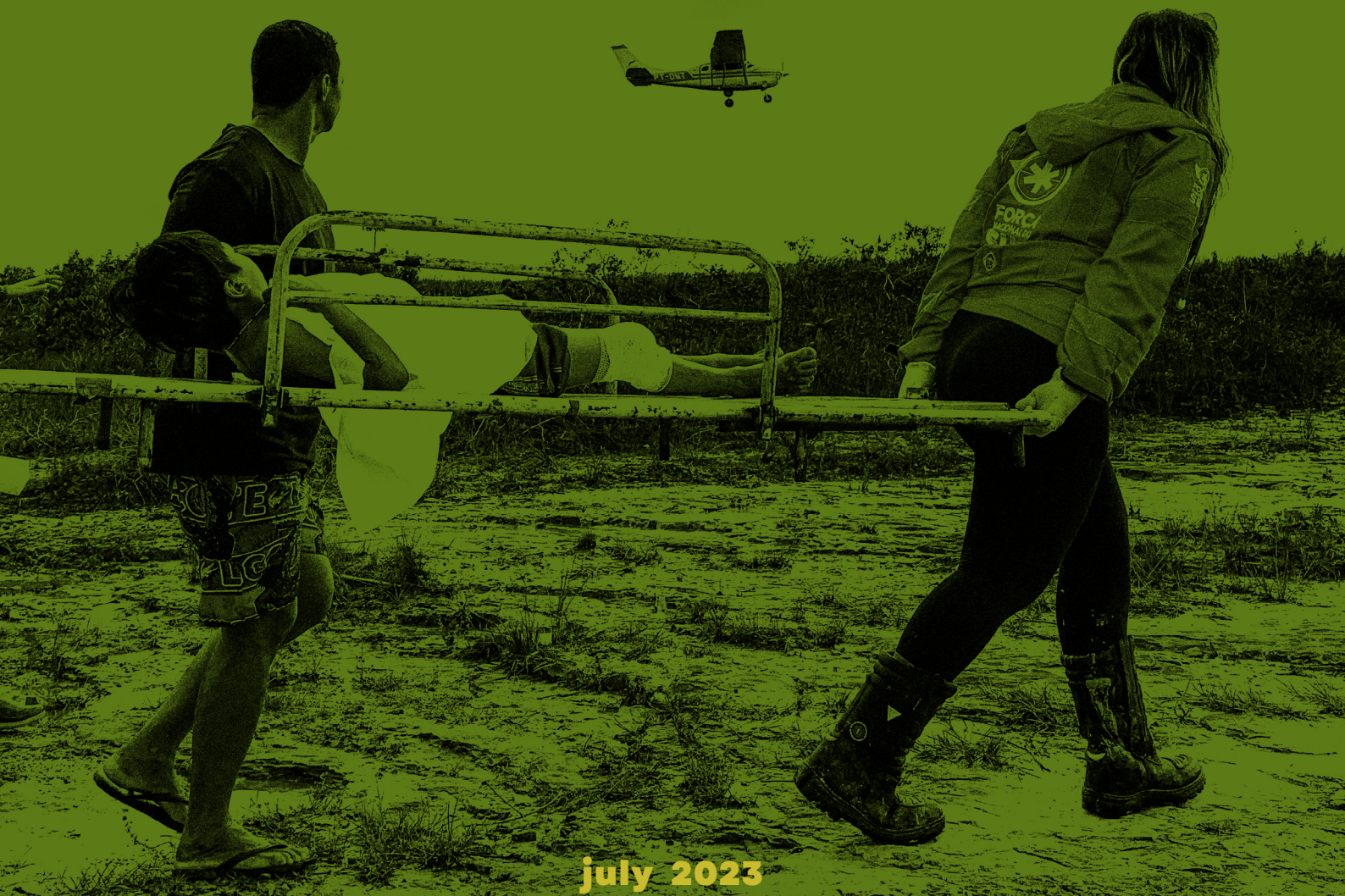


yamaki ni ohotai xoa!

WE STILL SUFFER:

a balance of the first months of
Yanomami emergency



july 2023

So for us even the hour of liberty rang out grave and muffled, and filled our souls with joy and yet with a painful sense of pudency, so that we should have liked to wash our consciences and our memories clean from the foulness that lay upon them; and also with anguish, because we felt that now nothing could ever happen good and pure enough to rub out our past, and that the scars of the outrage would remain within us forever, and in the memories of those who saw it, and in the places where it occurred, and in the stories that we should tell of it.

**Primo Levi,
The Truce.**

TECHNICAL FEATURES

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PRESENTATION

At the first weeks of 2023, on an unprecedented way, a series of episodes and news converged to call attention for a Yanomami¹ humanitarian crisis. While the Ministry of Health was executing an exploratory mission to verify the reason that led the death of three children in the mountain region², pictures of people in condition of severe acute malnutrition spread the social medias, denouncing the frightful lack of health's assistance in the territory.

Few days later, on 20 January, with the great repercussion and the in-place verification of the crisis proportion, the Ministry of Health decides to declare Public Health Emergency of National Importance – ESPIN³ in the Yanomami Indigenous Territory (TIY). Such mechanism seeks to strengthen the response capacity of State in front of a sanitary emergency in national territory. This instrument was created in 2011⁴, and used twice in the “Zica Virus” epidemic and COVID-19 pandemic.

At the same day of ESPIN announcement, the *Sumaúma* news website published a journalist report⁵ that helped the big public to understand the reasons behind the decision, it presented impressive numbers of children deaths that could be evitable under Bolsonaro's government. According the reportage, from 2019 to 2022, 570 indigenous people up to five years old died by causes that could be evicted if the health service worked properly, as pneumonia, diarrhea, malaria and malnutrition. The reportage also highlights that the numbers could be much higher than the ones registered in the Special Secretary for Indigenous Health (SESAI) system since the health centers based in areas of wildcat mining remained closed or without regular assistance during the whole year of 2022. So a child that

was born and have died in those regions, at this period, was probably not accounted as a “live born”, therefore, their existence was completely denied in the official statistics.

Recently, the Federal Public Ministry (MPF) also published a document⁶ that analyses the evitable death trajectory between children under five years old in the Yanomami Indigenous Territory. According to the agency, this kind of death almost doubled in the last 8 years, with peaks in 2020 and 2022. And, analyzing the number of deaths in this age group, considering malnutrition as the main reason of death, it is possible to verify that in the last four years the number of deaths doubled when compared with the four years before.

If the 2022 district census is correct⁷, the indigenous population of Yanomami Indigenous Territory, from 0 to 4 years old, grew under the tendency line for the first time in thirty years. The only moment this behavior has ever been observed was during the “gold race”, between 1987 and 1990, when there was an estimative that 14% of Yanomami population from Roraima have died by diseases associated with wildcat mining⁸.

At that time, in Papiu and Surucucus regions – zones highly impacted by gold exploration –, some communities had 91% of its inhabitants infected by malaria and 70% of the population was committed by breath infections. Many cases of malnutrition have been observed in all age groups, said this, in Surucucus the severe malnutrition cases were reason of 13% of hospitalizations. In Papiu, 43% of the people accounted by the health team at the time had lost one to

1. In the week of January 22 to 28, Google Trends registered a peck of interest of the term Yanomami.

2. Occurred on January 16 to 21, 2023.

3. Ordinance GM/MS N°28, January 20, 2023.

4. Decree N° 7.616, de 17 de Novembro de 2011

5. <https://sumauma.com/nao-estamos-conseguindo-contar-os-corpos/>

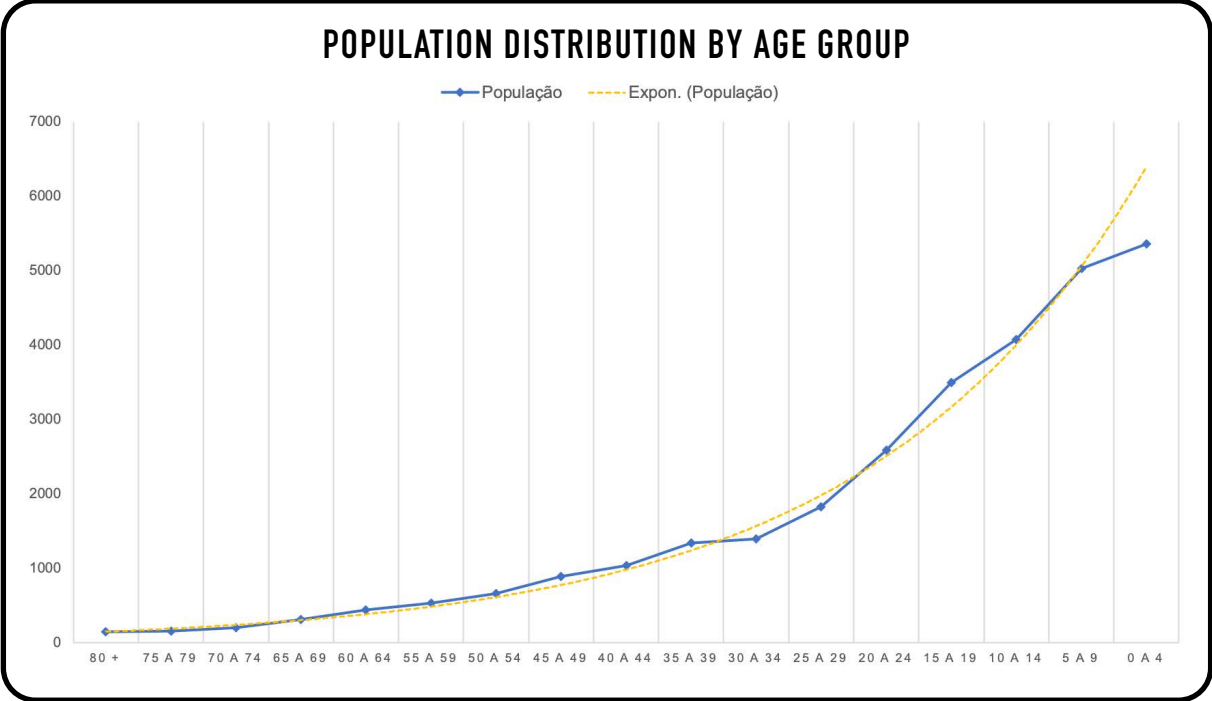
6. Civil Inquiry n° 1.32.000.000084/2023-17

7. There was a total disorganization in the statistics production about the Yanomami health in the last four years, this way, it is necessary to be careful about the use of these information.

8. RAMOS, A. "O papel político das epidemias: o caso Yanomami", *Série Antropologia*, v. 153, p. 2–21, 1993.

seven close relatives between 1987 and 1990, in view that, 13% of the children up to 14 years old had lost their father and/or mother at the same period.

Evidently, the similarity of Yanomami children in the final decade of 1980 and today's children is not a mere frightful coincidence. The infant mortality, the malaria boom and the emergency of a



GRAPH 1 – POPULATION DISTRIBUTION OF YANOMAMI INDIGENOUS TERRITORY BY AGE GROUP

new sanitary crisis could be just understood if added in the equation – besides the bad administration of the district structure and the politics⁹ unmanagement in the indigenous health –, the illegal mining impacts on the Yanomami communities and its synergies and disassistance.

According the Wildcat Mining Monitoring System of Yanomami Indigenous Territory (*Sistema de Monitoramento do Garimpo Ilegal da TI Yanomami*), from october 2018, when the Hutu-

kara Yanomami Association started the monitoring, until December 2022, the area impacted by wildcat mining grew more than 300%, reaching a total of 5053,82 hectares of devastated land. And, considering that before this period the illegal exploration was centered in some zones based in the Mucajaí and Uraricoera rivers, in 2022, it has expanded over new areas, directly affecting almost 60% of Yanomami¹⁰ population.

9. SAKAI, Juliana (Coord.). Interferência política na saúde indígena prejudica atendimento e gera conflito de interesses. *Transparência Brasil*. 2023.

10. Yanomami sob ataque: garimpo ilegal na Terra Indígena Yanomami e propostas para combatê-lo, 2022. Disponível em: <https://acervo.socioambiental.org/sites/default/files/documents/yai00067.pdf>

METHODOLOGY OF WILDCAT MINING MAPPING

Hutukara Association, since October 2018, promotes the wildcat mining monitoring in the Yanomami Indigenous Territory by the interpretation of satellite images of medium and high resolution. Through this system, named Wildcat Mining Monitoring System (*Sistema de Monitoramento do Garimpo Illegal – SMGI*), geoprocessing specialists regularly analyze images from 1 and 2 Sentinel satellites, and Planet constellation, mapping four main types of degraded area: 1) deforestation associated with wildcat; 2) active wildcat mining where the soil appears naked; 3) recently abandoned areas that exhibits an incipient vegetation advance, essentially composed by grassy that covers gravel lands; and 4) small tailings lakes.

