

Implementing a technological network as an useful tool to assist small quarries to operate on sustainable basis.

¹PEITER, C.C.; ²VILLAS BOAS, R.C.; ³ERTHAL, F.; ⁴SHINYA, W.
¹CETEM/MCT, Rio de Janeiro, Brasil; ²IMAAC/UNIDO, Rio de Janeiro, Brasil; ³DRM-RJ, Niterói, Brasil; ⁴ 235, Queen St., Ottawa, Canada.

Small-scale mining, including quarry operations continues to play an important social and economic role in hundreds of communities throughout Brazil. Often operating outside the formal economy, conflicts between the owners of small-scale mining operations, the mineworkers, various government agencies, and other stakeholders have contributed to the progressive degradation of the environment, low degree of concern on health and safety, and low productivity.

The Centre for Mineral Technology (CETEM) and the Department for Mineral Resources of Rio de Janeiro State (DRM -RJ) are implementing a consensus building methodology in order to organise the production of dimension stone by small-scale quarries in the NW region of the State of Rio de Janeiro on a more sustainable basis. The approach being used by CETEM and DRM-RJ is based on their own experience in working with gold prospectors in the Amazon and with small producers of the mineral aggregates sector, and on experiences learned from some successful Canadian initiatives.

The innovative aspect, introduced by this consensus building methodology, is the creation of a network among R&D institutions located at Rio de Janeiro province. Named as RETECMIN, the network is devoted to provide technical assistance to quarries operations, that proved to be very helpful to join capabilities and avoid disruptive competition among government agencies and the other stakeholders. The new ideas and insights disclosed with this project may prove to be useful to professionals and agencies involved in addressing similar problems elsewhere in Brazil, South America and around the world.