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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: A Youth Strategy for the Rio Sao Francisco

Youth Engagement requires opportunities for youth to participate in the decision making process and in building and implementing sustainable social and environmental pillars within their communities. Youth from the São Francisco watershed area communities of: Três Marias, Beira Rio, Pirapora, Buritizeiro, Barra de Guaicui, and Ibiaí participated in intensive youth engagement seminars with an intended purpose of establishing a baseline of assets to develop a youth strategy in their river and watershed areas. Our team worked with youth and their leaders to assess personal, community, and environmental assets perceived by youth themselves to help determine how to mobilize resources and move forward with a youth strategy in each community. The results of the youth engagement workshops in the six communities sowed seeds for steps to be taken towards youth strategy in the area of Project Peixes, Pessoas e Água. However, a full understanding of meaningful youth engagement within a youth strategy requires strengthening amongst the leadership of the youth groups, teaching staff, & communities as well as the support needed to develop experience and tools for comprehensive implementation. My recommendation is to provide mentorship opportunities to incubate youth engagement pilot projects in each of the communities. These projects will serve multiple purposes:

- a) Provide leaders, youth, and residents an opportunity to experiment with youth engagement through hands on learning.
- b) Provide an opportunity to create a model youth strategy appropriate to Brazil's social, economic, and environmental reality. This can serve as a model for youth programs throughout the region.
- c) Enable youth to have the opportunity to participate in finding their own solutions to the problems they face

SECTION I: INTRODUCTION

Youth make up 50% or more of the population base in southern countries but their voices are rarely meaningfully consulted when considering the “big issues” of a country’s development plans. Given the brilliance, ingenuity, and energy of the young, efforts are made in Canada and elsewhere to create opportunities for youth engagement in their own country’s development, (Centre for Excellence in Youth Engagement Canada, 2003 – 2005). World Fisheries Trust recognizes the need to engage youth from the São Francisco watershed in determining how to address the environmental and social challenges it faces. To this end, the research, analysis, and recommendations in this report were gathered during an intensive fourteen-day exploratory mission to establish opportunities for engagement within existing institutions, youth groups, clubs, and programs in the area. Our goal is to develop a youth engagement strategy for the watershed area to ensure that an informed and engaged youth population will work for the sustainability of their watershed and the sustainable livelihood of the inland fishery.

1.1 OVERVIEW OF PEIXES PESSOAS E ÁGUA (PPA)

The goal of the PPA project is to support equitable use of the freshwater fishery resource and long-term sustainability of fishing communities. The intent is to draw from Canadian experiences to support socially and environmentally sustainable communities through participatory fisheries management and conservation. The intended results will be reduced poverty, resilient communities and long-term productivity of the fishery resource in Brazil’s São Francisco Watershed Area.

A Youth Engagement Strategy is being pursued as part of the project’s approach to “build awareness in stakeholders and the general public on Brazilian fisheries and aquatic ecosystems” and “to create gender-balanced, family, and youth opportunities” within the project. The proposal recognizes a demand for greater local community participation in management of the fishery and ecosystem. The communities want to develop the tools to adapt to changing times and to be involved in the management of the resource they depend on.

To ensure the Youth Engagement Strategy is integrated into the larger PPA project it will focus on key theme areas of the PPA project such as: promoting awareness and-or that monitor and evaluate socio-economic and environmental conditions in fishing communities. The project is situated in fishing communities where current conditions are “precarious”. The communities are poor, frequently lack running water and proper sewage, and have social problems related to gang violence, substance abuse, and the sex industry. This reality makes a youth strategy all the more essential as studies indicate that women, children & youth suffer disproportionately in these circumstances

(Waring, M. 1999).

1.2 CONTEXT OF YOUTH ENGAGEMENT

The development of a youth strategy in the PPA project based on the fundamental principles of youth engagement could have a profound positive effect on the long-term development of the communities. To enlist youth participation should help the long-term viability of fishing communities and their families. It is within this context that we investigate opportunities for youth engagement.

The Canadian Centre for Excellence in Youth Engagement is a four-year research project partnering academics, institutions, youth organizations, the Canadian Government, and youth in understanding how youth engage in their world. The Environmental Youth Alliance, a key partner, researches youth participation in creating ecological and social change in their communities. Youth engagement is defined as *the meaningful and sustained involvement of a young person in an activity, focusing outside the self. Engagement has behavioural, emotional, and cognitive components (Centre for Excellence in Youth Engagement, 2004).*

Research indicates that meaningful youth engagement is associated with benefits to youth and the communities in which they live. Through engagement, youth may gain a sense of empowerment as individuals and make healthy connections to others, which results in reduced negative behaviours and increased participation in positive activities. In addition to the social benefits of these behavioural changes, the community gains through the energy, ideas, processes, and knowledge that youth bring to organizations, activities, and their relationships with adults.

1.3 YOUTH ENGAGEMENT IN THE SÃO FRANCISCO WATERSHED AREA

During our 14-day mission we visited over 500 youth and engaged in participatory workshops with the intended purpose of:

- 1) Review community assets and requirements for development of the project's youth strategy, in consultation with WFT, Brazilian partners, and community members. This was done through reconnaissance visits to all communities and through meetings with local youth, community leaders, and government representatives.
- 2) Conducting seven participative environmental and community development workshops focused on youth capacity-building in the project area ;on representation on environmental monitoring techniques for youth; and one presentation on youth engagement for teachers at a seminar organized by the UFSCar Environmental Education team.
- 3) Demonstrating potential tools for preparing groups to propose a small hands-on demonstration project of environmental recovery in their communities. This workshop engaged the group of leaders and

participants in a case study during which they decided what an environmental project would encompass when utilizing an asset- based capacity building approach.

- 4) Proposing a youth strategy for the PPA project which addresses: community development based youth groups, environmental stewardship programs, proposals for involvement of municipalities for long term sustainability, environmental public education programs developed and implemented by youth, and establishing a youth network between youth within and beyond the project area.

Our original intention was to discuss opportunities for gaining additional funding for small environment projects, however, given the substantial increase in the number of workshops and seminars we conducted, we were unable to pursue research in this area. An EYA intern will pursue funding options as the pilot projects unfold.

