



PHE partnerships guide

Community-based natural resource management

Version 1

blue ventures
beyond conservation



PHE
Madagascar

Population
Health
Environment
Network

About this guide

This guide consists of 15 chapters covering the core **values**, **skills** and **knowledge** needed to develop and implement effective cross-sector Population-Health-Environment (PHE) partnerships. You have downloaded **chapter 10 - Community-based natural resource management**. If you wish to download other chapters or the entire guide please visit the Madagascar PHE Network's website [here](#).

This guide is primarily designed for use by the staff of environmental organisations wishing to develop cross-sector PHE partnerships with health service providers in line with priority community needs and their organisational missions. Many chapters will also be relevant to the staff of health organisations wishing to develop cross-sector PHE partnerships with environmental organisations working in under-served zones. And of course livelihoods-focused organisations working at the interface of sustainable development and natural resource management are also ideally placed to develop and implement collaborative PHE initiatives with relevant partners.

This guide draws on the PHE implementation experiences of Blue Ventures and other members of the Madagascar PHE Network in order to provide practical advice structured in a conversational format with case study examples. As such it should be highly relevant to organisations working in Madagascar and much material will be applicable to organisations working in other countries as well.

This guide is accompanied by various complementary resources including an integrated PHE community outreach tool (illustrated PHE story cards) available via the Madagascar PHE Network's website [here](#). Please note that a comprehensive online library of documents relating to PHE programming has been collated by the Population Reference Bureau and can be found [here](#).

This guide should be considered a living document and as such it will be updated regularly. Please don't hesitate to contact Blue Ventures (pheinfo@blueventures.org) if you have any suggestions for improvement or requests for elaboration. We look forward to incorporating your feedback into future versions of this guide.

Credits and acknowledgements

This guide was written and produced by Laura Robson, Blue Ventures' Health-Environment Partnerships Manager.

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This guide should be referenced as follows: Robson, L. (2017) *PHE partnerships guide*. London, UK / Antananarivo, Madagascar: Blue Ventures Conservation.

10. Community-based natural resource management

By the end of this chapter you should:	This chapter may be of particular relevance to:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Know the main objectives of community-based natural resource management Know how community-based natural resource management works in principle and in practice Know some challenges that communities may experience when seeking to manage their natural resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Managers and community-based staff of health organisations

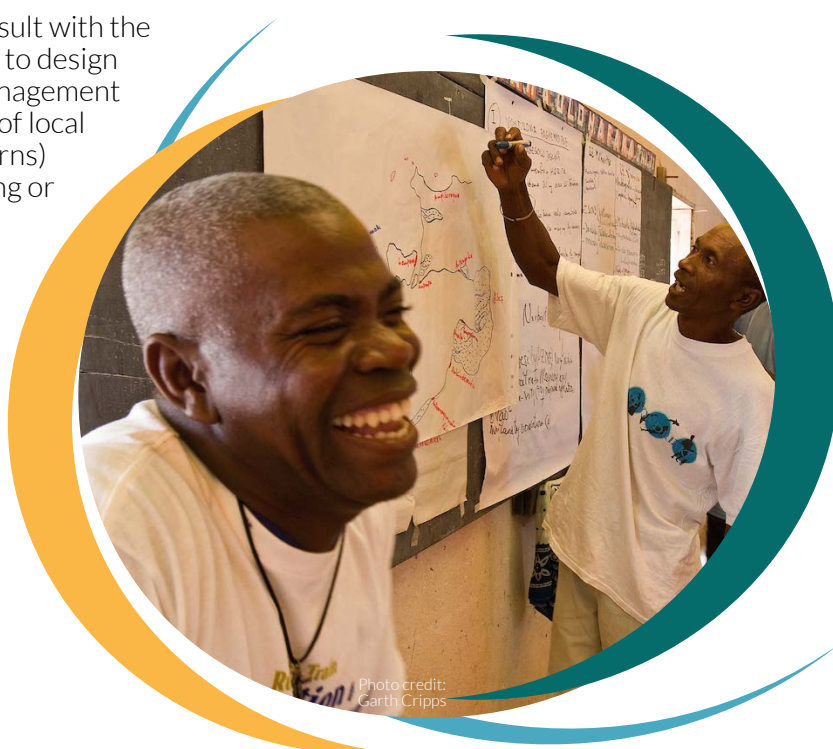
What are the main objectives of community-based natural resource management?