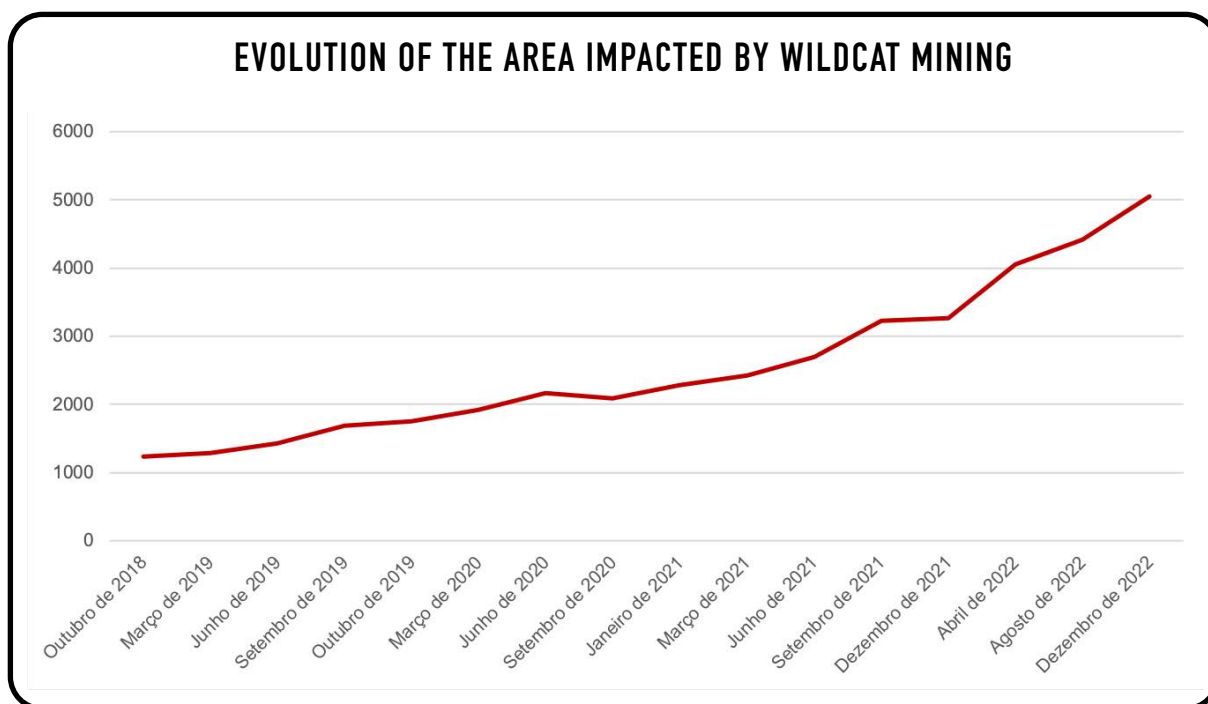
For geoprocessing the radar images, it is used a methodology from Alert System by Deforestation Radar (*Sistema de Indicação por Radar de Desmatamento - SI-RAD*), which consists in a series of algorithms that processes Sentinel-1 Satellite information using the Google Earth Engine platform. In this environment, a time mosaic is produced and it allows observing the changes in the vegetation behavior on three time markers adjusted for analyses.

In both cases, optical and radar images, the interpretation considers not only the geometry and spectral response of the targets but also the spatial context. Therefore, all the mapping is executed observ-

ing the communities location and their family farm lands, and another information about Yanomami territory such as landing strip and health centers, this guarantees the differentiation between removal of the forest cover by traditional agricultural management and deforestation associated with mining exploration.

The mapped scars are frequently validated by overflights. In 2023, however, it was not possible to make an aerial survey, as the Aerospace Actions Command (*Comando de Ações Aeroespaciais - COMAE/FAB*) denied the authorization for monitoring flight, after a formal request of Hutukara Association in June. It is worth to mention that a week before the association formalize the request in the COMAE, the Military Forces organized a visiting to Surucucu, followed by an overflight, with press guests that had an intention to propagandizing a supposed neutralization of the wildcat mining activity¹¹. As we shall see, the aerial images of the overflight would possibly contest that version and, because of it, the Yanomami people were boycotted in their independent monitoring.

11. <https://g1.globo.com/jornal-nacional/noticia/2023/06/27/terra-indigena-yanomami-militares-tem-poderes-para-revisar-e-prender-suspeitos-de-crimes-ambientais.ghtml>



GRAPH 2 – EVOLUTION OF THE AREA IMPACTED BY WILDCAT MINING IN THE YANOMAMI INDIGENOUS TERRITORY FROM OCTOBER 2018 TO DECEMBER 2022

Besides the destruction of the forest, soil and rivers, impacting directly the economy of indigenous families, who depend on fishes, hunting and land for planting, the wildcat mining also directly affects the people's and communities' health and well-being.

In the Yanomami case, there is a direct relation between the wildcat mining boom and the increase in cases of infectious diseases, such as flu, pneumonia and other respiratory infections (COVID-19 and so on). Because of the uncontrolled increase in the movement of strangers in the territories and the Yanomami population low immune resistance for respiratory pathogens, these infections widely affect communities, causing intense physical debility and compromising their livelihood activities. In addition, due to the lack of primary care, flu-like conditions often develop into pneumonia, which is often lethal in already sensitive contexts. Just between 2019 and 2022, for example, 172 people died of pneumonia in the Yanomami Indigenous Territory, according to SIASI data.

Malaria is another disease made worse by wildcat mining¹². In many health centers affected by invasion, such as Palimu, Parima and Auaris, the number of malaria cases has been multiplied by a hundred. According to the official data¹³, in 2020 the Yanomami Indigenous Territory has concentrated almost half of all malaria cases diagnosed in Brazil's Indigenous Lands. This disease, in turn, like respiratory infections, compromises not only the individual health of the patient, but also the economy of communities that depend on family labor to produce their livelihoods. A man who can not work in a family farm land in the dry season because he is weakened by malaria, he will find it more difficult to support himself and his co-residents in the future, thus creating a vicious cycle of malaria, economic crisis and social fragilization. At Parima's region (Arathau health center), for some illustration, besides malaria increase in 1.127% from 2018 to 2020, the communities present some of the worst levels of child malnutrition of all Yanomami Indigenous Territory: approximately 79,34% of the children up to five years old in the region were underweight or very underweight.

12. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC9706895>

13. Recommendation N° 1/2021/MPF/AM e RR

Studies carried out by Oswaldo Cruz Foundation (Fiocruz) have also demonstrated that contamination by mercury from wildcat mining activity has reached worrying numbers in the regions affected by wildcat mining, with irreversible consequences for women's reproductive health and for the full development of children, who are subject to congenital malformations, cerebral palsy and other consequences. At Aracaçá community, a published study made by Fiocruz have demonstrated that more than 90% of the village population presented mercury index in the body that was above the standards considered safe for human health¹⁴.

In terms of social impacts, wildcat mining, through the entry of alcoholic beverages, drugs and firearms, is also an important vector of social disruption. Organized denunciations made by Hutukara Association from 2021 to 2022 shows that in many regions the wildcat miners approach strategy is by grooming young people with promises of goods, weapons and alcoholic beverages. With no understanding the real consequences of this "alliance", this group begins to defend the interests of the invaders, their opponents are usually people with more experience and who are responsible for the collective advisement and for the work of social cohesion of local groups. Often, these disagreements lead to conflicts, and frequently to episodes of violence.

Once an armed conflict between communities has broken out, the situation can last for years, causing a vicious cycle that, in addition to human losses, produces a scenario of permanent insecurity, as the one observed at Parafuri. People are afraid to go out for hutting, for working in the more distant family farm land and moving around the river, which also has a profound impact on families' productive systems.



PHOTO 1 – CHILDREN ARMED BY WILDCAT MINERS AT XITEI, 2023. CREDIT: CLEDINALDO SANTOS

Finally, it is impossible to draw the current framework of Yanomami Indigenous Territory without mention the frightening escalation of violence against indigenous people and communities by the wildcat miners. As it grows and expands into new areas, wildcat mining looks for armed militias associated with criminal factions in order to impose themselves and guarantee territorial control. Because of this situation, the Yanomami and Ye'kwana peoples are prevented from moving freely around in the Indigenous Territory under risk of been murdered. In this context, death threats and humiliation are frequent.

In one of the most terrifying incidents of 2021, the series of attacks on the Palimiu communities, the involvement of agents of the First Capital Command (Primeiro Comando da Capital – PCC) in illegal gold exploration was made explicit for the first time in the Yanomami context. For months, the criminals systematically attacked the communities on the riverside of the Uraricoera river, openly shooting at women and children.

14. <https://informe.ensp.fiocruz.br/noticias/39388>

JUDICIAL DECISIONS THAT HAVE BEEN BREACHED BY THE GOVERNMENT

- Public Civil Action 1001973-17.2020.4.01.4200. In decision on 03/07/2020, the Federal Regional Court of the 1ª Region decided that the Union presented in 5 days and implemented in 10 days a plan for the extrusion of the Yanomami Indigenous Territory. After a series of versions deemed insufficient, a minimally satisfactory plan was only approved on 24/11/2021, however, the plan was never carried out and the violence in the Yanomami Indigenous Territory increased.
- Public Civil Action 1001973-17.2020.4.01.4200. On 12/05/2021 was ordered the Union to guarantee the security of the Palimiu community until the extrusion was accomplished – the National Public Security Force, however, remained in the region intermittently, for short periods of a few days to provide security for health missions, letting the community vulnerable for new wildcat miners attacks, that continued to occur without further obstacles.
- Public Civil Action 1000551-12-2017.4.01.4200. In provisional compliance with the sentence was ordered the reopening of Walopali, Serra da Estrutura, and Korekorema BAPes. There have been successive delays in complying with the decision. The Korekorema BAPE (Uraricoera) was only rebuilt at the beginning of 2023.
- Claims of Non-Compliance with a Fundamental Precept 709. On July 8, 2020, the Federal Supreme Court ordered that the Union presented the plan for the protection and implementation of sanitary barriers in 33 territories with isolated and recently contacted indigenous people, as well as isolate the invaders in the Yanomami Indigenous Territory. On May 24, 2021, the Federal Supreme Court ordered the Union to immediately adopt “all necessary measures to protect the life, health and safety of the indigenous populations inhabiting the Yanomami and Munduruku Indigenous Territories, in the face of the threat of violent attacks and the presence of invaders, must take all necessary actions and remain on the territory as long as the risk is present”. It also ordered the Union to refrain from “publicizing its actions, refraining from disclosing dates and other elements, in order to ensure its effectiveness, all of this could compromise the secrecy of the operation, even the generic information”, since publishing and publicizing the dates of operations against illegal activities was interrupting the effectiveness of the actions. The Articulation of Indigenous Peoples of Brazil (APIB) indicated priority actions to try to contain the wildcat mining invasion, as well as indicated the geographical coordinates of several aerial strips used exclusively by wildcat miners, but nothing has been done by the Federal Government.

Nevertheless, it was not for lack of denouncements that the Yanomami situation got where it is. Only Hutukara Association, between 2021 and 2022, sended more than 37 letters about all the abuses committed in the Yanomami Indigenous Territory, without obtaining adequate and efficient responses to the serious violations reported. The same happened with decisions made by STF itself and the Federal Court for the Union in order to formulate and implement territorial protection and health care measures in the Yanomami territory. All ignored or disrespected by the last government.

At international level, a resolution by the Inter-American Court of Human Rights¹⁵ and requests of adoption of emergency measures to deal with the crisis, made by Inter-American Commission on Human Rights¹⁶, were also disregarded.

So, with hope, the Yanomami and Ye'kwana peoples received the news that Brazil, through a democratic process, decided to put an end in their nightmare, by electing a new president. This hope was strengthened by new government's mobilization in the first month of the current administration.

However, the challenges posed by the current Yanomami crisis cannot be underestimated. As we shall see in this report, despite the efforts already made by the federal administration, the road to territorial and sanitary recovering of Yanomami Indigenous Territory is longer and many adjustments need to be done that a minimum of dignity is restored.

This report aims to critically examine the federal government's actions in the first months of 2023, in order to contribute to its improvement. With this in mind, we begin the document by analyzing the measures taken to combat wildcat mining, highlighting the logistic congestion strategy, its results and difficulties, such as the flexibilization of airspace control for two months, followed by an evaluation of health care actions which, due to a series of factors that will be explored throughout the report, showed very worrying results, given the trajectory of deaths and the lack of control of malaria in the territory.

15. <https://www.bbc.com/portuguese/brasil-64388813>

16. <https://noticias.uol.com.br/colunas/jamil-chade/2023/01/25/bolsonaro-foi-alertado-sobre-risco-de-dano-irreparavel-ao-povo-yanomami.htm>

TERRITORIAL PROTECTION

In June of this year, the government came in public to celebrate the end of wildcat mining alerts in the Yanomami Indigenous Territory¹⁷, after the Federal Police monitoring system was more than 30 days without detect changes in the forest covering that indicates the opening of new areas for mineral exploration. Some authorities even declared that this effectively meant the end of illegal activity at Yanomami Indigenous Territory, after just over four months of operation.

Unfortunately, the absence of new alerts signals does not mean complete wildcat mining neutralization. First, because the rainy season, that begins in the end of April and has its peak in July, can make it very difficult to verify changes in the forest using remote sensing, because of the intense cloud covering in some zones, and, second, some wildcat mining may be active in already deforested areas, which is more probable due the current situation.

Our monitoring indicates that, combining area reports with satellite image interpretation, even though there is a significant wildcat mining activity reduction in the Yanomami Indigenous Territory in this first semester, yet, there is persistence in some exploration centers that resists the actions of security forces, besides the return of some wildcat mining groups that have managed to hide their equipment during operations.

In June, Hutukara Association received denouncements about wildcat mining activity on the Apiaú and Couto Magalhães rivers. While in the first river the Yanomami people said they did not know about any operation in the site and for that, the intensity of wildcat miners circulation suffered small changes since the begging of the years; in the second river Yanomami people informed that, after successive operations, the wildcat miners presence at Papiu has significantly decreased, but recently small groups started an attempt to return to former camps.

Below is the transcript of part of the Papiu theri denouncement:

We, Papiu leaders, would like to denounce the return of wildcat miners in our region. Despite the authorities and president Lula have already cleaned the forest, the wildcat miners continue to return, for this reason we are sending these words. Although there is demarcation, they are coming back by the rivers. We want you to remove these intruders.

We do not invite them [the wildcat miners to work in our region]. They terrify at Rangel airstrip, they continued by boat by the Couto de Magalhães river (Hero u), stopped at Marahau community (Papiu region/ Maloca Papiu) and they entered the forest. They arrived alone, guided by the GPS. By 2022 they had arrived [in our region], they came from Surucucu region, the others from Xopathau. Those who landed in Xopathau arrived by the forest guided by GPS. After arriving, they opened a clearing and started to terrorize. They're about an hour and a half from Papiu's health center.