The report is based on youth perspectives of the environment, their watershed area, and communities they live in. The theme is one of “youth as partners – youth as assets” in sustaining the fishery and the watershed. During our mission we discovered that youth were well aware of the environmental challenges that existed in their regions and were interested in working towards improving the quality of the environment and ultimately their own lives. Of particular note is the Agente Joven Program (AJ), which operates in three of the communities (Buritizeiro, Pirapora and Três Marias). This is a federal program for youth-at-risk offered throughout Brazil and provides a curriculum that includes a significant environmental component. Given increased mentoring, support and guidance, this program could be easily integrated with evolving environmental stewardship & education projects in the watershed area.

A second program of note, Projeto Manuelzão (MZ), is a community health promotion program that has a strong presence in Barra do Guaicuí. Though not youth focused, there is a child and youth component – “little fighters” - within its larger community health mandate. Community based environmental stewardship and education is an area of focus in this program.

Beira Rio and Ibiaí do not have specific youth programs/institutions that incubate environmental interests and opportunities such as AJ or MZ. However, the municipalities are interested in supporting small environment clubs that are youth driven. (Do these already exist- not to my knowledge)

In general, we found that youth are looking for ways to engage in their world through positive outlets.

SECTION II: METHODOLOGY

2.1 YOUTH ENGAGEMENT MODEL

Capacity-focused development is central to a youth engagement model whereby youth are seen as assets and partners. *“All historical evidence indicates that significant community development takes place only when local community people are committed to investing themselves and their resources in the effort. This observation explains why communities are never built from the top down, or from the outside in”*, (McKnight & Kretzmann, 1993). Keeping this in mind, a youth engagement model assumes supporting capacity building to enable participation & decision making from youth themselves.

Youth engagement occurs when certain variables are in place including:

1. Initiating factors: Circumstances that get youth involved in an activity (a teacher, a friend, family member, mentor, workshop, seminar);
2. Sustaining factors: Factors that sustain youth involvement over time (youth groups/clubs, programs, mentors);
3. Activity: The specific nature of the involvement (gives a feeling of contributing, is fun, enables learning, challenging);
4. Outcomes/Impacts: Results are evident from the engagement (builds confidence, pride, empowerment, and a sense of contributing).

(Pancer & Pratt, 1999 & Centre for Excellence in Youth Engagement, 2004)

We know from extensive research that youth who become engaged in their community/environment will continue their involvement throughout their adult lives. Therefore, instilling a well-developed youth strategy PPA project could result in a strong contribution to the overall sustainability of fishing communities in this area for the long term.

2.2 PARTICIPATORY YOUTH PROCESSES

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child states that...

“Parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child.” (Article 12)

The role of children and youth as active participants in their societies' development plans is often neglected despite their enshrined rights by United Nations member countries, including Brazil. Yet, most citizens value the role that children and youth could potentially play in their communities and local environments. In general, teachers, community leaders and governing bodies don't have or understand mechanisms for achieving youth engagement, which creates real barriers to child and youth participation. One of the key components of youth engagement is the acceptance of youth as true partners

in the development process, whereby youth have real decision-making power over their activities. Valuing the skills and abilities of youth through empowerment mechanisms such as being involved in the decision-making process are a key step in engaging youth in their world. True partnership is a difficult step to take for many in positions of power over youth; however it is a critical one to take if true engagement is to be realized by the youth community. To support communities in initiating the long journey to achieving youth engagement, a step-by-step process can be utilized that can be slowly integrated into an organization's work-plans over a period of time.

Personal and Community Asset Mapping: Transformative Pedagogy

Bioregional and community development mapping processes use maps as a tool to represent and validate the experiences of residents in their local environment. Critical education theorists such as Paulo Freire have a clear influence in how map-making can be utilized in marginalized communities. Specifically, mapping as an approach to community education leads to a transformative educational process described in Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*: "mapping can be seen as a transformative pedagogy because it asks the subjects...to name their world and to see the possibility for change" (Lydon, 2000, p.13). Personal and community mapping can have an emancipatory effect as an inclusive tool to build community capacity, as well as contributing to the social and ecological sustainability of communities. For these reasons mapping was a key approach used to secure youth participation in collecting information for a PPA project youth strategy.

In the six communities in the São Francisco Watershed area we participated in youth engagement workshops to assess their perspectives of the problems and challenges they are faced with, what skills and abilities they have to address these challenges, and what assets exist both personally and within the communities that can play a supportive role. Youth participated in personal and community asset mapping to help facilitate the gathering of these ideas and perspectives. Environmental problems that existed in their region were highlighted on the maps. Youth worked individually and in small groups for up to six hours to map their assets and region, then presented the results to their peers and community leaders.

2.3 DATA COLLECTION PROCESS

Personal, community, and environmental maps were collected and coded. Narrative field notes were kept during the workshops to keep track of group dynamics, brainstorming sessions, and new ideas that emerged during the presentation process. After each presentation we held a discussion of what steps could be taken to move forward. In some cases, the groups wanted to develop work plans for future projects and in other cases we held discussions about how to proceed in the future. All original information was collected at the end of the workshop for coding, reporting and analysis. The results of this mapping process provided the basis for the development of a youth strategy for the PPA project and are analyzed in the next section.

SECTION III: YOUTH ENGAGEMENT IN THE SÃO FRANCISCO WATERSHED AREA

In this section the data collected from the seven youth capacity building and mapping workshops and seminars is presented and analyzed, and corresponding recommendations are made based on these results.

3.1 TRÊS MARIAS: workshops, analysis and recommendations

World Fisheries Trust field staff organized workshops focused on the Agente Joven (AJ), program in Três Marias. We met with AJ leaders and participated in two workshops with over 56 youth & six leaders over two days. (Note: pop. Of TM is 22,000 should be included for consistency with other sections.)

