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Report

Documentation of planetGOLD Programme: Communication Interventions in Peru

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The planetGOLD project in Peru completed its implementation in December 2024. It was executed by the Peruvian government through the Ministry of Environment and Ministry of Energy and Mines (MINAM and MINEM) with the technical assistance of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

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Abbreviations/Acronyms

Abbreviation/Acronym	Definition
ASGM	Artisanal and Small-scale Gold Mining
AGC	Artisanal Gold Council
Au	Gold
ARM	Alliance for Responsible Mining
BGI	Better Gold Initiative
Hg	Mercury
MFPS	Mercury Free Processing System
MIA	Mercury Initial Assessment
MTR	Mid Term Review
NAP	National Action Plan
NRDC	Natural Resources Defense Council
OHS	Occupational Health and Safety
PC	Projekt-Consult
PIR	Project Implementation Report
ProDoc	Project Document
PSC	Project Steering Committee.
ToC	Theory of Change
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme

Executive Summary

The planetGOLD Peru project's communication strategy was conceived as an important cross-cutting component that supported the project's strategic areas (formalization, financial mechanisms, and technological upgrading) and coordination (national and subnational). Nonetheless, two sets of communicational campaigns developed an identity of their own and gained significant, healthy independence from other strategic areas:

- **Intervention 1: “Expedición Mercurio” Campaign:** This campaign aimed to raise awareness about mercury contamination. It reached 54,890 individuals nationally and in the project's regions of intervention.

Implemented from 2020 to 2024, the campaign included annual updates to engage a broader range of target groups within the ASGM community. Key outputs include substantial social media interaction and participation of more than 2,940 individuals in awareness workshops.

- **Intervention 2: Online Training Workshops and COVID-19 Awareness:** These workshops provided essential training in regulatory affairs, addressing challenges often faced by the ASGM community. Delivered online due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the “MAPE sin COVID” campaign collaborated with various partners to offer guidance on COVID-safe ASGM operations.

Key outputs include reaching approximately 72,000 ASGM organizations across the departments of Piura, Arequipa, Puno, Madre de Dios, Ancash, La Libertad, Ayacucho, Ica, Pasco, and Apurímac.

Key impacts of these campaigns are:

- **Government adoption of training workshops.**
- **Enrolling a network of organizations,** fostering mutual trust for future interventions.
- **Developing communicational materials** that facilitate the replication of the project in the future.
- **Culturally adequate outreach standards,** for example, using culturally appropriate messages, including working with native languages.
- **Mainstreaming mercury awareness.**

1 Introduction

The planetGOLD Peru project is a national project part of the planetGOLD programme, funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and led by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). In Peru, it was implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and by the Ministry of the Environment (MINAM by its initials in Spanish) in alliance with the Ministry of Energy and Mining (MINEM by its initials in Spanish) and with the technical assistance of UNDP Peru.

The project officially started in June 2019 and was completed in December 2024. Its main objective was to reduce, eliminate or avoid mercury emissions related to artisanal and small-scale gold mining (ASGM) in Peru. For that purpose, the project developed four strategies:

1. Strengthening institutions and legal frameworks for a mercury-free ASGM.
2. Identifying financial mechanisms to support the purchase of mercury-free technologies.
3. Supporting ASGM communities' capacity development through technical assistance, technological transfer and formalization support.
4. Raising awareness on mercury impacts, best practices, and lessons learned for a mercury-free ASGM.

This report synthesizes planetGOLD Peru's initiatives concerning communications, a component cross-cutting the project strategy but with an emphasis on the fourth strategy. For planetGOLD Peru, communications comprised several angles, including raising awareness concerning mercury and hazards in the ASGM community and making available project achievements to the public. Communication actions included strategic campaigns with educational components, press releases, and social media publications. These elements often entailed the development of engaging visual pieces (e.g. graphics and animations).