This situation, gradual return of intruders' small groups after specific operations, was also reported at Parafuri, Xitei and Homoxi regions, where the Yanomami people informed that wildcat miners continue to work nearby the villages, being supplied with food and fuel by regular helicopter flights.

17. <https://www.cnnbrasil.com.br/nacional/nao-ha-mais-alertas-de-garimpo-ilegal-no-territorio-yanomami-diz-pf/>

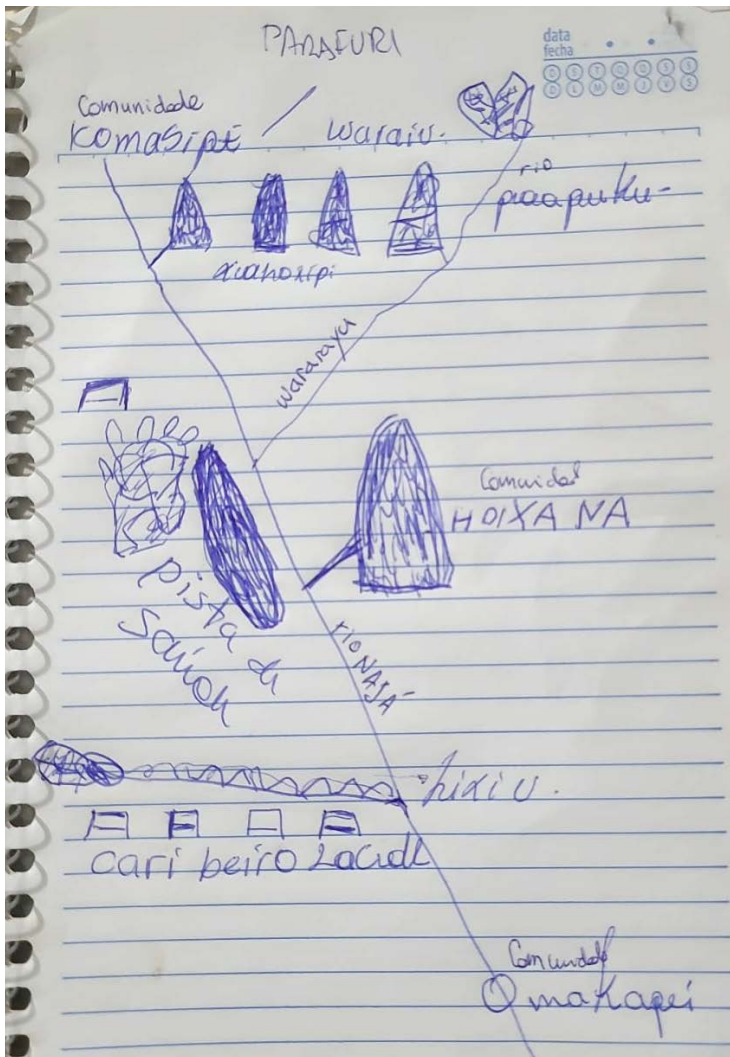


PHOTO 2 - SKETCH OF THE DENUNCIATION OF WILDCAT MINERS AT PARAFURI.

Similarly, there are reports of clandestine flights over Auaris skies coming from the Venezuelan border. It seems that some groups have changed their logistical base to Santa Clara de Uairén and keep fulfilling border wildcat mining, like in Caura basin, and upper Metacuni river, nearby the Sanöma people from Hokomawé community, and others¹⁸.

Also, in the Planet images, from 2023 June, is possible to verify the persistence of some campsites along the Uraricoera river, even though it is significantly reduced due to operations in the region.

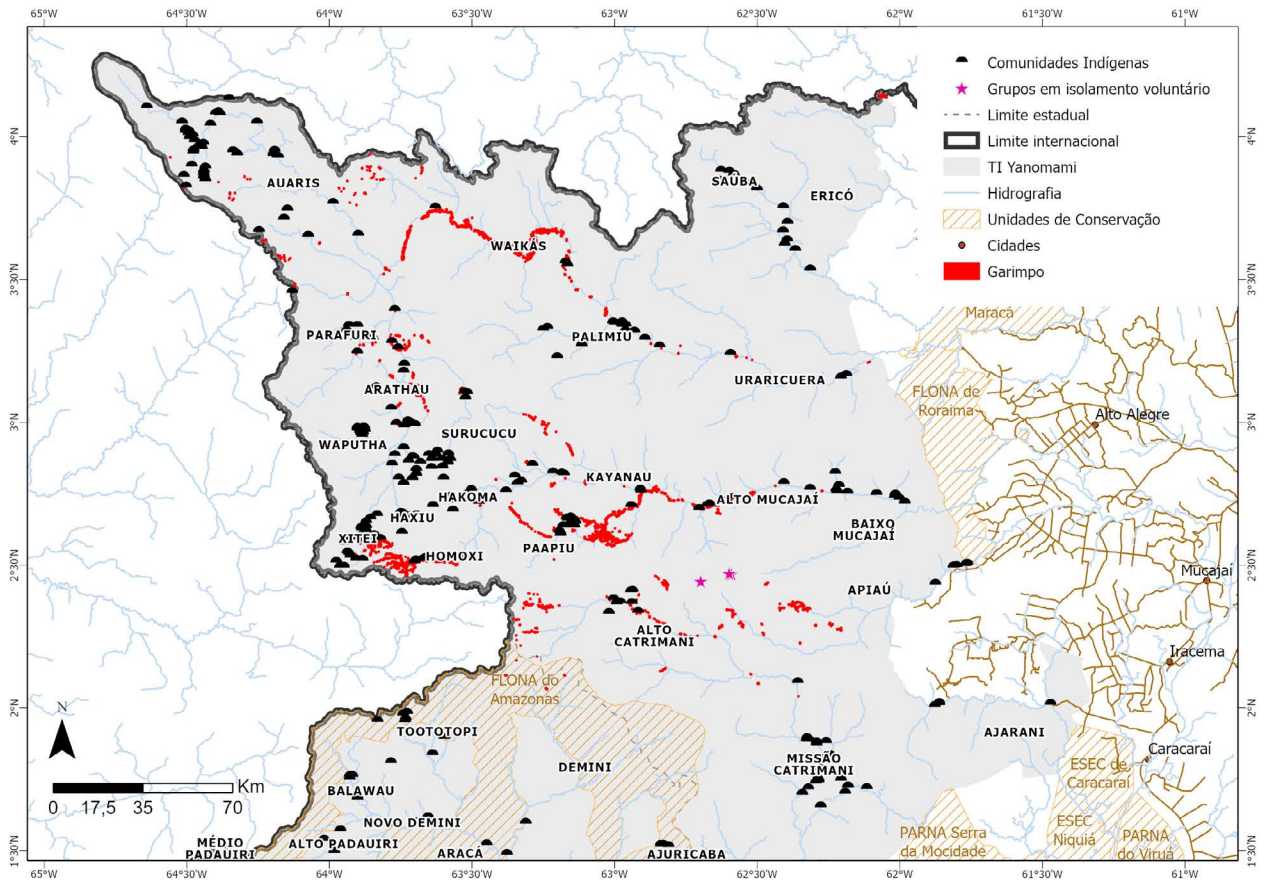
18. <https://debatesindigenas.org/notas/233-mineria-ilegal-venezuela-salvese-quien-pueda.html>



IMAGES 1 AND 2 – WILDCAT MINING CAMPSITE IN THE URARICOERA BANKS IN DECEMBER 2022 AND IN JUNE 2023. A SIGNIFICANT REDUCTION IN THE NUMBER OF STALLS IS OBSERVED, BUT NOT THEIR COMPLETE EXTINCTION.

According to SMGI, from January to June of 2023, the wildcat mining continued to increase in the Yanomami Indigenous Territory, adding 219 hectares to the total already impacted. This number represents an increase of 4% compared to December of 2022, when the total impacted area overcame the mark of 5000 hectares. But when compared with last year's behavior, when the increase in the same period was more than 30%, there is a significant downward tendency.

In fact, what was observed in most of the regions was the stabilization of a large part of the forest scars, with signs of recent changes that were quite punctual. None of the regions saw an increase of more than 50 hectares, with the largest absolute increases in the regions of Kayanau, Waikás, Alto Mucajaí and Auaris, respectively.



MAP 1 – TOTAL AREA DEGRADED BY WILDCAT MINING IN THE YANOMAMI INDIGENOUS TERRITORY

Below we present the Xitei and Homoxi radar images that illustrate this behavior. In blue, the areas where it appears that the activity has been

temporarily neutralized and, in red, the areas with an indication of recent change.