Leaders Meeting:

We met with the leaders of the AJ program in Três Marias to discuss their goals, mandate, and general infrastructure for the program. It was through this meeting that we were able to get detailed information on the environmental curriculum in the program, the interest and abilities of leaders, and the potential resources to support their environmental interests. The leaders do not have any specific environmental training; however the area supervisor does have an interest in integrating environmental opportunities that exist with the PPA project with AJ activities. Already, arrangements had been made for small groups of AJ youth to participate in the construction of a Barreiro Grande Watershed model that is being carried out by WFT consultants as part of a public awareness and environmental education campaign. The AJ supervisor, Denise Aparecida da Silva Goulait and team were interested in using youth engagement methods to further develop their environmental curriculum.

Summary of Workshops:

Our team participated in two, workshops with approximately 28 youth attending each three hour workshop.. The workshops were conducted in two locations: one on the margins of the city and the other near the city centre. Both workshops were held in schools in the afternoon, after classes. The leaders assigned to the groups (2 per group) also participated in the workshop, and the regional supervisor also took part in the second workshop. Active participation by youth in both workshops was high.

Analysis:

General observations indicate that group 1, (AJ1) and group 2, (AJ2), were from quite different demographic groups. AJ1 youth were from neighbourhoods on the edge of the city and AJ2 were from the city centre. AJ1 youth were very focused on social problems existing in their communities and that are a part of their everyday lives. A long list of social problems including gangs, violence, drugs, and prostitution dominated their perspectives of community concerns. For example, one of their members was in hospital from a recent gang beating and there was a strong desire expressed to do something concrete to curtail the violence and criminal activity in their neighbourhoods.

Summary of Environmental Perspectives:

The most significant environmental problem the AJ1 noted was the pollution in the Barreiro Grande Stream (Tributary of the Rio São Francisco). The group noted that pollution including municipal industrial and general garbage in and around the stream, was destroying the stream ecosystem. Also mentioned was the Rio São Francisco. AJ2 decided the biggest environmental problem was pollution from the mining company refinery on the Rio São Francisco, although they didn't feel they could do anything about it. Other noted problems included garbage and polluted streams. AJ2 voted on which area they would like to focus their environmental program with the following results: 1) public education, 2) recovery of the river buffer zone, 3) recovery of the other streams, 4) cleaning the square, and 5) cleaning up the garbage. (See table 1 in the appendix).

Personal and Community Assets

Finding citizen-based solutions to environmental problems within communities is a cornerstone of youth engagement. AJ1 & AJ2 had 35% of respondents list Agente Joven as a significant personal asset they had in their lives. It was the single most listed asset by the group and demonstrates the significant role the program plays in the lives of these youth. Other assets included: potential of youth, the beach, programs that support society, the municipality, the PPA project, family members and friends.

Recommendations for Três Marias:

The Agente Joven program is an excellent resource that could be leveraged to be a significant component of a youth engagement strategy for the watershed area. Youth are interested and understand the big issues that exist in their watershed. AJ has an environmental mandate in place and with some additional support, guidance and mentoring, could focus its efforts and energy on both improving the situation within the watershed and be a significant contributor to organizing and implementing a larger youth strategy for the region. Recommendations include:

- Include AJ leaders in all correspondence and information sharing with the PPA project, include their leaders in training and communication exercises, and arrange a PPA project managers meeting with the AJ state leadership.
- Suggest that AJ play a leadership role in establishing a youth engagement strategy for the watershed zone with specific goals such as conferences, training sessions for leaders on participatory youth processes, and initiating involvement of local municipalities focused on youth participation in the larger watershed sustainability plan.
- Support the initiation of AJ youth-led environmental recovery plans diagnosed from mapping exercises. Identified priorities include: Barreiro Grande Stream recovery and buffer zone (and other feeder streams of

the São Francisco River), and Public Education

3.2 BEIRA RIO WORKSHOPS, ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Across the River from Três Marias is the small fishing village of Beira Rio (population 500). The village is immediately adjacent to the river and has easy river access enabling great potential in becoming engaged in river stewardship. Some difficulties do exist with it's location such as human exposure to exposed mine tailings from across the river as well as some undesirable tourism activities such as drinking and partying. Though youth activities are limited due to lack of resources, a vibrant youth community exists that has a strong interest in making their community more livable. A group of local youth from a newly formed, municipally organized youth drop-in group convened to share their community knowledge and visions with us early on a Saturday morning.

Summary of workshops:

The municipality has recently been hosting a youth drop-in group at the local school and has hopes of incorporating an environmental curriculum into some of their activities. Although part of her mandate is focused on tourism she seemed open to hearing the ideas of the local youth and is trying to incorporate them into her mandate. Approximately 20 youth participated in the all-day workshop that used personal and community asset mapping and project planning strategies to examine possibilities for youth engagement in Beira Rio, with the long-term goal of empowering youth to become community and environmental stewards.

Analysis:

The youth in this community are acutely aware of the environmental problems that exist. Our activity focused on gaining access to this knowledge through small-group mapping exercises for their village. During the exercise they highlighted problem areas that related to the social and ecological challenges their village faces. Some key areas of concern included pollution of the river, lack of community green space, Inns where the sport fishermen stay, untreated water/sewage, riverside pollution and garbage, the mine, damming of the river, lack of employment, dead fish, bars, absence of activities for youth, agricultural toxins in the water, no access to water, and lack of buffer zones along the river.

Personal and Community Assets:

Many resources were recognized by the youth, including the school, local residents, the municipality, the neighbourhood association, the youth association, the health centre, the community association, the fish festival, fishing and fishermen, CAP, community reporters, and the agricultural production association. In terms of personal assets, Beira Rio contrasted sharply with Três Marias in that youth recognized fishing as a personal skill and asset.

A strong desire to improve things as soon as possible was palpable in the group, and the leaders asked if we would work with them to develop small project plans that may be implemented over a period of time. Through a system of voting we selected two projects and facilitated the development of project plans for the two groups as part of a youth driven exercise. The results were two focused initiatives which could serve as small pilot activities to help empower the youth group and build towards a more established youth presence in some of the other community-based groups. The initiatives were: 1). to help design and create a central green space in the village near the church in partnership with the municipality; and 2. to focus on environmental recovery efforts around the buffer zone of the river.