Following the executive summary, the report presents the background context for communication strategies. Then, it unpacks two different types of initiatives. The first one is "Expedición Mercurio", a communication campaign that targeted ASGM communities and local stakeholders, raising awareness concerning mercury's dangers for human and environmental health. The second one concerns a variety of online and offline communicational pieces targeting ASGM communities and a broad audience, to educate audiences on best practices, approaches and experiences in ASGM. Finally, the report synthesizes lessons learned and recommendations for future interventions.

2 Background on Communication Interventions

Background and Context

Although Peru has an important mining tradition, domestic media does not shine on ASM positively, which silos mining communities away from awareness campaigns on and for them. planetGOLD Peru tried to change this perspective by engaging closely with local communities and producing communicational pieces channeled through allied networks and maximize the impact on public opinion.

Although ASGM employs around 1 million people in Peru, positively discussing the sector in national media is challenging. Illegal mining has become common to refer to any type of ASGM activity, frequently in association with negative impacts such as environmental pollution, gender violence and economic and tax-avoidant opportunism.

Even though these impacts are documented in many locations, showcasing them constantly drives attention away from the struggles of mining communities to improve their practices, positive cases of mercury-free production, and the variety of local and vulnerable actors that aim to derive benefits from the ASGM economy.

This was the key challenge planetGOLD Peru's communication component faced. Communication was conceived as an important cross-cutting component that supported the project's strategic areas (formalization, financial mechanisms, and technological upgrading) and coordination (national and subnational).

Communications was considered in the project's formulation in 2019; however, clear communicational guidelines were not laid out. planetGOLD Peru did not initially distinguish communications from other project components and regarded it as an aid to showcase their activities and maximize their impact. A more defined strategy was laid out for two reasons:

- a) **The COVID-19 pandemic.** This worldwide phenomenon affected ASGM communities around the world. In Peru, program activities such as in-person training workshops were stopped following national lockdown restrictions. Their delivery had to be repurposed using known but infrequently used online formats, which pressed the need to strengthen the communication component.
- b) **Awareness raising on mercury impacts.** ASGM communities use mercury as part of the amalgamation process to obtain gold from ore. planetGOLD Peru aimed to inform these communities about mercury's pernicious effects on human and environmental health. Although it was originally imagined as a task under the technological upgrade area, the complexity of ASGM stakeholders raised the relevance of targeted efforts and approaches

to improve engagement.

Communications gained a more explicit purpose beyond sharing project outcomes with the public. These reasons also oriented communications initiatives “within,” that is, aiming at creating an ASGM community by building trust among key partners and stakeholders, giving ASGM communities an identity, and gaining the respect of peers, allied networks, collaborators, and others.

This communicational approach also did not forsake the communication of project achievements to a broader audience; however, it entailed an approach that indirectly tackled predominant media perspectives- by releasing more information about positive cases into the news landscape. The communications approach was achieved to accomplish communicational goals adapted on the go, but key messages concerning the ASGM community still need to be more directly addressed in national media.

Communication Interventions Chosen

Isolating communications interventions may not attest to the highly dynamic nature of the communications component. Nonetheless, there were two initiatives with distinctive mid-term goals and strategies, that is, they had an independent identity from other project areas.

This does not mean that any other communicational activities were not important to achieve planetGOLD Peru’s goals, but that they tended to be framed under a different area and not solely within the communications component.

The two interventions are:

- **Intervention 1: “Expedición Mercurio” Campaign.** This campaign reached approximately 58,000 people in the Peruvian South to raise awareness of mercury use.¹
- **Intervention 2: Online Training Workshops and COVID-19 awareness.** These workshops were delivered online due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The initiative has been embraced by Ministry of Mining and Energy (MINEM) beginning in 2021.²

The following sections will provide detailed information on each of these interventions.