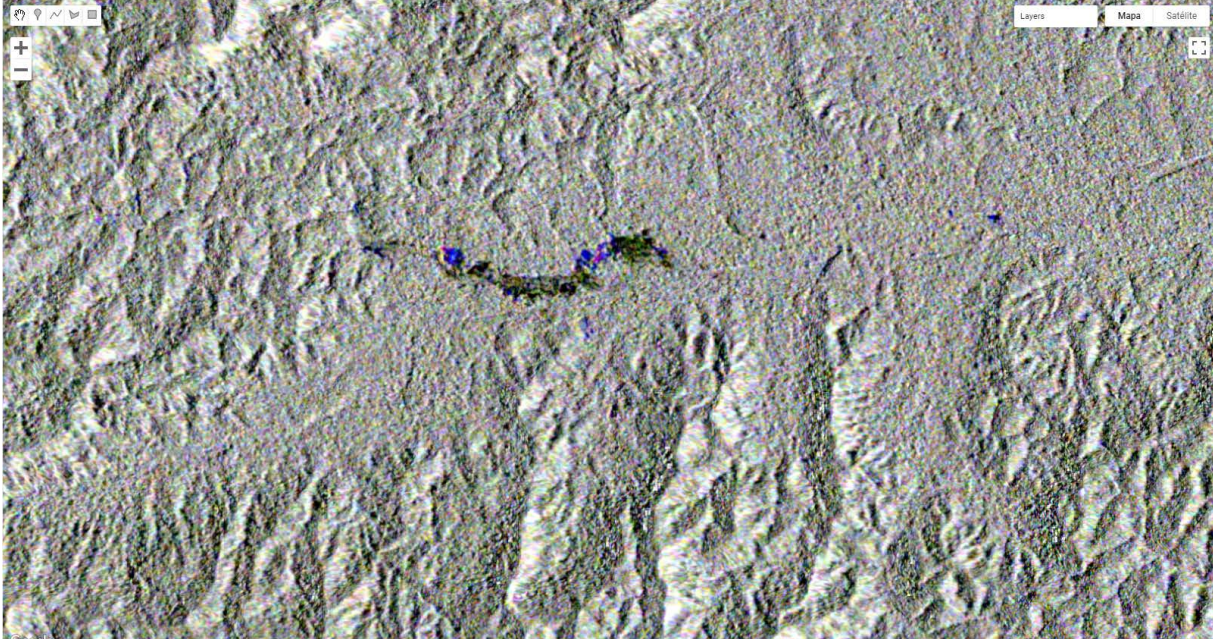


IMAGE 3 – WILDCAT MINING SCAR IN THE UPPER CATRIMANI ON RADAR IMAGE

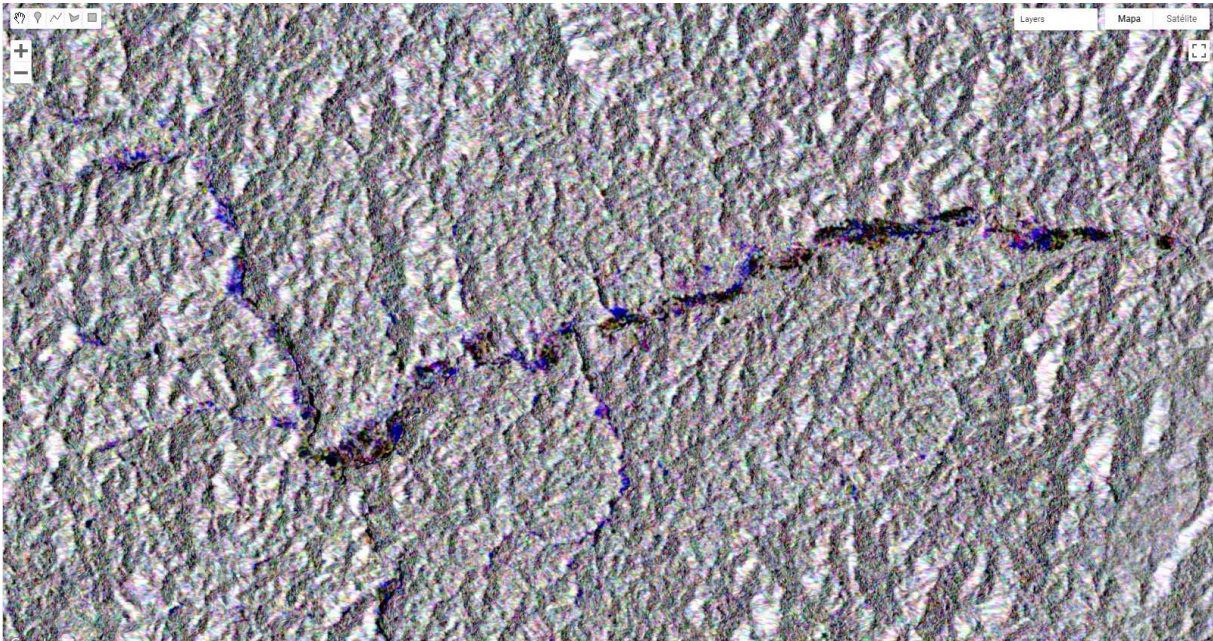
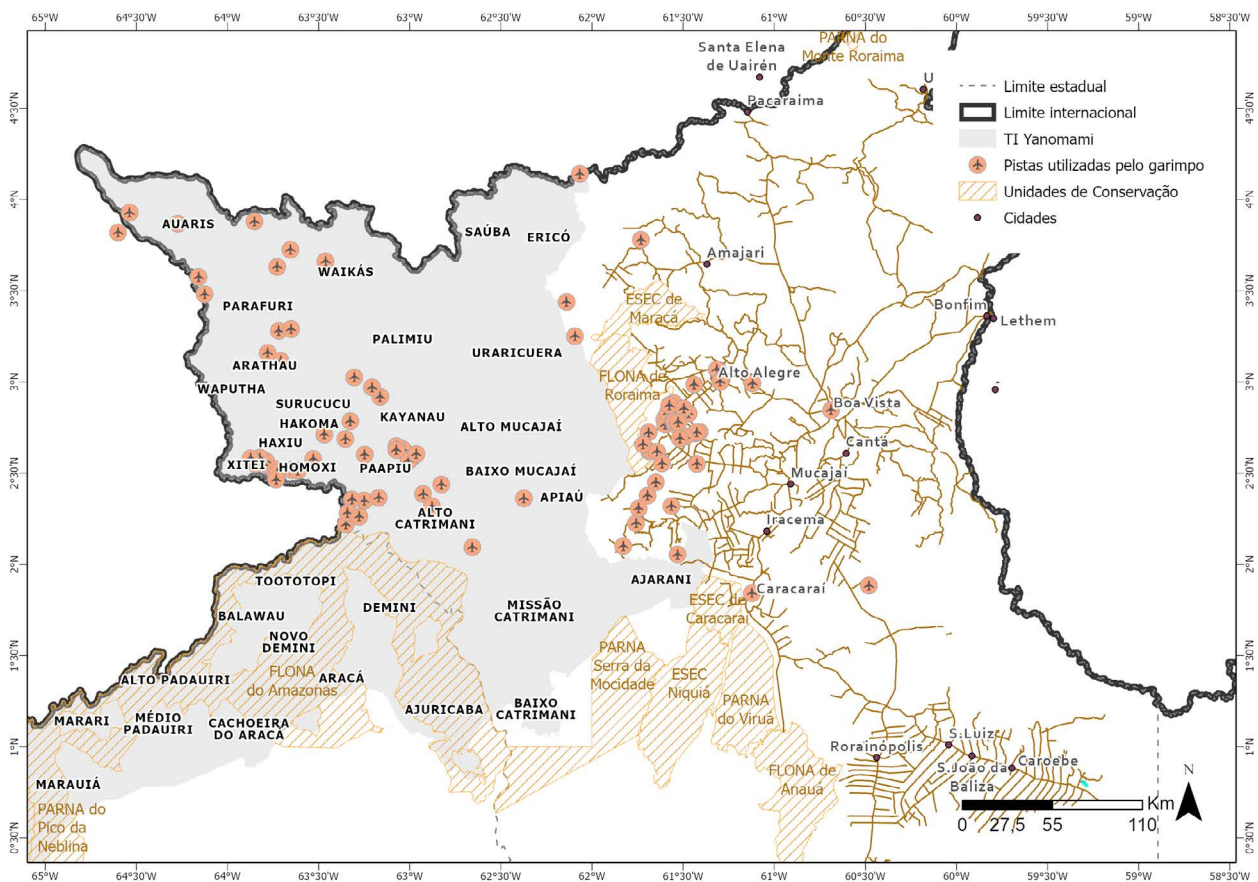


IMAGE 4 - WILDCAT MINING SCAR IN THE HOMOXI ON RADAR IMAGE

Undoubtedly, the most efficient actions to combat the wildcat mining in the Yanomami Indigenous Territory, adopted by the government, were the ones related to the “logistic congestion” strategy, something that indigenous associations had been calling attention to for a long time, with particular emphasis on controlling airspace and blocking river and land accesses. On the other hand, even though the strategy had positive responses, there are certain aspects of the way it was adopted and certain decisions that could have been made differently, perhaps with more positive impacts over time.

Among the points that deserve critical examination are the decision of not to completely close off access to the Yanomami Indigenous Territory for the wildcat mining logistic and the one to keep open three “corridors” in order to make it possible for criminals¹⁹ to leave spontaneously along two months (from February 6th to April 6th).

19. <https://www.cnnbrasil.com.br/nacional/cerca-de-300-garimpeiros-ja-deixaram-a-terra-indigena-yanomami/>



MAP 2 – AIRSTRIPS USED BY WILDCAT MINING LOGISTIC

On January 30th, the president signed the decree N° 11.405, which provides measures for the combat of the Public Health Emergency of National Importance (ESPIN) and wildcat mining in the Yanomami territory for the adoption by federal administration agencies. In this decree, it was established the creation of an Identification Zone of Air Defence (*Zona de Identificação de Defesa Aérea – ZIDA*) for the access control

during the period of ESPIN. However, the Operation “Yanomami Shield” (*Escudo Yanomami*) was able to maintain a total restriction of wildcat mining flights only for six days, after pressure from Roraima parliamentarians related with the wildcat miners movement²⁰.

20. <https://www.folhabv.com.br/cotidiano/movimento-se-reune-com-senador-e-pede-ajuda-para-retirar-garimpeiros/>

While this option reduced the costs of the combat actions to the activity from the State side, by the other hand, it allowed many financiers to take off their equipment of the Indigenous Territory, without damages (see the total number of confiscated and destroyed aircrafts) and embarrassments (with repercussions for investigations into the activities of these criminal groups). There are rumors that some of the main wildcat mining “owners” had small losses with the actions and moved their operations to Guyana, waiting for the efforts of the Indigenous Land Protection to diminish and then return to the Yanomami Indigenous Territory. Moreover, the strategy of the corridors has helped to capitalize on groups bet-

ting on the exploration of the wildcat mining logistic, such as airplane pilots, boatmen and drivers²¹. According a report from *O Globo* journal, some wildcat miners even paid R\$15,000.00 to leave the territory during this period²².

21. <https://g1.globo.com/rr/roraima/noticia/2023/02/07/garimpeiros-reclamam-do-alto-preco-de-voos-ilegais-e-ocupam-pista-clandestina-na-terra-yanomami.ghtml>
 22. Sassine. V. Mercado ilegal lucra com fuga de garimpeiros da terra yanomami. *Folha de S. Paulo | Cotidiano*. 18 de fevereiro de 2023.

CONFISCATED AND/OR DESTROYED MATERIAL	OPERATIONS 2022	OPERATIONS 2023²³
Aircrafts and vessel	134 (22 aircrafts destroyed, 14 aircrafts interdicted, 89 aircrafts confiscated, 9 vessel)	41
Barges	10	112
Engines and machinery	101 (91 engines destroyed, and 10 boat engines confiscated)	415
Power generators	16 (14 generators destroyed, 2 generators confiscated)	90
Demobilized campsites	No information	327

TABLE 1 - COMPARISON OF SOME OPERATIONS RESULTS IN 2022 AND 2023

Criminals associated with human trafficking were also able to continue profiting from the prolonged opening of the “corridors”, as revealed by a teenager rescued by the Federal Police in a

sexual exploitation situation²⁴. The fifteen-year-old teenager was lured to work as a cook at the Couto Magalhães wildcat mining shortly after

23. Results by June 27, according to journalist report: <https://g1.globo.com/rr/roraima/noticia/2023/06/27/acoes-contra-garimpos-reduzem-em-90percent-voos-clandestinos-na-terra-yanomami-e-somam-42-toneladas-de-cassiterita-apreendida.ghtml>

24. <https://www1.folha.uol.com.br/cotidiano/2023/03/exploracao-sexual-em-garimpo-na-terra-yanomami-envolve-varias-adolescentes-e-ameacas-diz-conselho.shtml>

Operation Liberation²⁵ was launched and entered the territory using one of the “humanitarian corridors”. At the time she arrived at the wildcat mining site, she was told that she would have to prostitute herself in order to pay for her transportation and living expenses. According to the teenager’s account, she and other young women were forced to do up to sixteen sex works a night in the cabarets at the Yanomami Indigenous Territory, being coerced into sex works even during their menstrual period.

Even the Ibama’s agents, responsible for the operations on the territory, criticized the maintenance of the corridors for so long²⁶. According to the agents’ assessment, the corridors have made it possible for certain groups to continue their economic exploitation, with direct consequences for the safety of civil servants. Since they set up a barrier on the Uraricoera river, there have been at least five attacks by heavily armed miners who have tried to break through the river blockade²⁷.

Besides the attacks on the officials at the barrier, there have also been armed attacks during inspections in the campsites. One of these happened during an Ibama operation on the Couto Magalhaães river²⁸, fortunately without any injuries, and another during an operation on the Uraricoera river, when four wildcat miners died after a shooting with the Federal Highway Police (*Polícia Rodoviária Federal – PRF*)²⁹. In the occasion, the PRF confiscated an arsenal of weapons and two holographic sights, which, according to a video posted on social media, were intended to shoot down security forces’ aircraft and helicopters³⁰.

Cases of violence against the indigenous people were also recorded during the period of “peaceful” departure of the wildcat miners. On February 5, wildcat miners at the Jeremias airstrip, Homoxi region, attacked two Yanomami people from Haxiu. One of them died after being shot in the stomach and another was taken to Boa Vista with serious injuries³¹. There have also been reports that two other indigenous people have been killed in the Parima region³².

At the end of April, wildcat miners ambushed three indigenous people from the Uxiú community while they were preparing for a funeral ceremony. Wildcat miners shot multiple times against the indigenous people, while traveling by boat on the Mucajaí river. Two Ninam people were seriously injured and one died of a gunshot wound to the forehead. According to reports gathered in the territory, the wildcat miners embarked at the port of Sítio 14 – notorious logistic point of wildcat mining in Mucajaí – and crossed the Protection Base of Funai Walopali (*Base de Proteção da Funai Walopali*) without being intercepted by the region’s security forces. In addition, the indigenous people from Mucajaí informed that the pilot of the boat had been “authorized” to transport the wildcat miners in the region in order to help remove them³³.

A few days later, more eight bodies were found near the Yanomami’s community that had been attacked³⁴. It is not known yet whether these deaths are linked to the Uxiú attacks, or if they are the result of conflicts between the wildcat miners themselves, or possible disputes between rival factions.

25. Operation Liberation was launched by the Federal Police on February 9, in partnership with Ibama and Funai. Its aim was to carry out inspections and crack down on wildcat mining in the Yanomami Indigenous Territory.

26. <https://g1.globo.com/politica/noticia/2023/02/24/corredores-aereos-em-terra-yanomami-podem-servir-a-garimpeiros-dizem-fiscais-do-ibama.ghtml>

27. <https://agenciabrasil.ebc.com.br/geral/noticia/2023-05/base-do-ibama-e-alvo-de-quinto-atentado-em-terra-indigena-yanomami>

28. <https://g1.globo.com/rr/roraima/noticia/2023/04/01/ibama-sofre-terceiro-ataque-a-tiros-durante-fiscalizacao-contra-garimpeiros-na-terra-yanomami.ghtml>

29. <https://noticias.r7.com/cidades/homem-morto-em-acao-contra-garimpo-ilegal-em-area-yanomami-era-integrante-do-pcc-02052023>

30. <https://g1.globo.com/rr/roraima/noticia/2023/05/02/garimpeiros-faccionado-morto-em-confronto-na-terra-yanomami-ostentava-e-armas-e-habilidade-com-tiro.ghtml>

31. <https://www1.folha.uol.com.br/cotidiano/2023/02/pf-faz-diligencia-na-terra-indigena-e-aponta-um-yanomami-morto-e-outro-ferido-por-garimpeiro.shtml>

32. <https://www.metropoles.com/brasil/garimpeiros-matam-tres-indigenas-yanomami-em-roraima-diz-lideranca>

33. <https://g1.globo.com/rr/roraima/noticia/2023/02/12/governo-federal-libera-acesso-de-barcos-para-retirada-de-garimpeiros-da-terra-yanomami.ghtml>

34. <https://oglobo.globo.com/brasil/noticia/2023/05/escala-da-violencia-na-terra-ianomami-pf-encontra-8-corpos-na-selva.ghtml>



PHOTO 3 AND 4 – PHOTO REPRODUCTION OF WILDCAT MINERS IN THE YANOMAMI INDIGENOUS TERRITORY THAT ARE PUBLISHED IN THE SOCIAL MEDIA³⁵

Another point of attention, which must be observed in the territorial protection actions of the first few months, is the issue of the Funai Protection Bases (*Bases de Proteção – BAPes*). It is known that efforts to set up and maintain these structures have been concentrated on the Uraricoera and Mucajaí rivers, which is quite understandable, considering that these two rivers concentrate most of the river logistics of the current wildcat mining operation. However, this concentration risks producing the effect of “leakage” into other river channels, such as those of the Catrimani, Apiaú and Uraricaá rivers, and it would therefore be essential to devise structures for monitoring and inspecting these zones.

We still have no news of increased pressure in the Uraricaá river, but, in Apiaú and Catrimani, community reports suggest that the invasion persists, although in Catrimani it happens on a smaller scale, by means of barges, in the lower reaches of the river, and in Apiaú, with a high level of movement of people and equipment without any supervision at the edge of the territory. According to the latest testimony from one of Apiaú’s leaders, there has even been a recent influx of new backhoes into the local wildcat mining sites.

This information worries us because possibly the paths used by the invaders to move heavy equipment in the Apiaú are related with the road

branch identified by remote sensing and confirmed by an overflight after a denouncement from the Alto Catrimani communities, on November 10th, 2022³⁶.

The approximately 150-kilometer track entered the Yanomami Indigenous Territory nearby the Apiaú river, and continued along the watercourse until it crossed into the Catrimani basin, where it passed less than 15 km from the village of the group in voluntary isolation known as Moxihatëtëma.