Recommendations

- Support the continued participation of the municipality in structuring a youth group in the community
- Facilitate the development of the youth group into a sub-group of the Community Associations to ensure longer-term stability, so it is less dependent on municipal funding (funding is uncertain).
- Provide mentorship for the projects suggested by the youth mapping exercises as pilot projects to build capacity in the youth community
- Link this group to other youth groups in the region through a youth strategy that supports communication, training, and regular contact between youth in the different municipalities.

3.3 PIRAPORA: workshops, analysis and recommendations

Pirapora is a city of 70,000 with a large youth population, located on the São Francisco River approximately 200 km downstream from Três Marias,. There is a large Agente Joven group (approximately 50 participants), a youth drop-in centre (Pingo de Luz), as well as a theatre group (ECA Move) and a large, active social service network for children and youth run by the municipality (Projecto Renascer). We met with several municipal Secretaries responsible for youth, as well as the Deputy Mayor, to discuss the municipality's plans for youth participation in their community and the surrounding environment. An interest exists within the municipality for participation in a watershed strategy with youth. Given our limited time, our main area of focus was providing youth engagement workshops with the Agente Joven group as well as with youth from a neighbouring community, Buritizero.

Workshop Summary

The first workshop was limited in scope because the number of participants far exceeded the capacity for an in-depth workshop. The groups who attended were the ECA Move, Pingo de Luz, and Projecto Renascer as well as municipal workers and leaders (approximately 90 people). We discussed youth environment and youth capacity building work in Canada as well as a need for youth involvement in finding solutions to local environmental problems. An emphasis on identifying personal and community assets was a key topic of our discussion. The assets discussed included existing programs like ECA Move,

which is a moving theatre group that uses popular theatre in a traveling caravan to highlight problems that exist, while opening dialogue for locally created solutions. This group discussed the possibility of doing a theatre presentation about the watershed area and Rio São Francisco. Pingo de Luz acts as a youth drop-in centre that would like to support programs in the environmental sector. This centre has approximately ten staff who work on both a full and part-time basis. The programming we observed seemed limited in scope, with few capacity-building programs for youth in evidence. An opportunity may exist here to train staff to be more actively involved in developing youth capacity in Pirapora.

We spent most of our available time with the Agente Joven group, delivering two workshops to over 60 youth from two different communities over two days. There was a lot of interest in working on watershed strategies and in taking pride in their neighbourhoods. We participated in personal, community and environmental asset-mapping exercises to help facilitate youth discussions about their communities, to help identify asset areas, and to determine the most significant environmental problems they believe are priorities for attention and awareness. We worked in small groups, primarily broken down by neighbourhood. Some of the dominant environmental concerns included: the polluted lagoon, garbage and lack of park space. The strongest resources in the community included: people, transportation union, charities, the municipality, family members, schools, radio stations and the natural environment.

After a lengthy discussion, AJ Pirapora requested pursuing a project plan to see what immediate steps could be taken as part of their AJ environmental curriculum. Each group/neighbourhood proposed a set of goals and objectives to accomplish mini projects related to their dominant environmental concern. Some activities included: public awareness campaigns, environmental education workshops, organizing work parties, cleaning up the garbage as a large collective effort, working with the municipality to improve areas, and working with the schools.

Recommendations

Key ingredients exist in Pirapora that make for promising first steps in initiating a youth strategy: an interested youth population, an established group with an environmental mandate (Agente Joven), and a supportive municipal government. Here an institutional framework could be developed from a partnership between AJ and the municipality that could apply the effectiveness of youth energy to achieving environmental goals in the region. To support an emerging youth strategy project PPA could:

- Work with AJ and the deputy mayor to develop a pilot municipal youth strategy in partnership with some of the promising youth groups that exist in the community.
- Involve the ECE Movel Theatre group in environmental education.
- Create training opportunities for municipal workers on youth capacity

- building and youth engagement, to make their work more effective.
- Initiate a communications network between youth from all the municipalities in the watershed for: communication, training, success sharing among youth, and capacity building.
- Support the initiation of pilot projects from the Community Mapping exercises through the EYA Intern.

3.4 BURITIZERO: workshops, analysis, & recommendations

A committed group of youth from Buritizeiro, a municipality of 40,000, across the river from Pirapora, participated in a two-day workshop held in Pirapora with the AJ Pirapora group. This large group of Buritizeiro youth would have been better served in a separate workshop in their own community rather than being integrated into the Pirapora group. We were not able to give them the time and attention they needed. However, due to time constraints they were blended into the Pirapora workshop. Buritizeiro youth participated in both days and were generally focused and anxious for the training and capacity-building opportunities that we presented.

Workshop Summary:

During the mapping exercise this group looked closely at their own community in diagnosing some of their community assets and environmental struggles. Specific areas of concern included: sewage being dumped in the river, cleaning up their community and engaging in environmental education activities. Specific activities of interest included: school-based activities, finding partnerships, public awareness and utilizing the media, radio and other forms of communication. A strong desire to expand to neighbouring communities was also of interest to them. Community resources that came to mind for Buritizeiro youth included: recycling initiatives and broad-based public awareness about the environment.

Recommendations

Buritizeiro has some strong projects and project leaders that are connected to the environmental education program (GRAAL, an international NGO with a mandate that includes women's support and environmental education in communities at risk). Buritizeiro youth can be mentored through the EYA intern to incubate a small environmental initiative that may find a long-term home with GRAAL initiatives in Buritizeiro. Other recommendations include:

- Support emerging youth pilot projects as defined in our mapping exercise through the EYA intern
- Connect local youth to local mentors from community based organizations like GRAAL
- Include the AJ leadership in a larger discussion on a regional youth strategy.
- Provide ongoing networking, training, and communication with Buritizeiro youth and youth from other communities in the PPA project area.

3.5 BARRA DO GUAICUÍ: workshops, analysis and recommendations

Barra do Guaicuí is a town of about 5,000 inhabitants of whom approximately 60-70% are children and youth. About 60% of families are involved in the fishery and live from a combination of fishing and other income generation activities. Currently there is one youth program – a theatre group of about 50 youth ranging from 12 to 22 years old. In addition, Projeto Manuelzão has an active community health promotion program and other opportunities for a sub group known as the little warriors.