¹ Visit “Expedición Mercurio” landing page here: <https://expedicionmercurio.com/>

² Visit the MAPE sin COVID-19 campaign webpage here: www.planetgold.org/campana-mape-sin-covid-19

3 Communication Intervention 1: “Expedición Mercurio”

Communication campaigns concerning mercury tend to focus primarily on miners or those who perform amalgamation directly. “Expedición Mercurio” took an alternative route by involving community members, including women and children. The campaign became the flagship planetGOLD Peru intervention, reaching around 58,000 people.

Description of the Intervention

“Expedición Mercurio” aimed to familiarize a broad audience on the pernicious impacts of mercury use in ASGM. The key messages always targeted ASGM communities, although every year target audiences were redefined to include more actors. The main communicational materials included websites, multilingual videos, multilingual reels, printed handbooks, pedagogical kits, games, infographics, and others.

The “Expedición Mercurio” communication campaign officially started in 2020 but evolved every year to include new audiences and formats. The key characteristics of “Expedición Mercurio” year by year are listed below. The main outcome metrics are in charts 2 and 3 ([page 12](#)).

Chart 1. Evolution of “Expedición Mercurio”: Key characteristics and products

Year	Key characteristics	Key products
2020	Launching of “Expedición Mercurio’s” website, a platform that emulates a scientific expedition presented in a friendly format to appeal to all audiences.	Educational website on mercury impacts: www.expedicionmercurio.com
2021	First in-person workshops with ASGM communities were performed after lockdown restrictions were lifted. Fieldwork for the campaign’s diagnosis was conducted in Puno, Arequipa, and Piura. Multi-lingual communicational pieces were prepared.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diagnosis and awareness plan on ASM mercury exposure risks. • Workshops with ASGM communities. • Multilingual videos (reels and long videos).
2022	The first workshop targeting local public servants was conducted. The experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshops with public servants in Puno, Piura and Arequipa.

	helped planetGOLD Peru identify future allies in communicational initiatives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshops with ASGM communities in Arequipa.
2023	<p>The program, with the support of local public servants and schools, identified the previous year, delivered a series of workshops to primary and secondary school students.</p> <p>The intervention included delivering a pedagogic kit for teachers so they could perform these workshops with new students over the years.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshops in five local schools. • Delivery of mercury awareness pedagogical kits, including active learning activities, games, dynamics, etc.
2024	Organization of a story and drawing contest for school students (Image 1) ³	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mercury awareness story and drawing contest.

The key reasons for this evolution are:

- **COVID-19**
“Expedición Mercurio” was originally conceived as a key action contributing to the project’s fourth strategy (raising awareness on mercury impacts, best practices, and lessons learned for a mercury-free ASGM), but adapted to lockdown restrictions imposed during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- **Ex-post diagnosis and plan design**
Another reason why the program changed from its original design was that the diagnosis and awareness plan were finalized in early 2021 and implemented during the second semester of the same year. One of the main recommendations was to incorporate multicultural and multilingual approaches, based on which online communication pieces were designed in the Quechua indigenous language.⁴
- **Theory of miners’ behavioral change**
Within four years, the campaign moved beyond ASGM in-situ actors and included a wider variety of stakeholders including *pallaqueras*,⁵ local public servants, school children, and

³ planetGOLD Peru. (2024, May 24). [Perú: estudiantes participan en concurso de relat y dibujo para prevenir la contaminación por mercurio.](#)

⁴ For example, this short video presents key mercury pollution facts in Quechua collao, the indigenous language variety spoken in the province of Arequipa and Puno: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fo_QmjemsEU

⁵ Vernacular name for artisanal gold collectors who work in mining waste areas, a task often performed by women.

women of reproductive age. By expanding the core audiences, the program aimed to raise awareness about mercury harms and the ASGM communities based on the idea that family members and locals are more likely to influence miners' behavior.

- **Stakeholder enrollment**

The campaign was started by planetGOLD Peru in collaboration with MINAM and MINEM. However, positive first results and parallel ASGM initiatives⁶ brought the campaign to the attention of other organizations that wanted to join the initiative. The planetGOLD Peru project partnered up with them preserving the overall perspective -raising awareness on mercury impacts, while also staying open to adjust the scope and target audiences.

