

# Working holistically

Making the connections, sustaining real change

“ A model for everyone working to conserve the natural life-support systems of our troubled planet. ”

SIR DAVID ATTENBOROUGH



## Beyond conservation

Blue Ventures recognises the inextricable links between poor health, unmet family planning needs, food insecurity, environmental degradation and vulnerability to climate change.

In response to these interconnected challenges, we have developed a holistic approach integrating reproductive health services with marine conservation and coastal livelihood initiatives.

Our unconventional journey in conservation began through listening. We learned that people in Velondriake, Madagascar's first locally managed marine area, thought that fish stocks would collapse without improved access to family planning. We also saw that, as a field-based organisation working in these isolated communities, we were ideally positioned to address this critical unmet need.

We started incorporating reproductive health services into our fisheries management initiatives in 2007. Since then, we have expanded this programme to serve over 25,000 people across more than 60 communities along Madagascar's west coast.

From sea cucumber aquaculture to maternal and child health, our interdisciplinary teams now work closely together to coordinate their activities and identify opportunities for cost-sharing between all of our programmes.

We engage communities in a variety of environmental and health topics through small group discussions, interactive theatre and school workshops. Exploring the connections between different themes enables us to broaden our reach, for example, getting men talking about family planning and involving women in fisheries management.





## Population-Health-Environment

Our holistic way of working is often referred to as “Population-Health-Environment” (PHE) because of the way that such an integrated portfolio of programmes reflects the relationships between people, their health and the environment.

The PHE approach empowers people to make their own reproductive health choices, while equipping them with the skills they need to manage their resources sustainably.

PHE has been shown to produce greater impacts than single-sector interventions, and to generate additional benefits such as the increased engagement of women in alternative livelihood activities.

**60**   
communities /   
**25,000** people served

## Empowering coastal communities to live with the sea

Blue Ventures developed a PHE programme in the Velondriake area of southwest Madagascar from 2007, and replicated this approach further north along the coast in Belo sur Mer from 2013 and in the Barren Isles from 2015.

In addition to supporting locally led marine conservation initiatives, we provide voluntary family planning services through a network of local women trained as community-based distributors of contraceptives. We uphold the reproductive rights of all people to freely choose the number and spacing of their births.

Our fully integrated PHE approach encompasses:

- Sustainable fisheries management
- Aquaculture enterprises
- Locally managed marine areas
- Voluntary family planning services
- Community health promotion
- School and university scholarships

## Our impact

Couples are empowered to plan and better provide for their families; improving food security, allowing women to play a more active role in fisheries management, and boosting the sustainability of local conservation efforts.

Coastal communities are able to live more healthily and sustainably with their marine environment, building social and ecological resilience to climate change.



**Increase in the proportion of women in Velondriake using contraception**



“ Family planning lets couples choose how many children they have, while marine reserves help to increase fish catches. If the population isn't growing so rapidly and the fish catches are increasing, then we can have a better balance between fish stocks and our population. This means that people and the environment can live together, and we all benefit from this. ”

ROGER SAMBA, PRESIDENT OF THE VELONDRIAKE LOCALLY MANAGED MARINE AREA ASSOCIATION



1,125+

unintended pregnancies averted in Velondriake and Belo sur Mer to date among a population of

20,000

## Driving adoption

Having experienced the immense value of integrating reproductive health services with local marine conservation initiatives, we are now assisting other organisations to adopt this approach.

We are supporting the development of a national PHE network in Madagascar in collaboration with Voahary Salama, bringing together health and conservation NGOs, donors and policy makers to facilitate cross-sector partnerships.

We are offering technical advice and mentoring to conservation organisations starting to implement PHE with health partners such as Marie Stopes Madagascar, proposing learning exchanges and training courses, convening meetings to share experiences, and collating impact data to communicate to a variety of stakeholders.



**35** health and conservation partners are involved in the Madagascar PHE Network including the Government of Madagascar, Voahary Salama, Marie Stopes Madagascar, JSI/MAHEFA, WWF, Conservation International and WCS



**blue ventures**  
beyond conservation





## We rebuild tropical fisheries with coastal communities

Blue Ventures works with coastal communities to develop transformative approaches for catalysing and sustaining locally led marine conservation.

We work in places where the ocean is vital to local cultures and economies, and are committed to protecting marine biodiversity in ways that benefit coastal people. Our conservation models are designed to demonstrate that effective management improves food security and makes economic sense.

Over the past decade, our innovations have guided national fisheries policy and been replicated by communities, NGOs, businesses, donors and government agencies along thousands of kilometres of coastline. So far our work has impacted the lives of more than 150,000 coastal people.

## Working holistically

Blue Ventures recognises that improving fisheries management alone is not enough to overcome the numerous and interrelated drivers of marine environmental degradation.

Our programmes in Madagascar encompass locally led marine conservation, sustainable fisheries management, community-based aquaculture and ecotourism businesses, educational scholarships and reproductive health services.

This integrated approach addresses the interconnected challenges of poor health, unmet family planning needs, environmental degradation and food insecurity in a holistic way. It enables communities to manage their resources sustainably, both now and for the future.



### Communities first

Above all, we listen to community needs, responding in a sensitive and pragmatic way for lasting benefits.



### Passion & belief

Our mission is urgent and critical, we believe that our models work, and we are determined to get the job done.



### Valued people & effective teams

We work in diverse and inclusive teams where all members have a voice and influence. We are effective because our work is integrated across teams and projects.



### Innovation & courage

We are resourceful and creative. We are prepared to take risks and challenge broken paradigms.



### Openness & humility

We are an open source social enterprise. We work in a transparent and collaborative way to pass on what we learn to others who share our vision and passion.



### Grounded in evidence

We have high standards and are not afraid to be self-critical. If we see that something doesn't work, we change tack until we're on the right course.

# blue ventures

beyond conservation

For further information or to discuss partnership opportunities please contact:



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Winner, Buckminster Fuller Challenge, 2011  
For work to protect marine resources and improve the livelihoods of poor coastal communities in Madagascar.



Observer Ethical Awards, runner-up 2010.  
Blue Ventures was commended for creating the Indian Ocean's first replicable blueprint for community-centred marine and coastal conservation planning.



Condé Nast Traveler Environmental Award, 2009  
For two decades, Condé Nast Traveler has been honouring environmental visionaries around the world who have found innovative solutions to seemingly intractable problems.



Responsible Tourism Awards 2004: highly commended for "Best in a Marine Environment"



Responsible Tourism Awards 2006: highly commended for "Best Volunteering Organisation"



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Responsible Tourism Awards 2009: highly commended for "Best in a marine environment"



Responsible Tourism Awards 2010: Winner for "Best volunteering organisation"



Ashoka & National Geographic Geotourism Challenge 2008: finalist



Changemakers & National Geographic Geotourism Challenge 2010: finalist



United Nations SEED Award 2005: winner, "Madagascar's first experimental community-run MPA"



Enterprise Young Brits 2005 & 2006: highly commended, "Social and Environment"



United Nations Development Programme Equator Prize 2006: the Village of Andavadoaka, winner (in partnership)



Skal Ecotourism Awards 2006: Winner, "General Countryside"