Workshop Summary

Youth participation in the workshop lacked leadership initially therefore we concluded the first part of the workshop and began an open dialogue with the youth and community leaders who attended to find out if they wanted to pursue youth engagement efforts within the PPA project. A committed group of youth and leaders emerged who participated in the second part of the workshop. During the second phase we pursued community mapping and project planning scenarios.

Personal and Community Assets:

Only four youth out of 50 mentioned fishing as a personal or community asset they valued, a surprising result from a community where the majority of families make at least some of their living from the fishery or the river. Other assets mentioned were focused on community resources, schools, community radio, the PPA project, and the municipality.

Analysis:

Three leaders and approximately 18 youth participated in the second half of the workshop, which focused on their visions for their local environment and specific areas of interest. The most significant problems that dominated the minds of the young people in Barra do Guaicuí included: river pollution, garbage, lack of a sewage system, burning, predatory fishing, river sand extraction, lack of awareness amongst fishermen, cottages and lack of control on tourism, marginal lagoons being filled in, destruction of the buffer zone along the river, no recycling, no employment, and other less specific social problems. Priorities for a youth strategy were focused on the river and the possibility of creating a buffer zone along the river through native plantings. Making their community a nicer place to live through river recuperation was their main vision. The youth saw a wide range of community resources available for their project, including: local help through work parties, schools/education, the local churches, the museum, the theatre group, Projeto Manuelzão, Peti, the municipality, Project PPA, the health centres, and the community radio.

Recommendations

Our team encountered a leadership that initially seemed uncertain of their role, so in order to ensure a solid partnership in Barra do Guaicuí we recommend:

- A follow-up meeting with the primary partners of Barra do Guaicuí to discuss their understanding & expectations of the PPA project partnership in terms of the Youth programs.
- That the EYA intern work with the emerging youth environment group/club to facilitate the development of a youth pilot project. This support may help define youth interest in participating in a larger youth strategy for their watershed region.

3.6 IBIAÍ: workshops, analysis and recommendations

Ibiai is a small town along the river and was the first community to have active participation from the fisherman colony as well as the mayor. This effort reflected a well-organized, strong community effort for youth involvement in the PPA. The mayor, several secretaries, the Fishermen's Colony President and over 50 youth attended for several hours to diagnose and participate in activities to develop initial steps towards a youth strategy. The leaders whom were present included: The Mayor, the Municipal Secretaries for the Environment, Tourism, and Sports and Leisure, a teacher, and the President for the local Fishermen's Colony, Josemar. The Mayor spoke strongly in favour of revitalizing the river and the importance of a youth voice in the community. Youth Programs that currently exist in the community include: Peti, (a federally funded child labour prevention program), Second time (an after-school care program), and some sports programs.

Summary of Workshop:

The Mayor, Josemar, and the Municipal Secretaries participated in the personal and community asset workshops, giving youth the opportunity to see a more personal side of their local leaders. Everyone recognized the situation of the river and expressed their commitment to work towards making it better. There was a strong desire by local youth to continue working on a youth strategy for the river so we broke into two smaller groups and facilitated a "next steps" planning session. The main areas of interest involved community awareness about river pollution and the hopes of creating a cleaner and more sustainable river and tackling garbage and river pollution through a community-based initiative lead by youth.

Personal & Community Assets:

Close to 50% of the youth in this workshop recognized the river as an asset.– This was the strongest response out of all the youth groups we worked with. Other assets that were recognized included the municipality, schools, and local businesses.

Analysis:

With a strong partnership amongst community leaders and a committed active youth base, a good possibility exists to implement an effective youth strategy in this municipality. Activities that utilize community resources and mentorship will

have the strongest likelihood of succeeding. At the conclusion of the workshop, youth had made strong plans to proceed with pilot projects and had a committed group of youth engaged to support their activities.

Recommendations:

- That Ibiaí be a part of a larger youth strategy for the PPA project area that incorporates training, education, communication, and networking among youth in the various communities.
- That emerging pilot projects work with an EYA intern to help keep the group focused and maintain a communication link with the overall PPA project's education efforts.
- A strong active leadership presence in Ibiaí means that this community may serve as a good choice for a pilot in a municipal outreach strategy for youth.

3.7 ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION: Summary of opportunities for synergies between a Youth Strategy and an Environmental Education Strategy

An Environmental Education, (EE), assessment was carried out by WFT consultants focused on the requirements for implementing an environmental education strategy in the PPA project. Below is a list of some of the recommendations from that exploratory mission that may synergize with a Youth Strategy.

Três Marias (TM):

Below are recommendations that resonated with the interests expressed by youth and/or were projects that have already been initiated by the PPA project:

- As part of the PPA EE initiative, Agente Joven was invited to participate on a rotating basis in the building and presentation of a participatory watershed model of the Barreiro Grande watershed (see p. 12), beginning in October of 2005,.
- Adopting parts of the Barreira Grande Creek for restoration and education. Both Agente Joven groups identified this creek as an area of interest to them. A collaboration could occur between the two AJ groups, schools, and a larger EE effort in the community.
- The PPA project's teacher's in-service workshops and training by UFSCar will link teachers to community environmental projects. An opportunity may develop for projects with youth such as AJ.

Beira Rio:

Important background information for the youth program that can be drawn from the EE report is information about the history around native plant reclamation in the community. Youth would like to pursue a planting program; however past plantings have been destroyed by fires. Precautions against fire

must be carefully considered in this community. Other synergies include:

- Using the Rio São Francisco as the focus for EE in the school, both with youth programs and with the community.
- Building on the strong connection between the community, fishing and the river.
- Youth have been invited by WFT staff to participate in presenting the pilot, Participatory Watershed Model to communities.
- Local youth participated in community mapping exercises which may form the basis for the development of an EE program.

A simple, student version of a water quality monitoring program or course in the São Francisco and Abaeté Rivers so that youth interests in participating in São Francisco River conservation efforts, as identified in the mapping exercise.