35. <https://g1.globo.com/rr/roraima/noticia/2023/05/02/garimpeiro-faccionado-morto-em-confronto-na-terra-yanomami-ostentava-e-armas-e-habilidade-com-tiro.ghtml>

36. It is not recent the denouncements from Yanomami people about the existence of a road branch used by wildcat miners in the Yanomami Indigenous Territory. Since 2019, at least, there have been rumors about small trails used by quad bikes to transport fuel and other supplies. However, only after September 2022 signals from the road branch could be detected by remote sensing.

According Davi Kopenawa, this road branch is probably the resumption of an old wildcat miners’ trail opened in the 1980s, which gave access to “Camlabacho” wildcat mining site. At the time, the trail connected the Apiaú Settlement Project (PA Apiaú) to the Cambalacho wildcat mining site, a journey that took weeks on foot.

TRANSLATION OF TRANSCRIPT OF RADIO MESSAGE OF NOVEMBER 14, 2022:

Boa Vista, November 14, 2022.

We, Yanomami people from Alto Catrimani I, reported that three electric excavators had arrived here. That's why I'm communicating on the radio. I want it publicized immediately. We leaders are warning you, the Hutukara directors.

You, from Hutukara, perhaps think that X is lying. But we need to urgently notify the Federal Police, with Funai's help, to remove the wildcat miners from there. This way they come quickly. If it takes a long time, our homes will be destroyed. The children are scared and running away. That's why we, their parents, are worried.

Because they don't know about the excavators that arrived here in the Alto Catrimani. We didn't know it could get here in this region. The first day one excavator arrived, and the next day two more. It's true.

That's my information, you have to do a meeting. They need you, because you need to see. I'm not fooling you. It came to us, the Alto Catrimani people, a road that a backhoe came from. We're all worried because we didn't know that three excavators would arrive here. The wildcat miners weren't invited to come, but they are here.

The presence of a road like this poses numerous risks to the protection of the Yanomami Indigenous Territory. The most evident of these is the possibility of reducing the logistical costs of wildcat mining, so that the consolidation of land access could facilitate the entry of supplies, greatly expanding the operating capacity of illegal activity. Similarly, land access would allow the entry of heavy machinery, changing the technical standard of wildcat mining, which today is basically structured on the model of “*bico de jato*” hydraulic pumps.

Such technological change already occurred on other territories like Munduruku and Kayapó Indigenous Territories, the second and first Indigenous Territories most affected by wildcat mining, respectively. In these areas, what we have seen is an explosive increase in the size of the degraded area and an absurd gain in productivity, which makes the activity much more difficult to combat, because even with repeated operations involving the destruction of machinery, the gains allowed by exploitation with backhoes compensate for the damage in the very short term. In addition, tractors and excavators not only help to remove soil for mineral extraction, but they also help to build infrastructure, contributing to the development of construction sites and their expansion.



PHOTO 5 – BACKHOES IN OPERATION AT YANOMAMI INDIGENOUS TERRITORY, ON DECEMBER 2022.
CREDIT: VALENTINA RICARDO (HAY/GREENPEACE)

One of the justifications for the reinforced operation of only two Protection Bases in a great territory like Yanomami Territory is probably the low availability of human resources to support control and surveillance actions. Since agencies like Ibama and Funai were completely scrapped in Bolsonaro's government. But in there lies another strategic mistake in the planning of the actions to remove the intruders: relegating the armed forces initially only to the role of logistical support for the other institutions.

If the involvement of the Armed Forces in the execution of preventive and repressive actions inside the Yanomami Indigenous Territory had been planned from the start, it might have been possible to expand the capacity of the Protection Bases (BAPEs) and even to plan the instal-

lation of new structures at other strategic points, freeing up, for example, specialized groups of Ibama and of the Federal Highway Police to carry out more actions at illegal campsites and construction sites, instead of remaining immobilized at Mucajaí and Uraricoera barriers.

Only on 21 June the decree N° 11.405 was changed, finally assigning the Ministry of Defense the "execution of preventive and repressive actions against cross-border and environmental crimes, on the land border and in inland waters, by promoting patrols, searches of people, land vehicles, vessels and aircraft, and arrests in flagrante delicto, among others".



PHOTO 6 – INSIDE VIEW OF THE ARMED FORCES HELICOPTER. CREDIT: GUILHERME GNIPPER

But, in our analysis, the main criticism of the strategy adopted by the government to conduct the operations is not the flexibilization of air control, or the reduced action in the BAPES, but the lack of coordination³⁷, that could ensure a close dialogue with indigenous organizations and communities, and also articulate command and control actions with humanitarian aid and health care attention.

In this sense, the ideal flow of actions aimed at stabilizing the sanitary and political situation of communities would be: i) operations to neutralize the wildcat mining; ii) support for vulnerable communities with basic food baskets, agricultural tools and seeds; iii) conducting health care service missions; iv) re-establishment of the regular health care service.

Despite the reasonableness of such a sequence, no such coordinated action has been recorded in any of the Yanomami Indigenous Territories' sensitive regions. This means that most of them still have a high degree of socio-economic and health vulnerability, without proper emergency support or regularization of health care.

37. On January 20, 2023, the National Coordination Committee to Combat the Lack of Sanitary Assistance for Populations in Yanomami Territory was set up, coordinated by the Civil House of the Presidency of the Republic, but it had much more to do with outlining general action strategies.

**EXCERPT FROM A SPEECH MADE BY AN UXIU FEMALE LEADER,
DURING THE YANOMAMI AND YE'KWANA LEADERS FORUM,
ON JULY, 2023, MATURACÁ, YANOMAMI INDIGENOUS TERRITORY.**

My forest is not well. Those that you call garimpeiros (wildcat miners) are very close to my house, they killed our teachers, that's why I'm not happy. I don't want garimpo (wildcat mining). That's why I'm here, to fight for our Yanomami territory! The garimpeiro distributes alcoholic beverages, because of it the Yanomami people is dying and coming to an end, that's why I want to say this to you all. I don't want my people to come to an end! At Kayanau there have already ended themselves in alcohol beverages, they killed themselves. You don't know what I'm talking about, you have never seen this. My forest is totally destroyed, we have no more food. The garimpeiros are mixing with the Yanomami people. They also killed the AIS.

Where my brothers live the garimpeiros keep coming, the airplane do not stop to land there. I can't visit my relatives, because I'm afraid. The garimpeiros are in the way, so we can't walk.

We have no health. Everybody is sick. I'm sad because they killed my brothers, they are all skinny, with a big stomach. In the forest there is no food, because the forest is destroyed.

That's why I came here to talk with the authorities.

HUMANITARIAN AID

In the context of the Yanomami emergency, the actions of delivering basic food baskets and tool kits have been called “humanitarian aid”. And, in fact, these activities would be essential to help the socio-economic stabilization of the most vulnerable communities, if they were being carried out correctly. Which they weren’t.

The situation of food insecurity is not widespread in the Yanomami territory, but has increased enormously in recent years due to a combination of factors, ranging from the destruction of natural resources by illegal exploration to the disorganization of production due to the health crisis and the social impacts of wildcat mining. In 2021 and 2022, this was compounded by the effects of the prolongation of the rainy season as a result of the La Niña weather phenomenon, which prevented many communities from renewing their family farm lands.

In fact, since the beginning of the year, the government has started a plan to offer basic food baskets to Yanomami communities. The Plan, presented by Funai on 10 February, 2023, planned to distribute 12,600 basic food baskets a month throughout the first semester of the year, which would amount to more than 50,000 basic food baskets, according to a journalistic report from *A Pública* news website³⁸. However, during this period, only 50% of the total baskets planned were actually delivered due to logistical problems involving the Armed Forces, as the journalist report shows.

In addition to the problem with the number of basic food baskets delivered, the Yanomami people indicate a series of other shortcomings associated with the distribution method in the

territory. First, because there was no distribution plan that prioritized delivery to the most vulnerable communities, which meant that the deliveries were at the mercy of the capacity of the airstrips and clearings for launching the basic food baskets. Thus, the baskets were concentrated around the airstrips with the highest carrying capacity, leaving many remote communities unattended and families with known food insecurity not included. This was the case in some Kayanau communities, which, according to Siasi data, had 83% of children up to the age of five with very low weight and low weight in 2022. Second, because no protocol was elaborated for the delivery of the baskets to ensure that they reached all the families in a given region and were distributed equally among the communities. One of the complaints made was that the lack of mediation in the distribution led to a process of concentrating the basic food baskets in the hands of those families who were “lucky” enough to be at the delivery point when the food was donated.

In Auaris, the field reports inform that the basic food basket that arrived in the region were stored in the frontier platoon, with a long delay in distribution to the communities. This slowness, in turn, has led to some of the meat (dried meat or “*charque*”) included in the baskets perishing. In this region, in order for humanitarian aid to be effective, it is essential that the distribution strategy also takes into account the dynamics of the Platoon’s baskets to the communities, which implies taking into account the costs of river transportation or even small flights. There are a total of 29 communities in a situation of severe food insecurity. With the delay on food supplying many communities, local leaders have warned that some families are eating manioc while it is still green, thus affecting the future economic recovery.

Likewise, it is important that the provision service of basic food baskets is guaranteed with some periodicity and on a schedule agreed

38. <https://apublica.org/2023/06/militares-recusam-entrega-de-cestas-basicas-aos-yanomami/>

with the communities, considering that a basic food basket lasts an average of ten days for a Yanomami family, and that short-cycle crops such as corn need at least 90 days to be harvested. This aid should also be complemented with the distribution of agricultural tools and seeds, with a view to sustaining the action in the medium and long term.

A non-systematic inventory made with the leaders from sensitive areas (Kayanau, Parafuri, Xitei, Homoxi, Haxiu, and Arathau) suggests that support with a basic food basket, when it started, was discontinuous and in most cases was not complemented by agricultural tools and seeds.

There are reports that Funai agency has recommended avoiding humanitarian aid in certain areas due to the situation of local insecurity.



PHOTO 7 – LAUNCHING OF BASIC FOOD BASKETS AT SURUCUCUS. CREDIT: GUILHERME GNIPPER

INVENTORY OF THE SITUATION ON SENSITIVE REGIONS FROM THE LEADERS' PERCEPTION

	ARE THERE WILDCAT MINERS STILL WORKING IN THE REGION?	HOW WAS THE WILDCAT MINER EXIT, DID THEY MAKE ANY THREATS OR ATTACKS ON THE COMMUNITIES DURING THE WITHDRAWAL?	IS THE HEALTH CENTER WORKING?	ARE THE HEALTHCARE TEAM VISITING THE MALOCAS (TRADITIONAL INDIGENOUS HOUSES)?
PARAFURI	Yes. Two active "machine pairs" (called "tatuzão"). They arrive using the airstrip and ground transportation.	There was the operation, but one of the two groups (of eight people) returned after the operation. There were no threats on the way out, but they warned that they would return after the operation.	No.	Hardly.
XITEI	Yes.	There was an operation. They burned some of the machinery, but there were others left. After the operation, the wildcat miners returned. The miners threatened people from the Kanakiu and Ximixipora communities.	Yes.	No. There are only three staff working at the health center and they can't visit twenty-three communities.
HAXIU	Nearby Yamasipiu.	There wasn't.	A makeshift health center opened in February.	They can't visit all.
HOMOXI	Yes, nearby the Xereu and Tirei communities.	There were quick actions to destroy machinery. The Homoxi airstrip was the logistical center for the wildcat miners' exit. On the way out there were conflicts with Haxiu groups.	No. The Homoxi airstrip is used by wildcat miners.	No.
PARIMA	No.	There was a major operation to destroy barges and campsites. There were no threats.	Yes, with the presence of the National Force and Funai.	No.
KAYANAU	It ended near the Mucajai river, but it continues in Couto Magalhães river.	Operations occurred.	No.	No.

TABLE 2 (CONTINUES ON THE NEXT PAGE)

	HAVE THE CHILDREN BEEN ALREADY VACCINATED THIS YEAR?	ARE PREGNANT WOMEN HAVING PRENATAL CARE?	HOW IS THE MALARIA SITUATION?	IS THERE CONFLICT IN THE REGION? BETWEEN WHICH COMMUNITIES? WHAT IS THE REASON?
PARAFURI	No.	No.	Several cases of malaria, but no deaths.	Makabey and Xaruna are in conflict. The reason of the deaths was a drunken binge.
XITEI	No.	No.	Not many, but there are other pathologies.	Tirei and Xitei against former-Pixahanapi (Kuniamari), because of a dispute over the gold digging; Hehu against Xereu and Maripe.
HAXIU	Some of the children, it is under execution.	In some communities, it is under execution.	Not much. But in previous years there have been deaths.	Haxiu against people from Surucucu.
HOMOXI	The mobile task force is doing it with limitations.	The mobile task force is doing it with limitations.	There are cases.	Against people from Xitei.
PARIMA	No.	No.	Very serious, two recent deaths.	Many conflicts. Others regions against Parima.
KAYANAU	No.	No.	There are many cases of malaria.	Kayanau against Wayahomapi (due to alcohol consumption and conflicts resulting from deaths).

TABLE 2 (CONTINUES ON THE NEXT PAGE)

	HOW IS THE FAMILY FARM LAND SITUATION?	DID YOU RECEIVE A BASIC FOOD BASKET? HOW MANY TIMES IN 2023?	DID ALL THE COMMUNITIES RECEIVE IT?	DID YOU RECEIVE AGRICULTURAL TOOLS?	ARE THE PEOPLE OF THE REGION LIVING WELL? IF NOT, WHAT ARE THE PROBLEMS?
PARAFURI	There is family farm land.	Once.	Yes.	No.	Health center closed, in need of repairs, in need of boat and fuel to attend the villages, there is lots of malaria.
XITEI	In some communities there are no family farm lands, because there is nowhere nearby that is good for agriculture. The dislocation was forced by insecurity. That's why there's a lot of hunger in the region.	Twice in 2023, but they were concentrated at the Xitei health center.	Hehu and Ximixipora, for example, did not receive.	Only the communities that received basic food baskets received agricultural tools.	There's wildcat mining, there's hunger, there's not enough staff at the health center (it needs at least 10 people)
HAXIU	There is family farm land.	Received it several times, but only where there was access.		Not yet.	Health improved. But the health center was closed again in mid-July 2023.
HOMOXI	There are few family farm land.	Once a month.	Yes.	Not yet.	They don't live well.
PARIMA	There are few family farm land, and it is new.	Yes. Since the wildcat miners left.		Not yet.	No.
KAYANAU	There is family farm land.	Yes. The ones near Posto and Wayohomapi.	Thoritha community did not receive.	No.	People live very badly.