Image 1. First prize in “Expedición Mercurio” story and drawing contest.⁷



⁶ E.g. the National Multisectoral Policy on ASM (see formalization report).

⁷ PlanetGold. (2024, May 27). [Peru: students take part in a writing and drawing contest to prevent mercury pollution.](#)

Partners and Key Stakeholders

The main partners were MINAM and MINEM, as planetGOLD Peru's partners. However, the initiative enrolled other institutions, especially local municipalities, and development programs with interventions in the target areas over time. The full list is below.

Main partners: Institutions that collaborated with the original campaign (2020-2021).

- Ministry of Environment (MINAM)
- Ministry of Energy and Mines (MINEM)
- National Health Institute (INS)

Local partners: Institutions that supported activities with target groups, such as workshops with public servants or schools.

- Regional Direction of Energy and Mining (DREM) in Piura.
- Regional Bureau of Energy and Mining (GREM) in Arequipa.
- Regional Bureau of Natural Resources (GRRN) in Puno.
- Regional Direction of Energy and Mining (DERM) in Madre de Dios.

Partners at intervention sites: These partners were located in the intervention areas of other planetGOLD Peru activities (e.g. technological upgrade), and collaborated with various activities including but going beyond communications.

- Municipality of Ananea (Puno)
- Municipality of Sapollica (Piura)
- Municipality of Suyo (Piura)
- Municipality of Chaparra (Arequipa)
- Municipality of San José Village (Arequipa)

Main Outcomes, Outputs and Impacts

“Expedición Mercurio” has been lauded by local partners as a gentle and effective way to engage with ASGM communities, which are often neglected by development interventions. The organization of the campaign itself supported the strengthening of trust between planetGOLD Peru and local stakeholders, enabling the implementation of other project components.

A vignette of the impact for local communities may be drawn from the video report about the

campaign in Ananea, an ASGM community in the Andean region of Puno.⁸ In this video, a teacher, a local authority comment, high school students, and ASGM miners, express their views about the different planetGOLD Peru interventions in their locality, highlighting that these engagements drive progress here.

To assess the outcomes, planetGOLD Peru worked with different metrics. For online interventions, the program measured engagement, which is understood not as visualization but as any interaction with the content (comments and likes) (chart 2). Key metrics for offline content include attendance and, in the case of the story and drawing contest, the submission of artistic pieces (chart 3).

Chart 2. “Expedición Mercurio” main online output metrics.⁹

Year	Facebook interactions	Video reproductions	Radio plays	Website visits
2020	12,000	4,000	447	1,200
2021	8,000	60,000	597	3,000

Chart 3. “Expedición Mercurio” workshop participation¹⁰

Year	Workshops and other
2021	174 in person participants (miners and pallaqueras) 69 online participants (ASGM stakeholders)
2022	207 in-person participants (public servants and authorities)
2023	2,222 in-person participants (school students) 178 online participants (miners and pallaqueras)
2024	122 submissions for a story and drawing contest

Chart 4. Total reach through interactions on social media

Year	Workshops and other
2020	43,000 individuals
2021	8,056 individuals
2022	597 individuals
2023	111 individuals
2024	185 individuals

⁸ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6sA3Ujj5cGo>

⁹ planetGold Peru. (2021). [Reporte Anual 2020](#); planetGold Peru. (2022). [Reporte Anual 2021](#).

¹⁰ planetGold Peru. (2022). December 13). [Concientización para la reducción del uso del mercurio en tres regiones del Perú](#); planetGold Peru. (2024, May 24). [Perú: estudiantes participan en concurso de reato y dibujo para prevenir la contaminación por mercurio](#); Interview with planetGold Peru team.