Pirapora: Recommendations include:

- AJ youth and the youth centre of Pirapora expressed interest in planting native species, which could synergize well with the Matrículo Verde School native planting program (Supported by IBAMA & MESFA). Resources should be made available to AJ.
- Results for methodologies for mapping exercises from our youth strategy sessions may be useful to the UFMG (Belo Horizonte) students working on mapping environmental impacts on a local stream (Veiridiana) and mapping veredas and their access points (Valdinei). Connecting these individuals with AJ may be mutually beneficial in developing youth pilot projects and long term community stewardship initiatives.
- Youth demonstrated an interest in waste issues during our community mapping sessions, therefore partnerships should be cultivated with the Municipal Secretary of Infrastructure and Urbanism programs that focus on waste management (e.g. Sala Verde, Lixo e Cidadania- and "Coleta Seletiva")
- There is a general need to increase public awareness about stewardship as youth are interested in stewardship.
- Youth are interested in establishing a youth network between Pirapora and the other communities in the watershed so they can build capacity in the youth community.

Buritizeiro:

Of special note are the conditions youth need to endure to attend school and after-school programs. Some travel as much as 100km per day to get to school, and making extra- curricular activities impossible for them. Recommendations include:

- Building on links with fishing families who already know a lot about the river – this is a huge asset to build on.
- Municipal links include: Secretary of Social Assistance, Agente Joven, and other programs run by NGOs such as GRAAL
- Link youth maps with the EE recommendations for a community-mapping event.
- Solicit bursaries for Agente Joven

- Start riparian zone stewardship projects with the local fishing colony as well as other river stewardship initiatives. Interest in these activities was expressed by local youth.

Barra do Guaicuí:

The community has a good history of working collaboratively on community-based environmental projects around green space design and creation as well as on garbage issues. Some specific recommendations that meld well with a youth strategy include:

- A networking/conference opportunity among youth to share experiences, resources and capacity building.
- Provide support for policy changes through participatory management strategies that includes youth participation.
- Careful documentation of the relationship between human health and environmental degradation (such as open sewage and the contamination of water supply by garbage, and the steps needed to achieve improvement). Youth expressed an interest in the garbage & sewage problems of the community.

Ibiaí:

There is good dialogue amongst many residents of the community regarding the river, fishing, and environmental education. The community leaders tend to participate, as does a solid base of society. Recommendations include:

- Youth could increase capacity by mentoring with Amigos do Rio São Francisco as an NGO resource for ecological and public awareness projects.
- Developing a community festival to identify environmental and social issues of concern could have a youth component.
- Developing a simple monitoring program for river stewardship

Resources for Youth Stewardship Goals:

IEF (State Forestry Institute or Instituto Estadual de Floresta)

There was some indication that IEF may provide native plants for replanting initiatives at no cost. They have nurseries in Sete Lagoas and Pompeu and have a book on growing and maintaining seedlings.

Minha Caderneta de Pescaria – This resource book on fishing is produced by the National Program for the Development of Recreational Fisheries (PNDPA)

Broad Based Recommendations that may directly involve youth:

Foster the exchange of Canadian and Brazilian experiences through EYA interns, attendance at the United Nations World Urban Forum, increased youth engagement and capacity training for leaders and municipal workers at the local, regional, and international level).

SECTION IV: IMPLEMENTATION

4.1 IMPLEMENTATION: A youth strategy for the Peixes, Pessoas e Água project

We should be on our guard not to over estimate science and scientific methods when it is a question of human problems; and we should not assume that experts are the only ones who have a right to express themselves on questions affecting the organization of society.

- Albert Einstein

Below are four key action strategies that are recommended as initial steps to be taken in implementing a youth strategy for the PPA project area. All are based on the assumption that participation by youth is desired and will have support as it emerges:

- 1.) Incubate youth engagement pilot projects in each of the communities to provide leaders, youth, and community residents an opportunity to experiment with youth engagement. An opportunity to create a custom Brazilian model for youth strategy appropriate to Brazil's reality is essential for true implementation.
- 2.) The Agente Joven program is an excellent resource that could be leveraged to be a significant component of a youth engagement strategy for the watershed area. AJ has an environmental mandate & a state wide administrative structure in place to organize and implement a larger youth strategy.
- 3.) Integrating a youth strategy with existing institutions is recommended where possible, (institutions considered should be capable of partnerships with youth). If there is not sufficient or effective institutional support, stand-alone, youth driven environment clubs should be considered.
- 4.) Initiate a regional capacity-building youth network with a mandate to: communicate among youth groups, provide training, link youth together to build capacity, support emerging youth programs, ideas, & vision.

4.2 Models & Recommendations: A youth strategy for municipalities

An institutional framework could be developed at the municipal level to facilitate youth perspectives in the PPA project region's development plans. For example, the City of Vancouver recognizes the need for youth input and has developed two key areas to connect youth with the city: An Office of Child &

Youth Advocacy and a Youth Outreach Team. These positions provide youth with access points into the City's administration. Interested municipalities in the PPA project area could provide access points for youth that are suitable to their resources such as: municipal conferences, monthly round tables with the Mayor and Secretaries, and/or a municipal youth liaison. Youth access will help secure youth engagement in their region's development.

APPENDICES

Table 1: Tres Marias' Community Assets, Problems, & Priorities Action

Assets	Problems (1)	Priorities for Action (1)
Agente Joven Group 1 Beach, Agente Joven Potential of youth Social support programs: Association of parents with children with disabilities Daycares, schools, casa home Bompastor Partnerships, family members, youth co-op, PPA/WFT, Society, Sao Vincente de Paulo, CEMIG COSEVASF, other municipal enterprises	Mining Company, Garbage, Landfill, polluted streams of the city	Public Education of the SFR – 23 votes Cleaning of the Stream BG – 16 Campaign for selective garbage collection – 16 votes Campaign for separation of toxic garbage – 6 votes Work party to clean the square – 19 votes Recovery of the buffer zone – 21 votes Cleaning the embankment of the river – 13 votes
Assets	Social Problems (group 2)	Environmental Problems (group 2)
Agente Joven Group 2 Soccer stadium Leisure, public park, green space Villa Aeronautica – club, Springs of GBX, Mountain irante, Central Square Rio Sao Francisco & Fish, Corrego Buritizinho is clean, the church, the school and club of Barrio Dermig, Water treatment of Bairro Cernig, Centro of town has a lot of resources: Libray Represa de Tres Marias, Hospital, Bairro Chico Alexandre park Bairro São Geraldo: Drugs, pollution, alcoholism; Bairro Maraba – traffic accidents, Bairro Cidade Florencia Bairro Mineira de Matas & Bairro Nova Horizonte & Centro– Robbing	Drugs, No Street lights,Lack of paving of Is this Parque de Nacoes, prostitution Lack of social housing, Hospital is not enough, violence & drugs Bairro SG Bairro CEMIG lack of paving & violence, Bus terminal (no transportation), Bairro Ipiranga, Alcoholism, Bairro Sabastião Alves – lack of lighting, Bairro Erminia de Novals – violence & lack of sewage Bairro Mineira de Matias – robbing homes, Bairro Progresso- no sanitation Bairro Erminia de Novals, Bakery, Bairro São Jorge Church, Bairro Sebastião Alves Bairro Ipirango offices, Bairro Cidadada Turistica waterfalls, health centre	Dirty Stream Barreiro Grande Ceco what's this Stream sewage Open Sewage & lack of pavement in Bairro or Bahia Panorama Accident from mining company Pollution in BG Grota – Sewage