TABLE 2 (CONTINUATION)

HEALTH CARE ATTENTION

The Yanomami Health District was created in 1991, in the wake of changes in the legal and institutional framework of the country's official indigenous policy after the 1988 Constitution. It was formed under the newly created National Health Foundation - FUNASA, as an attempt to solve the serious health situation in Yanomami territory after the wildcat mining invasion in the 1980s.

In essence, a Health District is a decentralized management unit, responsible for organizing primary health care services in a given territory (ethnically and geographically delimited), under the direct responsibility of the Federal Government, with the participation of the other spheres of government and organized civil society. Its service structure includes Basic Indigenous Health Units (*Unidades Básicas de Saúde Indígena* – UBSIs), organized into health centers, and Indigenous Health Support Houses (*Casas de Apoio à Saúde Indígena* – CASAI)³⁹.

As such, the health care model in the Yanomami Indigenous Territory was structured so that, in addition to the permanent presence of staff in the health centers, periodic and frequent visits were also made to the communities, in order to ensure that distance from the post did not represent an obstacle to health care. Home visits, carried out as teams move around, are fundamental to guaranteeing health coverage in the communities and monitoring the treatment of illnesses by health professionals, ensuring the recovery of patients. In addition, treating the disease in the community with the family support network provides various additional benefits.

39. The Yanomami Special Indigenous Health District is currently responsible for serving a population of over 30,000 indigenous people, spread over 350 communities, regionalized into 37 health centers. The DSEI-Y has 65 health facilities in the territory, most of which are in precarious condition, as well as a CASAI in Boa Vista (RR) and three administrative offices in municipalities in Amazonas (Barcelos, Santa Isabel do Rio Negro and São Gabriel da Cachoeira).

Some works⁴⁰ consider the beginning of the 21st century to be the *Belle Époque* of indigenous health in the Yanomami Indigenous Territory, a time when a large part of the communities were served by the Urihi-Health organization (*organização Urihi-Saúde*) through an agreement with Funasa, a period in which preventive measures and regular visits were the keynote of health action. And indeed, Urihi's figures are remarkable. DO PATEO (2017)⁴¹ reports that, in the organization's area of operation, the incidence of malaria was reduced by 99%, vaccination coverage in children under one year old reached the levels recommended by the Ministry of Health for the first time and there was a 65% drop in infant mortality.

During this period, beyond the expansion and consolidation of the service infrastructure, with the opening of new airstrips and UBSIs, a network of schools responsible for literacy and the training of Indigenous Health Agents (*Agentes Indígenas de Saúde* - AIS) and Microscopists was also created. This network boosted and spread the schooling process in the Yanomami Indigenous Territory, which had previously been restricted to communities close to the missionary structures.

By the end of the 2000s, however, although the volume of resources allocated to indigenous health had increased, the District was showing less and less positive results, due to political and administrative problems. According to indigenous organizations, the main reasons for the deterioration in health care were:

40. PATEO, R. D. D. A dança das Cadeiras na Saúde. In: RICARDO & RICARDO. Povos Indígenas do Brasil 2011-2016. São Paulo: Instituto Socioambiental 2017.

PELLEGRINI, M. Discursos dialógicos: intertextualidade e ação política na performance e autobiografia de um intérprete Yanomami no Conselho de Saúde. Tese de Doutorado. Programa de Pós- Graduação em Antropologia Social, Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina, 2008.

TOURNEAU, F.-M. Le. Les Yanomami du Brésil: géographie d'un territoire amérindien. Paris: Belin, Coll. Mappemonde, 2010.

41. PATEO, R. D. D. A dança das Cadeiras na Saúde. In: RICARDO & RICARDO. Povos Indígenas do Brasil 2011-2016. São Paulo: Instituto Socioambiental 2017.

1) the reduction in primary care teams in the UB-SIs; 2) the centralization of the purchase of basic supplies in the Ministry of Health, which had a direct impact on local pharmacies; and 3) the reduction in the number of visits to the villages furthest from the health centers.

This situation has contributed to preventive measures not being implemented and, usually, when patients decide to seek care, they are already in more serious conditions, significantly compromising the success of the treatments to be used. In addition, due to the shortage of pharmacies and the absence of a Multidisciplinary Indigenous Health Team (*Equipe Multidisciplinar de Saúde Indígena* - EMSI), patients often stop treatment and return to their communities at the first sign of recovery, without completing their treatment properly.

During the Bolsonaro period, this deterioration of the Yanomami health system has accelerated. Whether due to bad faith or incompetence in conducting health policy (possibly both⁴²), in recent years there has been a significant reduction in the presence of professionals working in the area and in the number of visits to the villages, in addition to the total deterioration of the infrastructure of the care units, widespread shortages of supplies and medicines and the dismantling of the epidemiological surveillance system.

In extreme cases, such as Homoxi and Kayanau, to name just two, the lack of assistance lasts for years, because in addition to the failures in the management of the District, there is also the criminal action of the wildcat miners, who have hijacked the tracks and structures of the UB-SIs, preventing the health teams from remaining in the region.

42. Civil Inquiry nº 1.32.000.000084/2023-17



PHOTO 8 - HOMOXI HEALTH CENTER BURNED DOWN BY WILDCAT MINERS IN 2022.
CREDIT: HUTUKARA YANOMAMI ASSOCIATION/REPRODUCTION/FACEBOOK

Thus, considering the lessons learned from successful experiences in the past, it would be reasonable to assume that the process of recovering Yanomami health would necessarily involve four lines of action:

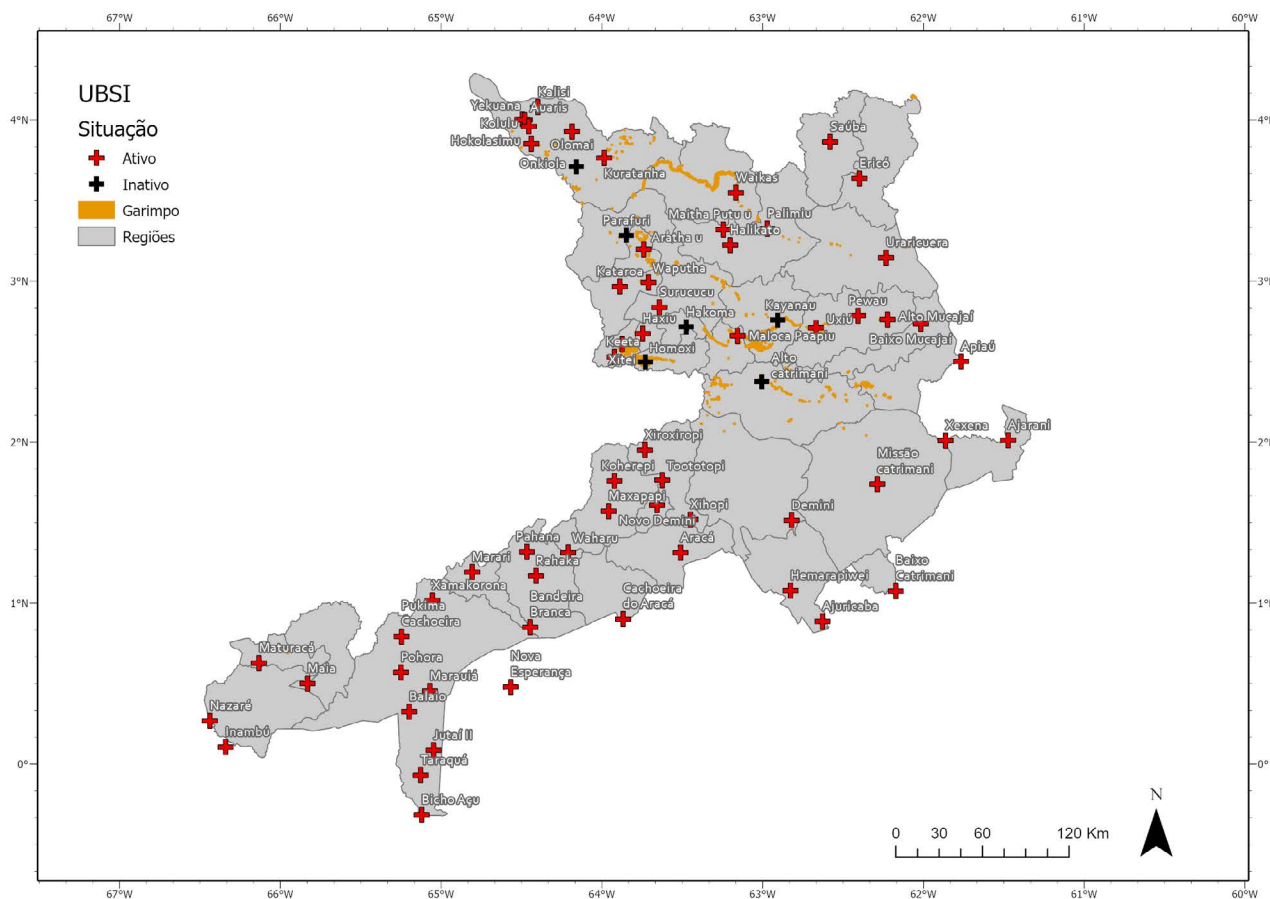
1 recovering the logistical and care infrastructure;

2 increasing the number of health teams working in the territory, with more frequent visits to the villages;

3 improving the epidemiological surveillance system, to shorten the response time between epidemic outbreaks and treatments; and

4 recovering the role of indigenous professionals as key players in the health teams.

However, although this path is well outlined in the diagnoses made at the beginning of the year and in the Federal Public Prosecutor's Office's documents on the subject, the current administration has had enormous difficulty in minimally stabilizing the crisis.



MAP 3 — SITUATION OF THE UBSI AT THE YANOMAMI INDIGENOUS TERRITORY IN THE FIRST HALF OF JULY

Among the reasons given for not resuming health promotion and prevention actions in an expanded manner, the Yanomami and the health professionals consulted indicate: i) the lack of infrastructure for the regular staffing of certain units; ii) the lack of security for the health team due to conflicts with wildcat miners or between Yanomami groups; and iii) the lack of sufficient personnel;

The lack of minimum infrastructure is the case, for example, of the Hakoma Health Center, which since 2021 has depended exclusively on sporadic health missions. The previous center, located in the hills, was abandoned due to armed conflicts that led to the displacement of most of the communities near the Mucajaí river. The region is currently experiencing a growing increase in malaria, with recent deaths associated with a lack of complete treatment, and in May it was the second health center from which the most people were moved to be treated in Surucucus.

Obviously, due to the aforementioned reasons, Homoxi is another emblematic case of closed health centers due to the lack of infrastructure.

There is also the case of health centers that have recently been opened but have no infrastructure, as is the case in Haxiu. At this center, which serves 900 people and had been closed due to an inter-community conflict, the deployed team is forced to work and live in a makeshift structure, protected by tarps donated by indigenous associations, as can be seen in the image below (Photo 9).

It is worth mentioning that, despite not being immediate neighbors of any known wilcat mining site, reports from the area indicate that the young people of Haxiu maintained close relations with the campsites located in Homoxi, from where they received weapons and alcoholic beverages.



PHOTO 9 – SITUATION OF THE KAIXU “HEALTH CENTER”. CREDIT: MÁRCIO HESINA

Still on the subject of infrastructure, the situation of the airstrips is equally worrying, despite numerous warnings from indigenous leaders about the importance of implementing a plan to restore them. The army took months to complete the renovation of the Surucucus airstrip, delaying the inauguration of the Surucucus Reference Center, which only started operating three months after the health emergency decree⁴³. Similarly, many of the communities that needed to be served by helicopters, because their airstrips were no longer functional, remain so. This type of transportation has dramatically increased the District's air freight costs, reducing the amount of resources that can be invested in more structural actions.

The low availability of helicopters, in turn, limits regular health missions to the most remote regions. Due to the seriousness of the health situation in the area, the equipment spends most of its time working on urgent patient removals and is not readily available for regular care.

However, even though the lack of infrastructure to receive the health teams remains a major challenge to reestablish regular care, the professionals on the territory report that, in their view, the lack of personnel to work at the UBSIs is doubtlessly the main challenge to reestablish the routines of health service in the most sensitive regions.

According to the ordinance of the Ministry of Health nº 1.317 from August 3rd 2017, the Multidisciplinary Indigenous Health Team should be composed of at least three professions of different occupations, with at least one with higher education (doctor or nurse) and the other two of secondary education (nursing technician). Still, the new management was not able to properly distribute the personnel in all health centers.

According to the interviewed personnel, there is a large concentration of staff at Surucucus to provide support to the Health Reference Center (*Centro de Referência em Saúde*), while most centers have undersized teams or even only seven-day missions which are not even regular in every two weeks.

Under this scenario, routine actions such as vaccinations, weighing children, prenatal care, deworming and supervised malaria treatment are impossible to carry out in these places, feeding the vicious cycle that has been operating in Yanomami health for years. As one health worker (who requested anonymity) said: "It's impossible in a village, with a hundred people with malaria symptoms, for a team of two people on mission to do anything other than test the population and treat the most serious cases."

