



Good Neighbours programme takes on environmental emphasis

AngloGold Ashanti's Good Neighbours programme is now in its fourth year and continues to bridge the divide between the company and its communities, and to improve the understanding between them. The aim of the programme, which was initiated and is managed by the Community Affairs department at Brasil Mineração, is to develop an understanding among the communities and cities surrounding the operations of the company, its historic, current and future impacts, and what the company is doing about these. It is also an important means for the community to ask questions and to raise issues of concern. The communities concerned are: Santa Barbara, Barão de Cocais, Nova Lima, Sabará and Raposos.

The quarterly meetings held with the neighbourhood associations' leaders and other guests are a key feature of the programme. The meetings are used to discuss topics of community interest, as identified by the leaders in previous meetings, as well as matters relating to the company.

“The idea is to be closer to the communities, so that we can anticipate their problems and assist in developing solutions. In that way we can pre-empt or rapidly deal with any small issues before they become big issues,” says Juliana Thomé, co-ordinator of the Public Relations unit of the company.

“We regularly take important operational information to communities, which ultimately provides a better understanding of what we are doing and what we are going to do,” says Dirlene Taveira Correa, co-ordinator of the Social Action unit at AngloGold Ashanti.

“When necessary, we will seek professional external advice or guidance on specific issues and present that at these meetings,” says Thomé.

Another part of the programme and one which is of increasing importance has been the production and distribution of information packs with detailed environmental information and data, specifically with regard to the quality of air and water in the region surrounding the operations. For example, in Santa Barbara, where Córrego do Sítio mine is located, detailed water quality information is provided as this has proved to be an issue of concern to the community. In Nova Lima, where the company has its metallurgical plant, the information pack provides details of the air quality monitoring programme and its results.

“Our main aim,” says Thomé, “is to provide information on the major issues of concern in an open and transparent way, whether or not these numbers are good or bad”.

The Good Neighbours programme also encompasses a hot line which is an open channel of communication between the communities and the company. On this 24-hour hotline community members may ask questions, register complains or simply report observations on matters relating to the operation of the company. In 2007, a total of 67 calls were logged (see graph).

