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# Health issues in Artisanal and Small-Scale gold mining

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## UNIDO's journey and position



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## Health issues – the basis for early interventions

### **1994 – UNIDO 1<sup>st</sup> ASGM project (Tanzania)**

- Focused on technology transfer.
- Project concluded that more needed to be done to raise awareness on the health effects of mercury use

### **1998 – UNIDO 2<sup>nd</sup> ASGM project in the Philippines**

- Specifically developed to assess health and environment contamination

### **2002 – UNIDO 3<sup>rd</sup> ASGM project in Ghana**

- Assess mercury contamination and introduce technologies



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## Health issues – Results in Ghana

- Water is not contaminated but sediments are
- In all fish sample, the mercury content is higher than the WHO toxicity standards
- Other food tested (plantain, cassava, chicken) not containing much Hg
- The whole mining community is affected by mercury intoxication
- 50% of miners and 25% of non-miners are considered as heavily intoxicated





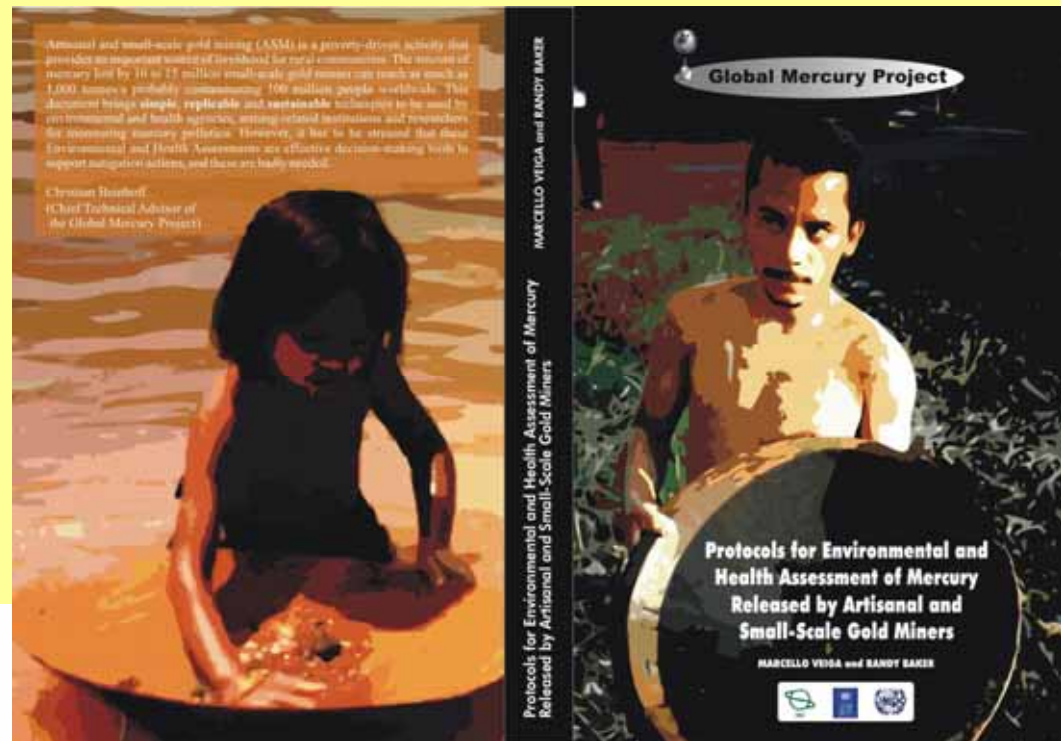
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## Health issues – a main part of the UNIDO - GMP

- One of the project's 7 components
- 20% of the total budget allocation
- Baseline information collected in 8 project sites
- Production of guidelines for Health and Environmental Assessments





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## Health issues – a reason for the Minamata Convention?

- Health (and environmental) effects of mercury were the basis for the development of the Convention
- However, until INC5, there was no specific article on health
- UNIDO GEF-V projects on ASGM (3 approved) all contain health components:
  - Awareness raising campaign for Francophone Africa (with AGC)
  - Baseline information in Ecuador-Peru
  - Monitoring together with the Department of Health of the Philippines



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## Health issues – The way forward

### Collaboration with WHO key to successful intervention on health

Pipeline project in Indonesia

- Finalisation of the National Action Plan (UNIDO – Balifokus),
- Awareness raising campaigns and trainings on mercury risks (WHO) and better techniques (UNIDO)
- Promotion and replication of mercury-free gold extraction techniques (UNIDO - Balifokus)
- Establishment of a mercury intoxication baseline (WHO)
- Establishment of a mercury programme in the Ministry of Health (WHO)



BALIFOKUS







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Thank you for your attention



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