- Ensure natural resources are available for local livelihoods, food security and nutrition
- Put communities that rely heavily on natural resources in charge of management efforts so that management plans are adapted to their needs and supported locally
- Conserve biodiversity and safeguard ecosystem health

How does community-based natural resource management work in practice?

In general, in countries where legal frameworks exist for community-based natural resource management, it works more or less as follows:

- Communities, often with the facilitation of a support organisation, organise into local management committees (ideally consisting of a small number of elected male, female and youth representatives)
- Local management committees consult with the wider community of resource users to design management plans and draw up management rules (ideally informed by evidence of local biodiversity and resource use patterns) e.g. closing off certain areas to fishing or forest extraction either periodically or permanently, applying certain restrictions on fishing gears, etc.
- Local management committees submit management plans and rules to relevant government authorities for approval
- Local management committees sensitise the wider community about management plans and rules
- Local management committees monitor natural resource use and enforce management rules with sanctions applied for infractions as appropriate



- Local management committees explore and pursue options for communities to undertake alternative food production and/or income-generating activities as appropriate
- Local management committees evaluate the effectiveness of their interventions based on appropriate sources of information and data (often collecting data themselves with tools and training provided by a support organisation) and adapt management plans regularly to improve their effectiveness

Communities are often accompanied through this process by environmental organisations or government authorities, in which case they may establish co-management arrangements whereby responsibility for natural resource management is assured jointly by local management committees and their supporting organisations.



The legal status of community-managed areas varies from country to country in line with national policies and legal frameworks, so it's essential to consult the appropriate legislative documents in your country of operation for more specific details. As an example, communities in Madagascar have been granted *de jure* management rights over certain natural resources under the GELOSE (*gestion locale sécurisée*) policy, thereby strengthening the *de facto* management rights that they exercise through the application of customary rules (called *dina*). A number of other policies in Madagascar provide provisions for the legal recognition of community-managed areas as IUCN category V or VI protected areas, thereby assigning them a protected status once certain standards are achieved.

What are some challenges that communities may experience when managing their natural resources?

- Non-respect for management rules by community members - reasons for this may include:
 - Incoherence between rules and local needs (although unlikely / hopefully avoided as rules designed by communities themselves)
 - Lack of alternatives to illicit resource extraction (important to ensure that alternatives are available - e.g. through support for alternative income-generating activities - otherwise rules may be impractical)
 - Lack of understanding of rules and their benefits (insufficient community sensitisation)
 - Lack of buy-in to natural resource management efforts among the wider community (important to promote diverse representation, including of women and youth, in local management committees so that all sub-groups within the community have a say in decision-making)
- Implementation of inappropriate or insufficient management measures - reasons for this may include:
 - Lack of data to inform management measures (e.g. most appropriate sites for marine reserves)
 - Low levels of local knowledge about certain aspects of ecological systems - while local users often have very relevant knowledge about resources, certain resources may be difficult to monitor or understand locally (e.g. migrating species)
- Insufficient capacity for monitoring natural resource use - reasons for this may include:
 - Local management committee members unable to afford time away from livelihood activities for monitoring
 - Local management committee members lack equipment needed for effective monitoring
- Difficulties enforcing management rules - reasons for this may include:
 - Familial relations between local management committee members and infractors
 - Pressures originating from outside of the local community (e.g. migrating populations and illegal commercial extractive activities)
- Insufficient support from relevant government authorities and/or lack of supportive legal frameworks



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