The current solution has been to remove critically ill patients to the Reference Center in Surucucus, to the detriment of strengthening health promotion and prevention strategies in the communities. It is worth noting that the Center was already operating at 90% of its capacity on the day it was inaugurated.

The concentration of human resources in certain areas can also be seen in the territorially limited work of the SUS National Force⁴⁴, which only provided assistance in six health centers: Auaris, Palimiu, Surucucus, Missão Catrimani, Marauíá and Waputha. Although more than 8,000 visits had been made by July, the Yanomami complain that the professionals from the SUS National Force rarely travel to carry out health actions in the communities, most of the time remaining restricted to the immediate vicinity of the post where, generally, there was already assistance. The indigenous leaders' unfulfilled hope was that the arrival of the SUS National Force professionals would result in the provision of care in remote areas.

43. <https://g1.globo.com/jornal-nacional/noticia/2023/04/22/centro-de-referencia-em-saude-indigena-comeca-a-funcionar-na-terra-yanomami-e-vai-atender-46-aldeias.ghtml>

44. Teams composed of doctors, nurses and nutritionists.



PHOTO 10 – SURUCUCUS HEALTH REFERENCE CENTER. CREDIT: EDS.

PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTER ***(Centro de Operações de Emergência em Saúde Pública COE-Yanomami)***

With the declaration of the Public Health Emergency of National Concern (*Emergência em Saúde Pública de Importância Nacional - ESPIN*) in the Yanomami Indigenous Land (TIY), the Public Health Emergency Operations Center (COE-Yanomami) was set up. The COE's duties include planning, organizing, coordinating and controlling the measures to be adopted during the ESPIN, as well as liaising with state and municipal health agencies and other public authorities.

The structure of the National COE includes all the secretariats of the Ministry of Health and institutions such as the Ministry of Defense, the Ministry of Indigenous Peoples, the National Foundation for Indigenous Peoples (*Fundação Nacional dos Povos Indígenas - Funai*), the Pan-American Health Organization, the Ministry of Justice and Public Security, the Oswaldo Cruz Foundation, the Ministry of Development and Social Assistance, the Family and Fight against Hunger, the National Supply Company and the Civil House of the Presidency of the Republic.

The issue of security in the territory is the main reason given for not resuming actions in many of the most sensitive regions from the health, social and political point of view of the Yanomami Indigenous Territory, such as Parafuri and Kayanau, and also for the lack of visits to villages in areas such as Xitei and Arathau. The lack of security in sensitive areas, even after several months of operations, demonstrates precisely the lack of coordination between the actions to combat wildcat mining and the attempt to recover the health system, since these should be the priority areas for action.

Since February, the National Security Force has increased its presence in Roraima by more than 100%. Part of them are stationed in the Yanomami Indigenous Territory, either at Funai's Protection Bases or at Health Posts, such as Xitei and Arathau, with the aim of ensuring the safety of public agents. However, without the effective neutralization of wildcat mining in certain regions, the presence of the National Force only partially solves the problem, because the guards refuse to accompany the health teams on visits to the villages, and the teams do not

feel safe to leave the vicinity of the UBSIs, as the wildcat miners remain in the territory.

In short, the persistence of wildcat mining centers maintains the atmosphere of insecurity in the territory, preventing the re-establishment of health teams or the carrying out of health and humanitarian support missions in sensitive regions. This means that the vectors that produced the health crisis have not been tackled at their root, requiring most of the health team's efforts to be focused on emergency and urgent care, instead of health promotion and prevention actions, as recommended. The high logistical costs and resources spent on emergency actions, in turn, consume the budget that could be used to invest in improving the conditions of the UBSI's, in training processes and in improving the surveillance system. The result is the maintenance of the situation of abandonment in the Indigenous Territory as a whole, despite the huge mobilization made in the face of publicity about the crisis.

**EXCERPT FROM PAPIU'S SPEECH TO THE YANOMAMI AND YE'KWANA
LEADERS FORUM IN JULY 2023, MATURACÁ,
YANOMAMI INDIGENOUS TERRITORY.**

"They killed one of our people, but despite this, they continue to pass by our houses with rifles and revolvers. I've been fighting the wildcat miners for a long time, not a short time. They keep insisting, but I keep fighting. They killed one of our people for nothing. I'm not afraid, even though they

carry guns I'm not afraid, the wildcat miners are getting closer and closer, that's why we can't go out to make flour, get manioc, go to the fields, because the wildcat miners are so close, we can't walk. Malaria has spread a lot, it's very bad."

THE CURRENT NUMBERS ON HEALTH

A lack of significant change in the general health of the indigenous population over the last six months can be noticed in the official figures presented in the COE Yanomami reports. According to the bulletin of July 7, in 2023, only 23 of the almost 350 communities had been immunized, 921 people had to be removed by aeromedical service (military or civilian), while in 2022 a total of 1,819 rescues were made, and 154 deaths had already been recorded in the year, which corresponds to 73% of the total deaths recorded in 2022 between January and September.

Furthermore, according to our last assessment, of the 65 UBIs in the Yanomami Indigenous Land, six are still completely closed: Hakoma, Homoxi, Kayanau, Parafuri, Ōnkiola and Alto Catrimani. Together, these centers have a population of more than 2,000 unassisted people.

There is a noticeable inertia in the health care strategy and the maintenance of the *modus operandi* of previous years when analyzing the profile of those who died, and the prevalence of deaths from preventable causes.

TOTAL DEATHS AT THE YANOMAMY INDIGENOUS TERRITORY BETWEEN 2018 AND 2022

YEAR	TOTAL
2019	259
2020	332
2021	249
2022*	209

TABLE 3 - SOURCE: SIASI/SESAI/MS. 2022. *PRELIMINARY NUMBERS, REFERRING TO THE PERIOD FROM JANUARY TO SEPTEMBER

CAUSE OF DEATH IN 2023

CAUSE	NUMBER	%
infectious	66	43%
external	30	19%
other	26	17%
malnutrition	19	12%
neonatal death	9	6%
diseases of the digestive system	4	3%

TABLE 4 - SOURCE: COE REPORT OF JULY 7, 2023

Meanwhile, the malaria situation remains extremely worrying. According to official data, 12,252 cases had already been recorded by July 2023, which corresponds to almost 80% of the total recorded in 2022. As can be seen in the chart below, in the last eighteen months malaria peaked in the first quarter of 2023, following an upward trend visible in 2022.

If, on the one hand, we can interpret these figures as the result of a process of lack of care that was already underway, on the other, it is worrying that the actions taken by the new administration have not managed to significantly halt the spread of the disease, despite numerous warnings.

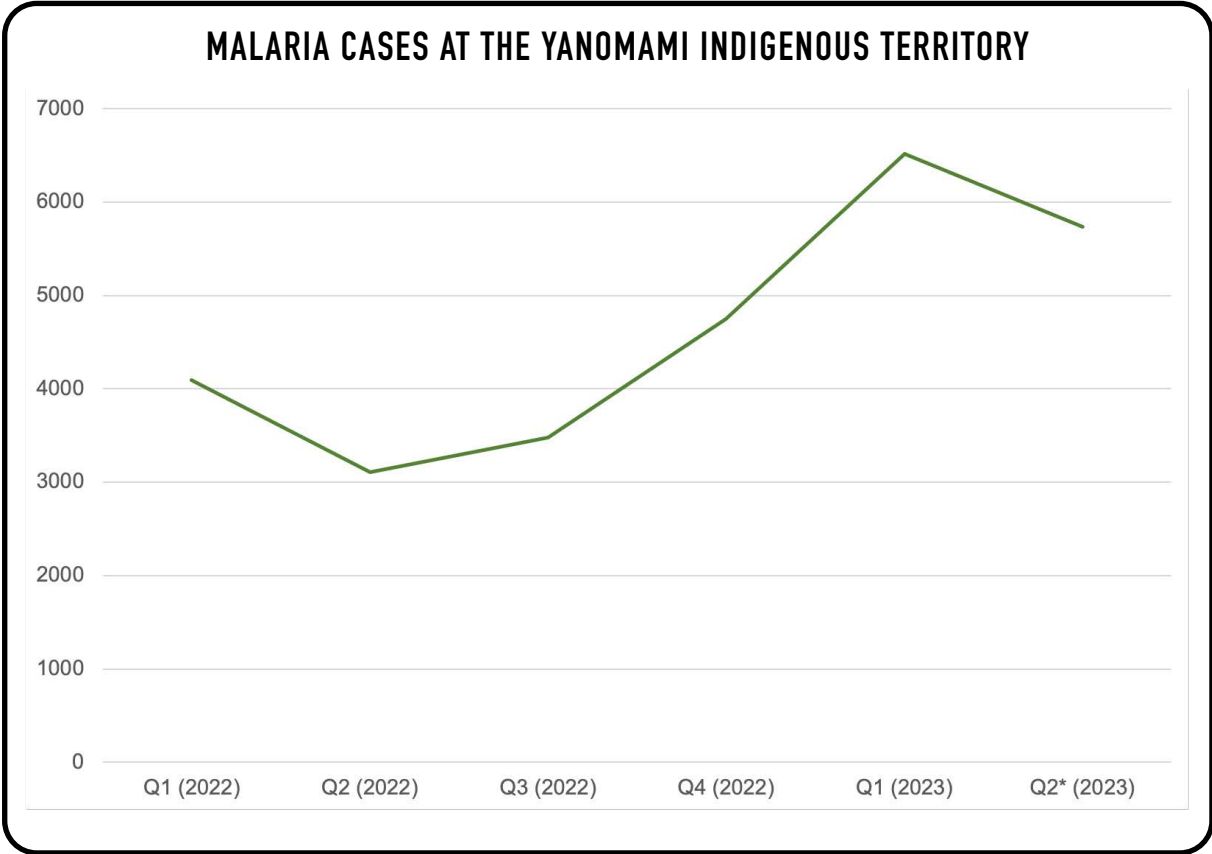


CHART 3 – EVOLUTION OF MALARIA CASES AT THE YANOMAMI INDIGENOUS TERRITORY IN 2022 AND 2023

It is worth noting that, as in 2022, it is very likely that malaria cases are still underreported, considering that many UBSIs were short of supplies (rapid test, test slides and medicines), and that at least seven units were inactive for most of the period examined.

Analyzing the evolution of cases by health center, we can also see that in most regions the number of malaria cases remained within the 2022 pattern, with the exception of Auaris, Surucucu, Maloca Papiu and Palimiu, where the proportional increase was even greater.

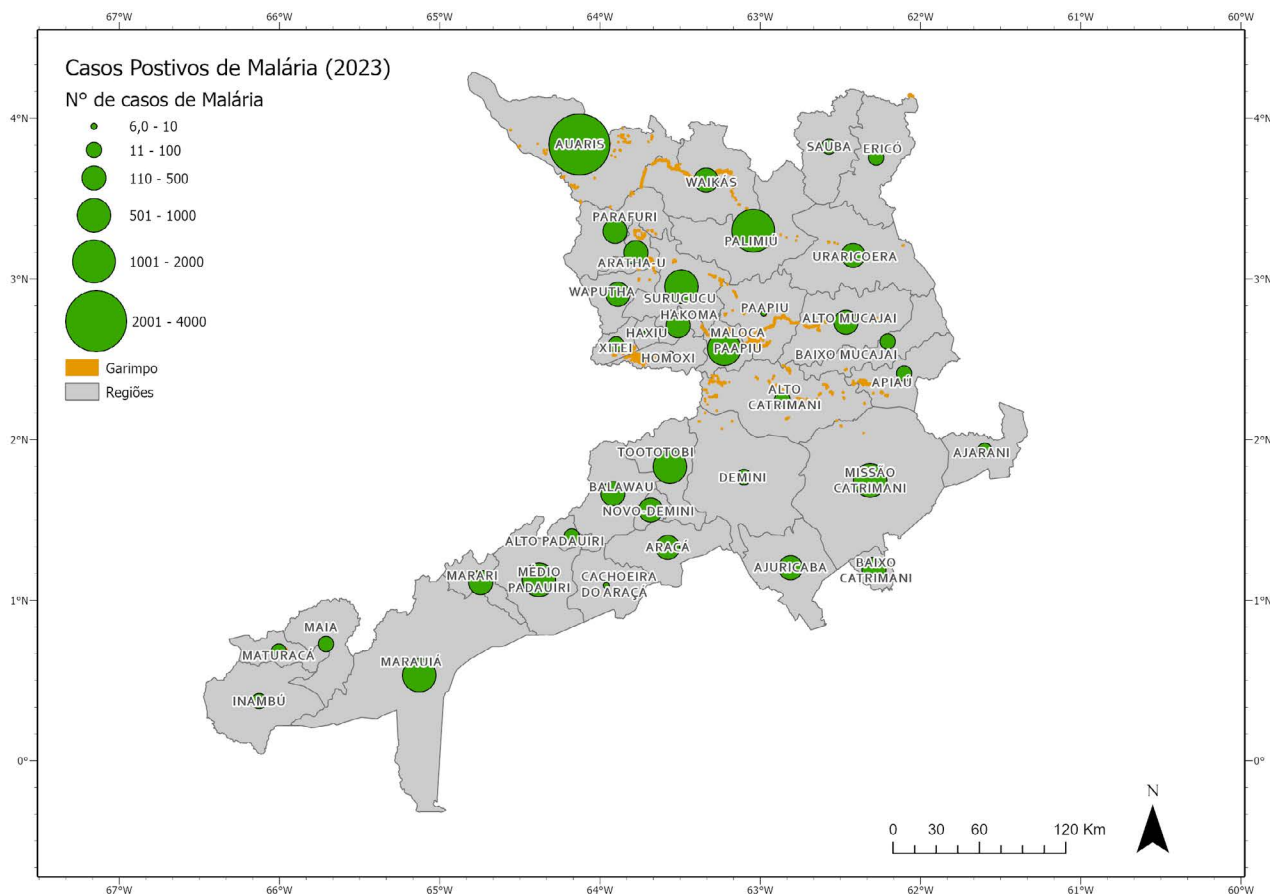
CASES OF MALARIA PER TRIMESTER AND HEALTH CENTER

HEALTH CENTER	Q1 (2022)	Q2 (2022)	Q3 (2022)	Q4 (2022)	Q1 (2023)	Q2* (2023)
AJARANI	0	9	0	3	9	7
AJURICABA	16	60	254	46	74	58
ALTO CATRIMANI	99	53	5	9	26	36
ALTO MUCAJAI	101	122	81	135	116	122
ALTO PADAUIRI	148	10	29	13	26	32
APIAÚ	37	71	51	65	41	28
ARACÁ	4	9	7	9	50	55
ARATHA-U	362	210	300	392	231	200
AUARIS	228	179	187	649	2170	1731
BAIXO CATRIMANI	24	69	64	100	54	47
BAIXO MUCAJAI	10	41	0	5	8	21
BALAWAU	323	217	342	444	262	183
CACHOEIRA DO ARAÇÁ	37	28	5	33	6	0
DEMINI	11	1	18	23	33	25
ERICÓ	39	18	10	16	26	42
HAKOMA	26	31	6	135	201	193
HAXIU	2	0	0	2	3	4
HOMOXI	8	3	4	2	0	7
INAMBÚ	8	0	2	2	10	16
MAIA	3	10	8	10	12	1
MALOCA PAAPIU	222	137	198	150	308	436
MARARI	211	89	58	51	97	79
MARAUIÁ	474	436	452	520	431	266
MATURACÁ	7	7	4	10	12	2
MÉDIO PADAUIRI	356	162	104	111	272	241

TABLE 5 (CONTINUES ON THE NEXT PAGE) - SOURCE: SIVEP/SVS/MS.

