addressing the impacts of mercury use on mining communities and a broader network of stakeholders. Booklets highlighting the health effects of mercury exposure on artisanal miners and summarizing key findings from the legal framework analysis were published and shared with stakeholders.

Additionally, two mini-documentaries were produced, focusing on the legal framework and financial training, alongside a blog discussing the legal framework and miners' financial needs. T-shirts featuring key messages and posters on mercury bioaccumulation were distributed to communities in the Dano district, further raising awareness and promoting sustainable practices.

Alignment with planetGOLD programme-wide communications strategy

While there is no direct evidence of the Burkina Faso project consistently aligning with the programme-wide communications strategy, tools such as mini-documentaries and blogs were created with comprehensive guidance from the global planetGOLD programme. For example, an episode of Dispatches from the Field and Voices from the Field were produced with global program support. Global alignment was also achieved through the continuous transfer of project information to the global knowledge platform during and after the project's implementation. Visual materials, such as booklets and posters, were reprinted several times throughout the year and distributed strategically.

The project also supported activities aligned with the Minamata Convention's national action plans to promote mercury-free gold processing. It engaged the Ministry of Mining and Environment to strengthen institutional support and ensure the long-term adoption of its achievements.

Changes Observed in Perceptions or Coverage of ASGM

The project implemented several actions that helped change perceptions of ASGM. For instance, in the commune of Dano in Burkina Faso, the team successfully engaged local authorities through various communication and awareness-raising efforts. They participated in training sessions, the commissioning of mercury-free processing units, and public events promoting the ASGM booklets,

which reinforced their understanding of the project's achievements. As a result, artisanal miners were included in community consultation frameworks, marking a significant shift as they were not previously involved in strategic discussions.

A shift in perception was noted through the media's newfound interest in the ASGM sector in Burkina Faso. Mines Actu Burkina, a local media organization, had previously been reporting regularly on mining activities. Recently, several other media agencies have shown interest in learning more about the artisanal mining sector. They have interviewed project staff to gain insights into program activities, training sessions, and mercury-free technologies. This collaboration with the media on ASGM did not exist before the implementation of planetGOLD.

As a factor of change, the project team actively participated in important events like the 2nd edition of the forum organized by the Association of Mining Students of Burkina Faso, and national ASM days to further promote the project and discuss the mercury-free training program.

Broader Lessons Learned

The communication interventions draw on two key lessons. Integrating digital and traditional outreach has proven effective for reaching a wider audience. Combining social media with traditional communication methods (e.g., radio, posters, and booklets) maximized the project's impact by catering to on-offline audiences. One can note that the hybrid approach ensures inclusivity and broadens the reach of project outcomes beyond Burkina Faso.

Additionally, engaging local communities and authorities has helped boost activities' effectiveness. By focusing on locations central to the project (Loba province, Dano municipality, and Gnikpière site), the project team ensured that stakeholders and affected communities were directly informed, fostering trust and encouraging grassroots-level participation.

Specific Factors for Success

A factor of success includes integrating project activities with the Minamata Convention National Action Plan for Burkina Faso. Engaging key ministries of mining and the ministry of environment ensures lasting impact and strengthens institutional-level support for planetGOLD's actions.

In terms of alternative actions, the project could have included theater performances as a means of communication. In the context of other projects, theater performances were used to raise awareness among miners on sites and had a real impact. A theater group performing specific themes, such as the benefits of mercury-free artisanal gold mining, would have a significant impact on the site. For example, when a site hosts around a hundred people, the audience for the play could triple or even more. Unfortunately, this could not be realized as it was not initially budgeted.

Overall, the project implemented several actions that helped change perceptions of ASGM. For example, in the project development area—the commune of Dano in Burkina Faso—the team successfully engaged local authorities through various communications and awareness-raising efforts. As a result, artisanal miners were included in consultation frameworks, a significant change since they were not previously invited for strategic discussions.

7 Recommendations for Future Interventions

Building on the accomplishments achieved, future actions could be undertaken to strengthen the sustainability of the pilot project's outcomes. These actions could include:

- Promoting the integration of mercury-free processing technologies into national ASM policies and guidelines.
- The future projects could continue leveraging multimedia platforms such as videos, posters, and booklets to ensure the sustainability of awareness-raising efforts beyond the project lifecycle.
- Leveraging international organizations and NGOs to secure additional funding for long-term initiatives is essential, as it amplifies awareness campaigns to inform stakeholders and the public about the benefits of mercury-free technologies.
- Government agencies such as ANEEMAS could take the lead in managing the project and expanding training programs to reach more artisanal miners and stakeholders in additional regions or countries. They could also facilitate access to formal financing for ASGM and cooperatives. Furthermore, ANEEMAS could help establish networks of trained miners who can share their expertise in mercury-free techniques with others.
- Maintain awareness campaigns to educate financial institutions on the advantages of a formal ASGM sector and mercury-free technologies, to promote miner access to funding.
- Universities and vocational schools could incorporate mercury-free technologies into their formal curriculums to ensure sustainable knowledge transfer.



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