Table 2: Beira Rio Community Assets, Problems, & Priority Action Plans

Assets	Problems	Priority Action Plans
School, People in the community, Government, Neighbourhood Associations, Youth Associations, Heath Centre, Factory, Community Association, Fish festival Fishing Community Reporters Rural production Association Buffer Zone, CAP – Centre for Fishermen's support, Garden of the School Recycling, Soccer field, Mobilizing residents	Town centre/church, Inns for fishermen, Untreated water, River problems, Riverside pollution, Garbage, Lack of trees, Closed access to river, Prostitution Sewage in the River No Employment No leisure time, no sports or alternative activities Dead fish, Damming of the river, Mine, Polluted Stream – Estevia, Bars/Pubs, Agriculture toxins into the river, Lack of Buffer Zones, Brothels	1st Project Plan Objective: More Trees close to river and in the centre; enhance environmental quality of the community Activities: To get seedlings that are native to the area To design the project properly To prepare the soil well that is donated by local farmers Sawdust from the saw mill Get permission from the government 2nd Project Plan Objective: To fix the plaza with chairs, garden, lighting, garbage cans, mural, phone, bathroom; to have a more beautiful square to enjoy leisure time and as a tourist viewpoint for the community and education about native species Activities: To do the project & model To get sponsorship To press and invite government to participate To plant the garden To start in December Resources: communication, fences to protect the trees Talk to people and raise awareness Sponsorship and community knowledge Obstacles: Difficult to raise awareness in the community; project requires professional drawing (landscape architect)

Table 3: Pirapora Community Assets, Problems & Priority Action Plans

Assets	Problems	Priority Action Plans
<p>Sao Geraldo neighbourhood</p> <p>People, Mothers Club</p>	<p>Sao Geraldo (Neighbourhood)</p> <p>Polluted Lagoon, Industry</p>	<p>Objective: Polluted lagoon, to have a better and cleaner city for all</p> <p>Activities: Workshops, brochures, get more people interested</p> <p>Obstacles: people, move them out of the way</p>
<p>Nossa Senhora Aparecida</p> <p>People, Transportation Union,</p>	<p>Nossa Senhora Aparecida</p> <p>Bad Square, Dead Fish Polluted Lagoon/River, Garbage</p>	<p>Nossa Senhora Aparecida</p> <p>Objective: A Bad Square exists and we want to revitalize it and have something for the family to go to</p> <p>Activities: Paint the plaza, cut the grass; Pruning, lighting, take care of trees and plants; education about the park, public awareness</p> <p>Obstacles: Lack of Financial resources</p>
<p>Cidade Jardim</p> <p>Youth, Good people, Catholic Child Protection Agency, Medicinal Plants, Health Centre, Recycling, Social projects, soccer field</p>	<p>Cidade Jardim</p> <p>Garbage, Lack of basic hygienic Sanitation, Lots of rats and scorpions</p>	<p>Cidade Jardim</p> <p>Objective: Address the Garbage – Clean the bairro and have a better quality of life. Establish sewage and drainage system</p> <p>Activities: One day per month work party</p> <p>Obstacles: Bureaucracy and lack of support, (get help from Prefeitura, mobilize the population through awareness raising)</p>
<p>Cicero Passos</p> <p>Computer and photographs</p>	<p>Cicero Passos</p> <p>Factory Pollution Burning, lack of basic sanitation, lack of safety & police, bad illumination</p>	<p>Cicero Passos</p> <p>Objective: Prevent the Flooding of the Barrio</p> <p>Activities: Diagnose the problem with photos, consciousness raising, use the people in the group</p> <p>Obstacles: lack of partners</p>
<p>Nova Pirapora/Santos Vila Blanca</p> <p>People, school, radio station, Communication media, Volunteers Agente Joven</p>	<p>Nova Pirapora/Santos/Vila Blanca</p> <p>Garbage</p>	<p>Nova Pirapora/Santos /Vila Blanca</p> <p>Objective: Control the accumulation of garbage in the empty lots, public roads, and marshes. To be away from garbage and its consequences</p> <p>Activities: Partnership with schools, Mobilize the population</p> <p>Obstacles: Lack of understanding of public Lack of support from tourism and sports secretariat</p>
<p>Bairro Industrial</p> <p>Public clubs, transportation Hospital, school, church, daycare, gymnasium, Government urban resource secretariat</p>	<p>Bairro Industrial</p> <p>Garbage, lack of asphalt Pollution of the lagoons around the river</p>	<p>Bairro Industrial</p> <p>Objective: Sweat equity, clean your own street day Clean empty lot to have a nice city</p> <p>Activities: Raise awareness with public awareness campaign Start partnerships: clean the lots with volunteers and tools.</p> <p>Obstacles: finding partners, raising awareness, getting tools.</p>
<p>Santo Antônio:</p> <p>Resources: Do a work party Go to the government</p>	<p>Santo Antônio:</p> <p>Lack of resources, fights, gangs, no police, no bus service, bad school, dirty cemetery</p>	<p>Santo Antônio:</p> <p>Objective: Awareness to the people, clean the cemetery and make an archive/file for guidance</p>