4 Communication Intervention 2: COVID-19 awareness and training workshops

The ASGM sector was among those affected by the pandemic. Artisanal and small-scale miners depend on cash flows to cover immediate needs, all of which threatened to be interrupted by COVID-19 and unsafe working conditions.¹¹ planetGOLD Peru collaborated with allies to start a communications campaign and online training program that benefited up to 50,000 mining organizations

Description of the Intervention

This intervention entails two independent but interconnected sets of actions, both shaped in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic since March 2020 in Peru.

“MAPE sin COVID-19” Campaign

This campaign aimed to control COVID-19 mass contagion in ASGM communities by delivering scientifically sound, national healthcare system-approved messages. As in other economic sectors, local producers did not originally understand the magnitude of COVID-19 and were willing to continue operations with the risk of contagion.

When the Peruvian government permitted artisanal and small-scale mining (ASM) and other economic sectors to resume operations despite the ongoing pandemic, planetGOLD Peru launched an impromptu communication campaign targeting occupational hazards and COVID-19 prevention in ASGM. This initiative was supported by various organizations, which committed to disseminating the content through their official communication channels.

The planetGOLD Peru project started a WhatsApp group bringing together local stakeholders. This and the [planetGOLD Latam Facebook page](#) were the main channels through which to share online material. The key products were all published online, including a COVID-19 prevention booklet, which was also printed and distributed offline, delivered to key locations close to mining camps. Other key campaign products were animated videos published on YouTube and WhatsApp stickers. Four posters with instructions concerning COVID-19 prevention were also printed and posted in the proximities of ASGM operations, mining organization offices and local governments.¹²

Despite its impromptu origins, the materials were used until well into 2021 with the rise of COVID-19 cases.¹³ Building on the 2020 experience, the communications team reactivated the

¹¹ Arista, F. (2020). [La MAPE en tiempos del COVID-19. ¿Cómo reactivar la minería artesanal y de pequeña escala en el Perú?](#) planetGold Perú.

¹² All the materials can be found in the following link: <https://www.planetgold.org/campana-mape-sin-covid-19>

¹³ PlanetGold Perú. (2022). [Informe Anual 2021](#).

communication channels to deliver messages seamlessly.

Image 2. “MAPE sin COVID” sample video.¹⁴



Online Training Workshops

In 2019, the program planned to deliver training workshops to ASGM communities. However, the COVID-19 pandemic made in-person sessions impossible. As a result, the team pivoted to online workshops, focusing on key administrative steps that are particularly challenging for miners: the REINFO¹⁵ and IGAFOM.¹⁶

This idea is built on planetGOLD Peru’s recommendation to improve online learning services for the ASGM community during the pandemic.¹⁷ The rationale to justify this format was that training opportunities should not dramatically impact by COVID-19 restrictions. Instead, the online format may provide opportunities for deeper engagement with miners in distant locations.

One of the most important concerns was ASGM community’s Internet bandwidth. However, the Peruvian government has invested in broadband Internet connections for rural areas over the past decade, and most ASGM communities identified by the project enjoyed a decent connection. Another concern was the best means to reach out to mining communities. The project chose Facebook since it was the most popular social media in 2020, without knowing that this was also the

¹⁴ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aWkVonEtKxA>

¹⁵ To start the formalization process, miners must register in REINFO (National Formalization Registry)

¹⁶ Environmental Management Permit for ASM Formalization. A permit necessary to complete the formalization process.

¹⁷ Arista, F. (2020). [La MAPE en tiempos del COVID-19. ¿Cómo reactivar la minería artesanal y de pequeña escala en el Perú?](#) planetGold Perú.

case for ASGM miners. Federations, operations, groups, and various operators and organizations connect through Facebook every day and use this platform to share news and updates about their activities. Thus, the project chose the best possible venue and contributed to reinforcing the building of an ASGM online community.

Workshop dates and updates were shared via WhatsApp and Facebook. Participants had the option to register and participate online via Zoom, which improved engagement. However, the videos were also streamed live on Facebook and YouTube, and then stored at planetGOLD Peru’s YouTube account.¹⁸

The workshop themes are listed below.