MISSÃO CATRIMANI	323	229	379	269	397	282
NOVO-DEMINI	206	66	138	126	82	224
PAAPIU	85	42	9	1	3	6
PALIMIÚ	188	254	314	454	590	722
PARAFURI	113	137	192	222	89	18
SAUBA	58	28	19	8	17	12
SURUCUCU	96	80	58	321	356	220
TOOTOTOBÍ	109	153	58	212	256	262
URARICOERA	87	61	32	50	83	37
WAIKÁS	63	83	85	137	134	34
WAPUTHA	8	0	1	5	19	85
XITEI	5	2	2	8	11	2
TOTAL	4097	3107	3476	4748	6515	5736

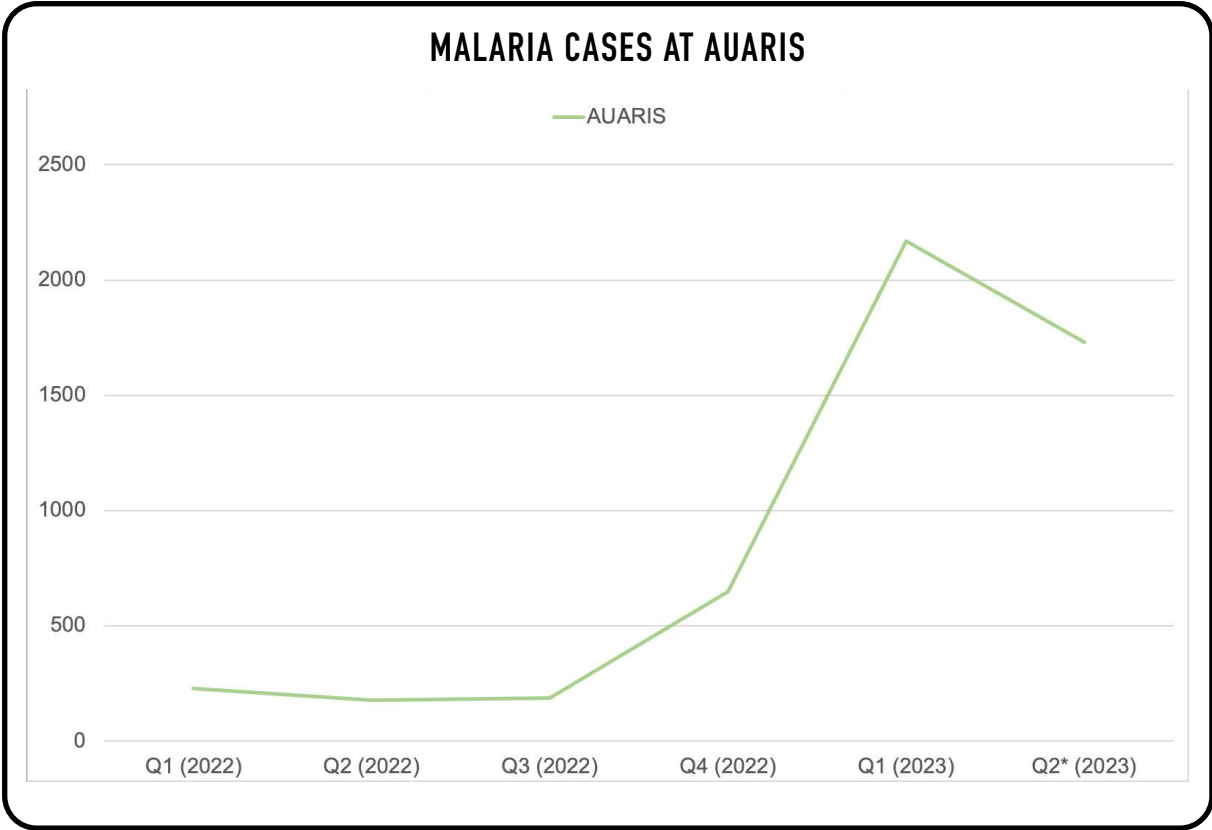
TABLE 5 (CONTINUATION) - SOURCE: SIVEP/SVS/MS.



MAP 4 – MALARIA SITUATION PER HEALTH CENTER. SOURCE: SIVEP/SVS/MS.

At Auaris, malaria in the first three quarters of 2022 was around 200 cases. In the last semester, it more than tripled to 649 cases. And in the

first quarter of 2023, it reached an astonishing 2170 cases, followed by another 1731 in the next quarter.



GRAPH 4 - EVOLUTION OF MALARIA CASES AT AUARIS (2022 AND 2023)

Looking at the behavior of wildcat mining near the region during this period, it is very likely that this increase in cases is associated with its expansion on both sides of the border. Our hypothesis is that this is malaria imported from the wildcat mining camps, which then spread to the communities without the health service taking the necessary measures to control it, while the disease was still restricted to a few individuals.

Reports from the area suggest that in addition to the effect of mining, the lack of control of malaria is associated with: i) the absence of vector control actions in the communities; ii) insufficient active search actions; iii) problems with diagnosis, with the occurrence of many false negatives; iv) delays in starting treatment, either because of diagnostic problems or because of a shortage of pharmacy supplies; v) problems with supervised treatment, with many individuals interrupting treatment before completing it.

In the case of treatment problems, the Yanomami people report that, in general, patients allege three reasons for stopping treatment earlier than recommended: a) lack of information about the treatment; b) unavailability of food for the patients in the UBSIs, so patients have to return to their communities to eat; c) malaise caused by the medication, which may be associated with an overdose situation, since the health professionals, as a rule, adopt the criterion of age to establish the dosage and not weight, because they lack scales at the UBSIs.

Therefore, it can be noted that all the reasons identified to explain the behavior of malaria in the region suggest the maintenance of a situation of serious lack of assistance with characteristics similar to the pattern adopted in the last four years, i.e. absence of regular visits to the villages, problems with supplies and structure in the UBSIs, and poor epidemiological surveillance.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

As we have seen, although the Territorial Protection actions that began in February 2023, based above all on the strategy of “logistical strangulation”, have produced important advances in the fight against illegal mining in the Yanomami Indigenous Territory. Some points still make it difficult to control pockets of wildcat mining resistance at the Indigenous Territory. These points include the loosening of air control for two months, the limitation of territorial control efforts to just two protection bases, and the limited participation of the armed forces.

This situation means that the feeling of insecurity is still present in the territory and prevents health actions from moving forward into sensitive areas. Along with the lack of available health professionals and the low investment in infrastructure at the UBIs, these are the main

reasons given by people working in the field for the difficulty in resuming regular services with quality in the villages. The health indicators, in fact, leave no doubt about the government’s timid results in this area. The lack of coordination of government actions in Yanomami territory is also one of the main factors behind many of the problems described in this report.

Therefore, in order to contribute to improving actions, from a holistic viewpoint, linking health, territorial protection, education and sustainable development actions, we present below a list of recommendations to be adopted in the interministerial strategic action plan.



PHOTO 11 — WORKING GROUP PRESENTS THE PROTECTION PROPOSALS AT THE YANOMAMI AND YE'KWANA LEADERS FORUM IN JULY 2023, MATURACÁ, YANOMAMI INDIGENOUS TERRITORY. CREDIT: FRED RAHAL/ISA

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 01** Improving the government's mechanisms for dialogue with indigenous organizations;
- 02** Strengthen coordination between sectoral actions and plan the development of actions in an integrated manner, through operational and intersectoral coordination of the Yanomami emergency;
- 03** Development of regionalized action plans for sensitive regions that combine actions into a single timetable for neutralizing wildcat mining, providing emergency support, promoting health, re-staffing UBSIs with the support of security forces, and developing socio-economic recovery activities for communities;
- 04** Ensure that airspace control is maintained for an indefinite period and reinforce monitoring in frontier zones;
- 05** Ensure regular inspection of the aviation fuel trade in Roraima and Amazonas and of private airfields located in the vicinity of the Yanomami Indigenous Territory (especially at Settlement Project Samaúma and Vila Apiaú);
- 06** Intensification of operations to combat wildcat mining in the areas that still exist, with the total destruction of the machinery used to extract gold and cassiterite and the application of the respective administrative sanctions;
- 07** The destruction of all clandestine airstrips and aircraft seized inside the Yanomami Indigenous Territory;
- 08** Reinforcement of the protection bases already in place (Walopali, Serra da Estrutura and Ajarani), urgent completion of the Uraricera BAPE, and creation of new bases on the Apiaú, Catrimani and Uraricaá rivers;
- 09** Promotion of periodic patrols in the river channels that give access to the Yanomami Indigenous Territory, and destruction of equipment and structures that assist wildcat mining logistics;
- 10** Developing a plan to train indigenous people to be involved in surveillance actions in the river channels;
- 11** The Catrimani and Uraricaá BAPES could be shared with Institute Chico Mendes of Conservation and Biodiversity (*Instituto Chico Mendes de Conservação e Biodiversidade* – ICMBio), located in the Serra da Mocidade National Park and the Maracá Ecologic Station (*Estação Ecológica* – ESEC), respectively;
- 12** Ensure continuous remote monitoring of the Yanomami Indigenous Territory as a rapid response to new alerts from security forces;
- 13** Develop a plan to encourage the voluntary disarmament in sensitive regions;
- 14** Investigation by the Federal Police of businessmen and companies linked to illegal wildcat mining on Indigenous Lands in the state of Roraima and the rest of the country, with a view to holding them civilly and criminally responsible for environmental crimes and usurpation of federal assets;
- 15** Cancellation of all mining processes overlapping the Yanomami Indigenous Territory;
- 16** Advance to amplify and consolidate Conservation Units around the Yanomami Indigenous Territory (Creation of the Parima National Forest Park, amplifying the Maracá Ecological Station, strengthening the management and surveillance of the Roraima National Forest Park and the Serra da Mocidade National Park);

- 17** Support the resettlement of communities affected by wildcat mining that manifest the interest of moving to a new place due to a lack of conditions to stay. This support should be given through logistical support, tools, infrastructure for health and accompaniment during their installation;
- 18** Prioritize investment in infrastructure for the renovation and construction of UBSIs and the renovation and maintenance of airstrips;
- 19** Re-staffing of closed UBSIs with the support of security forces;
- 20** Equipping the UBSIs with boats and motors to guarantee service to communities near the health centers with river access;
- 21** Creation of air hubs by macro-region for greater efficiency in the distribution of health personnel and supplies;
- 22** Scaling up the number of health professionals working in the territory, seeking to increase the number of professionals in sensitive regions;
- 23** Creating a special task force to combat malaria throughout the territory;
- 24** Study changes to the model for hiring human resources in indigenous health;
- 25** Promoting specific actions to combat child malnutrition by monitoring patients with nutritional deficits and implementing a plan to combat the causes of child malnutrition and reinforcing the Multidisciplinary Indigenous Health Team with nutritionists;
- 26** Plan to combat malnutrition by providing pregnant women and children under five with fortified foods or food supplements that guarantee the consumption of foods with a micro-nutrient intake.
- 27** Drawing up a special program to support women's health, with anthropological advice.
- 28** Improve the system for producing data on child malnutrition, guaranteeing territorial coverage and the periodicity of data collection;
- 29** Resume the training processes of Continuous Training of Indigenous Health Agents (*Agentes Indígenas de Saúde - AISs*) and Indigenous Sanitation Agents (*Agentes Indígenas de Saneamento – AISANs*);
- 30** Encourage partnerships and technical cooperation with organizations specializing in health that can support practical solutions capable of responding to the health crisis in the Yanomami Indigenous Territory;
- 31** Ensure investments from the National Education Development Fund (FNDE) in the infrastructure of the Yanomami Indigenous Territory's schools, promoting the renovation of existing schools, the construction of new schools, and the acquisition of electricity, communication and teaching support equipment;
- 32** Ensure that sufficient equipment, school materials and quality meals are sent to indigenous schools on a regular basis and, in places where access is difficult, guarantee specific funds to resolve the impasse in sending these items.
- 33** Guarantee specialized medical assistance for indigenous who present neurological signs and symptoms or other complications related to mercury contamination.