Table 4: Buritizeiro Community Assets, Problems, & Priority Action Plans

Assets	Problems	Priority Action Plans
Public Awareness Recycling Partners	Hospital is putting sewage in river Garbage	<p><u>Objective/Vision:</u> Sewage system for the River, want a clean river, pretty city, and aware population</p> <p><u>Activities:</u> Organize activities in schools and communities, look for partnerships, create infrastructure for communication of the problem Radio, media communication Expand the project to neighbouring communities</p> <p><u>Obstacles:</u> community gives no importance to the interest of the city</p>

Table 5: Barra de Guaicuí Community Assets, Problems, & Priority Action Plans

Assets	Problems	Priority Action Plans
Work parties Public Education School, Church, Old Church & Museum, Existing Projects PPA, theatre group, Manuelzãao(little fighters), Peti Municipality, Tourists, Active police, Youth, Religion & Cultural activities, Sports facilities, & Health centres, Recreation, Radio, Communications, Mail	River Pollution, Garbage in the community, burning No Sewage system, Predatory fishing, River Bed rock Lack of fishermen awareness, Lakes are being covered and polluted, Tourism without control & cottages, Lack of safety, Loss of buffer zone along the river Garbage is disposed of improperly, Lack of family involvement Social Problems, No recycling, Lack of employment, Illegal damms	<p><u>Objective:</u> To have a clean community that is nice and has lots of trees and more opportunities for employment To have a pilot project for buffer zone recuperation of the river Recycling & native plant nursery</p> <p><u>Activities:</u> Diagnostic of Barra de Guaicuí garbage Campaign to tell everyone about the information Call the Institute of Botany: to learn about native plant restoration Begin recycling in the school Find a place to separate the garbage Resources: group of youth, elders, municipality, the council, the school, the church, epa, Manuelzãao. Obstacle: to educate the community & municipality, time, participation, people</p>

Table 6: IBIAí Community Assets, Problems, and Priority Action Plans

Assets	Problems	Priority Action Plans
1st Group Municipality, Schools Businesses Professors, Fisherman, Wisemen	Community, youth, municipality, enterprises,	<u>Objective:</u> Community Awareness about river pollution São Francisco River Clean and sustainable <u>Activities:</u> To do a diagnosis of the river condition and ecosystem Campaign for divulging the information through radio newspaper, banners, work party Talk about t the river and its preservation using: Professors, fishermen, wise men, Create Publications about the culture Have cooking parties, folk dances
Second Group:		
<u>Assets:</u> Teachers, Municipality, Councillors chambers, Youth, Businesses	<u>Problems</u> Public Awareness, getting more people involved Pollution of SFR, Sewage, Deforestation, Garbage along the river banks, burning, sound pollution, erosion, Gravel & Sand extraction, Destruction of the buffer zone, sedimentation	<u>Objective:</u> Improvement of the River with a municipality cleaner and better health <u>Activities:</u> Cleaning the River and Recycling the garbage Diagnostics to figure out the big picture work plan To educate people about not putting garbage in the river Collect the Garbage Look for support from people around the community

Table 7: Teachers' Perceptions of Environmental Problems (check font etc.)

Community	Problems	Solutions
<p>Buritizeiro/Pirapora</p> <p><u>Pirapora</u></p> <p>Sue Ellen suegeo@gmail.com will coordinate info transfer to MarciaBat, Xandra, Minca R. Monica P.</p> <p><u>Buritizeiro:</u> Coordination will happen through Neivia Assunção has a phone to connect with Baby, Arlete,</p>	<p>Ecological Awareness*, Commitment to Food chain, Poor Species selection for Reforestation*, Deforestation*</p> <p>No Fish Control</p> <p>Industrial Sewage, Human sewage</p> <p>Bad Irrigation, Soil Compaction</p> <p>Translocation</p> <p>Destruction of Veredas*</p> <p>Sedimentation*</p> <p>Death of Fish</p> <p>Charcoal making</p> <p>Burning</p> <p>Lack of Knowledge</p> <p>Pollution*</p> <p>Lack of Public Government Commitment</p> <p>Destruction of Buffer Zone*</p> <p>Construction on River Bank*</p> <p>Garbage*</p>	<p>Sport Fishing</p> <p>Union</p> <p>Agriculture*</p> <p>Social Projects*</p> <p>Public and Private Schools*</p> <p>Trails</p> <p>Hydro Power*</p> <p>Community Reporters WFT*</p> <p>Flora & Fauna</p> <p>Fishermen's Colonies</p> <p>Folk Culture*, Crafts*</p> <p>Religion</p> <p>Capacity in Environmental Ed.*</p> <p>Tourism*, ecotourism</p> <p>NGOs</p> <p>People</p> <p>EcoForestry*Alternative Medicine*Heritage Program*Comitê Rio das Velhas*Inmates Recovery Program Family Agriculture & Alternative Medicine Program (Buricheck..)</p>
<p>Ibiaí</p> <p>Barra do Guaicuí</p> <p><u>Ibai</u></p> <p>Coordination</p> <p>Nino (devrson@yahoo.com.br) will pass info to Márcia, Cleusa, Cida</p> <p><u>Barra Do Guaicui</u></p> <p>Coordinator of info: Luza (luza@vol.com.br) to Neivia, helke, Dilza, Almirar, Bete</p>	<p>Predatory Fishing</p> <p>Tourism</p> <p>Garbage Accumulation</p> <p>Sedimentation and River Bank Erosion</p> <p>Sewage</p> <p>Deforestation of Buffer Zone</p> <p>Gravel/Sand extraction</p> <p>Burning</p> <p>Lack of Environmental Consciousness, Control Plant Destruction, Illegal informal Dams, Lack of River harbour</p>	<p>Crafts</p> <p>Water</p> <p>Tourism</p> <p>Fishing</p> <p>Religion</p> <p>Folk Culture</p> <p>Regional Fruits</p> <p>Family Agriculture</p> <p>Community Radio Program Barra do Guaicuí"Little Combatants Manuelzão – works with Schools Reconstruction of Riverbank (Ibiaí)</p>

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