Chart 4. ASGM training workshop themes in 2021.¹⁹

Month	Theme
March	Traceability Health and occupational safety
April	Labor regulations Responsible explosives management
May	Validity rights (in person)
June	IGAFOM
July	Annual declaration
August	Operational costs and accounts management
September	Health, safety and environmental regulation (in person) Financial inclusion (in person)
October	Mercury-free gold production
December	Responsible waste management

Partners and Key Stakeholders

In the case of “MAPE sin COVID-19”, the initiative attracted the attention of a wide network of collaborators, including the following:

National and subnational authorities:

- MINEM
- MINAM

¹⁸ <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLqg6WzDSkXyZ398HZZMP9ka6xh1jOtAAL>

¹⁹ MINEM, planetGold Peru & Swiss Better Gold. [Programa de Capacitaciones para la Minería Artesanal y Pequeña Escala](#).

- Regional Government of Arequipa
- Regional Government of Piura
- Regional Government of Puno
- Regional Government of Apurimac
- Regional Government of Pasco
- Regional Government of Ica
- Regional Government of Ayacucho
- Regional Government of La Libertad
- Regional Government of Ancash
- Regional Government of Madre de Dios

NGO and research centers:

- Solidaridad
- Alliance for a Responsible Mining (ARM)
- Red Social
- Artisanal Gold Council (AGC)
- Centro de Innovación Científica Amazónica (CINCIA)
- Fairtrade
- Pure Earth
- Megam
- ABR Consultants

International organizations:

- Better Gold Initiative
- Dutch Government
- Canadian Government
- Swiss Government State Secretary for Economic Affairs

In the case of the training workshops, these were first conducted in collaboration with Swiss Better Gold (SBG), drawing from both projects' expertise. They were run by experts, including guest presentations by MINEM specialists, expert consultants, and others in the ASGM development space. Some workshops were run in person, as the lockdown restrictions lifted in some locations. MINEM, as a planetGOLD partner, was part of the initiative, but assumed a more prominent role in the future (see next section).

Main Outcomes, Outputs and Impacts

The project estimates that by 2021, the “MAPE sin COVID” campaign reached around 72 000 ASGM organizations in the departments of Piura, Arequipa, Puno, Madre de Dios, Ancash, La Libertad, Ayacucho, Ica, Pasco and Apurimac.

The most important impacts are:

- **Enrolling a Network of Organizations:** Successfully engaged a wide network of organizations within and beyond the ASGM development sphere, fostering mutual trust for future interventions.
- **Developing Communicational Materials:** Created a comprehensive set of communication materials that facilitate the replication of the project in the future.
- **Government Adoption of Training Workshops:** The Peruvian government adopted the training workshop format. The DGFM office now delivers these workshops on a rolling basis. Additionally, the “Expedición Mercurio” campaign is anticipated to be adopted by MINAM.
- **Culturally Adequate Outreach Standards:** Established standards for reaching out to neglected ASGM communities using culturally appropriate messages, including native languages.
- **Mainstreaming Mercury Awareness:** Successfully disseminated key messages regarding the effects of mercury on people and the environment.

5 Sustainability

planetGOLD Perú’s website, YouTube and Facebook accounts are the most important platforms to store all communicational pieces. By preserving this database, future initiatives, organizations, and curious actors will find a primer in ASGM communications.

More importantly, these initiatives have been embraced by partners. As mentioned earlier, the DGFM adopted the online training workshops to deliver the initiative independently. Features that they continue to work with include collaboration with experts coming from allied organizations. These workshops have proven crucial in the context of ever-changing ASGM regulations, where miners need to catch up quickly with updates.

