A team of 1 PhD student, 2 MSc-GH students, and 4 undergraduate students spent the summer in the Peruvian Amazon researching vector-borne diseases and the health impacts of mercury exposure. The team also partnered with the Peruvian Ministry of Health to give presentations to children on nutrition, dental hygiene, and hand washing.

**METHODOLOGY**

- Collect sandflies and mosquitoes at the Villa Carmen Biological Station and in the communities of Salvacion, Shintuya and Itahuania using a Shannon Trap and CDC light traps
- Assess repeated measures of mercury in blood and urine collected from fieldworkers every four weeks during their one-to-two-month stays in low- and high-risk exposure regions
- Estimate dietary mercury exposure using a combination of dietary logs and direct mercury measurements in potentially contaminated and commonly-consumed food
- Assess early health impacts of mercury exposure by analyzing biomarkers of oxidative damage, inflammatory immune response, and kidney dysfunction in biological samples

**RESEARCH OBJECTIVES**

- Evaluate exposure to elemental and organic mercury and to assess related, downstream health impacts in the study’s field workers
- Collect sandflies and mosquitoes to research vector-borne diseases like leishmaniasis and malaria
- Disseminate results from previous studies on mercury exposure
- Enter existing survey data from the Hunt Oil Study into an electronic database
- Deliver charlas, or short talks, to children in schools and health posts to address health related issues

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