Additionally, the project team intentionally engaged MINAM in taking ownership of the “Expedición Mercurio” campaign, helping disseminate it during the project’s life and also helping ensure that it will continue beyond the project’s closure. MINAM plans to continue using the campaign landing page and other materials in relation to other initiatives and activities related to chemicals. MINAM will also include communication products from the campaign on their institutional websites.²⁰

²⁰ <https://aulaambiental.minam.gob.pe/que-es-el-mercurio-expedicion-mercurio/>
<https://sinia.minam.gob.pe/portal/minamata/>

6 Cross-cutting Issues

Gender

The “Expedición Mercurio” training for public servants emphasized gender awareness in ASGM management. With the support of additional material prepared by planetGOLD Perú, these workshops were useful in portraying the challenges of female artisanal gold collectors, the *pallaqueras*.

Furthermore, ASGM gender awareness messages were mainstreamed through social media on March 8 (International Women’s Day). These messages targeted a wider audience, to make *pallaqueras* visible before public opinion, and *pallaqueras* themselves, to bring to their attention national services concerning gender violence among other issues.

Pallaqueras participated in training workshop activities as core audiences, with some sessions reserved for them alone.

7 Findings, Experiences and Lessons Learned

Alignment with planetGOLD programme-wide communications strategy

When the project commenced in 2019, there were no established guidelines for communication activities. This led to efforts that were responsive to creating synergies with partners and collaborators, and the capacity to react to unforeseen events, such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

Despite this initial lack of structured guidance, the subsequent release of planetGOLD Program communications guidelines was invaluable. These guidelines played a crucial role in resolving discussions around the communication campaign's graphic identity and advancing communication initiatives. They provided a cohesive framework for collaboration among a wide network of stakeholders.

Initially, the ability to adapt communication activities to capitalize on opportunities and respond to unexpected events was crucial. The guidelines later enhanced this by offering a standardized approach, facilitating a more unified and effective communication strategy across the program.

Changes Observed in Perceptions or Coverage of ASGM

Changing public opinion about ASGM is the most significant challenge any ASGM project in Peru must confront. The planetGOLD Peru project chose to focus internally, delivering targeted messages to the ASGM community, miners, and allied networks, rather than organizing national campaigns to influence public opinion. The project considered conducting in-person workshops with journalists and influential opinion shapers, and a virtual workshop was held in April 2023 led by UNDP; however, an in-person workshop was not able to be carried out due to changes in public administration that delayed authorizations to start with the activity.

However, some progress was made, as local-level journalists have started distinguishing between informal and illegal mining. This nuanced understanding in media coverage, albeit limited, marks an improvement in recognizing the complexities of the ASGM sector. Despite the challenges, this shift is a positive step towards more informed and accurate representation of ASGM in media.

Specific Factors for Success

Achievements under the communication interventions

The most important achievement of the communication interventions was the successful adoption of planetGOLD Peru's communication strategies by partner organizations. This adoption provides a pathway for the sustainability of the initiative beyond the project's immediate scope. Achieving this success required working collaboratively from the beginning of the program, progressively building trust among partners. It was particularly beneficial to have team members with previous experience within these networks. Additionally, the communication campaigns were carefully aligned with the key priorities of all partners, ensuring cohesive and targeted messaging that resonated well with the stakeholders.

Barriers to success

One significant area where the project fell short was in launching a nationwide campaign to train journalists to shift public perception of the ASGM sector. This was due to political tensions between national institutions, specifically the Ministries of Mining and Environment, which do not always have aligned views on ASGM formalization. As a result, planetGOLD Peru had to navigate these complex dynamics, making it challenging to coordinate a unified effort at the national level. Despite these barriers, some progress was noted at the local level, where journalists have begun to distinguish between informal and illegal mining, marking a step forward in improving the understanding and coverage of ASGM.

Recommendations for Future Interventions

Based on planetGOLD Peru's experience, future ASGM communications initiatives should foster early liaison with project partners and consider the sustainability of the initiative from the get-go. This means that communicational initiatives must resonate with partners' goals and priorities. Future initiatives should also consider extra efforts in nationwide communicational campaigns, which entail workshops with local journalists concerning ASGM literacy and positioning opinion leaders with an informed and balanced perspective of the sector.



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