

Darwin Initiative Main: Annual Report

To be completed with reference to the "Project Reporting Information Note":
(<https://www.darwininitiative.org.uk/resources/information-notes/>).

It is expected that this report will be a **maximum of 20 pages** in length, excluding annexes

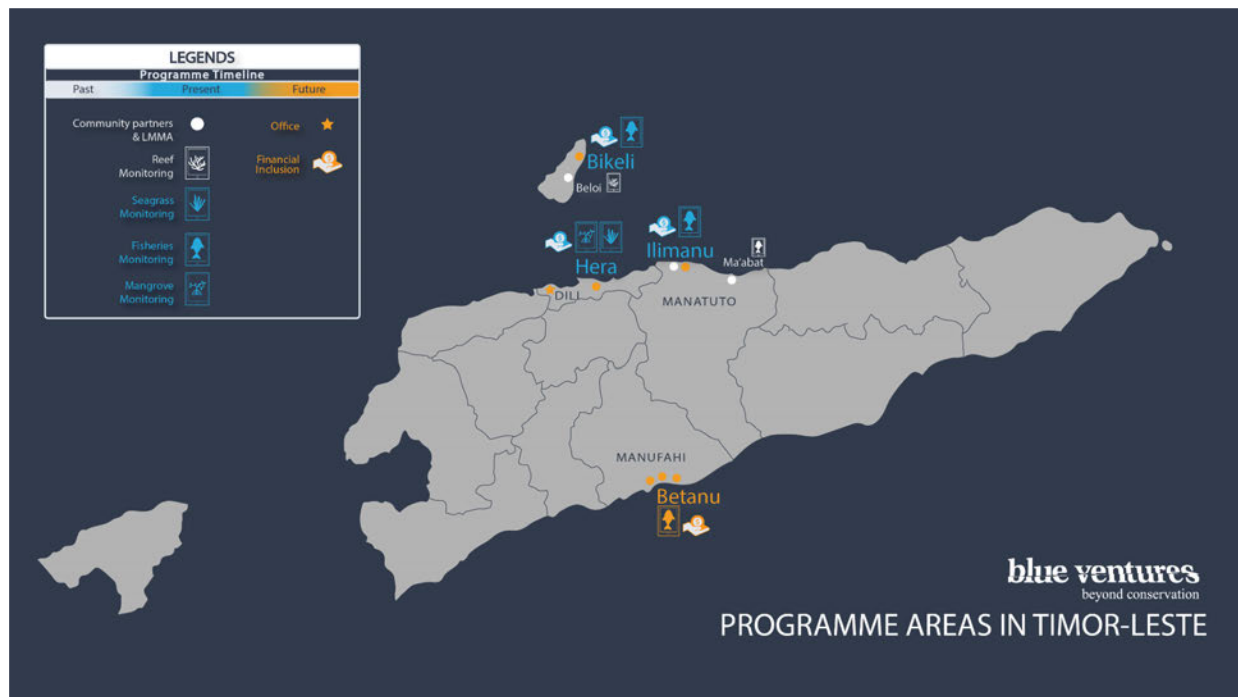
Submission Deadline: 30th April 2024

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Darwin Initiative Project Information

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| Project reference | 30-027 |
| Project title | Improving fisher livelihoods and protecting marine biodiversity in Timor-Leste |
| Country/ies | Timor-Leste |
| Lead Partner | Blue Ventures Conservation |
| Project partner(s) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government of Timor-Leste, Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries • WorldFish • Dreamers Dive Academy (DDA) • Assosiasaun Mariniero Timor Leste (AMTL) |
| Darwin Initiative grant value | £443,652.27 |
| Start/end dates of project | 1st April 2023 to 31st March 2026 |
| Reporting period (e.g. Apr 2023 – Mar 2024) and number (e.g. Annual Report 1, 2, 3) | April 2023 to March 2024 Annual Report 1 |
| Project Leader name | Bernardete Fonseca |
| Project website/blog/social media | http://www.blueventures.org |
| Report author(s) and date | Natercia [REDACTED], Nelson [REDACTED], Bernardete [REDACTED], Elizabeth [REDACTED], Ruth [REDACTED], 30th April 2024 |

1. Project summary



Timor-Leste sits at the heart of the Coral Triangle, an area between the Pacific and Indian Oceans and home to the richest marine biodiversity in the world. Emerging from decades of conflict, Timor-Leste became a sovereign state in 2002. Significant progress has been made towards rebuilding public infrastructure since gaining independence; however, poverty levels remain high, with nearly 42% of the population living below the poverty line, and 60% of the population food insecure.

Timor-Leste's coral reef and small pelagic fisheries underpin the livelihoods and food security of coastal communities, yet severe pressures on fisheries and declines in globally important marine biodiversity are directly threatening the communities that rely on these natural resources for their survival. These fisheries have suffered from a chronic lack of management and their productivity is declining from overfishing and habitat degradation, exacerbated by climate breakdown.

With a weak economy further undermined by Covid-19 restrictions, communities have become increasingly reliant on fishing for food and income. As pressure increases, communities have been intensifying their fishing effort, being pushed into deepening poverty in the face of diminishing returns, and have started to abandon traditional management customs, already weakened by decades of conflict, occupation and civil unrest.

To address these challenges, this project will support coastal communities to reinvigorate traditional village-level management of local fisheries by establishing Locally Managed Marine Areas (LMMAs), incorporating customary law and local governance known as Tara Bandu and enabling this local management to collect and use data to inform decision making. The effective protection of critical areas, combined with fisher-led management of the surrounding fishing areas can boost both ecosystem health and fish productivity. Reinforcing this important connection between community-level management and household-level benefits, this project will directly integrate proven mechanisms to improve financial resilience, and help fisher households retain, manage and safeguard income from their fisheries and maintain a financial safety-net for fluctuation in income. The aim is to reduce a key driver of overfishing - uncertainty - and enable households and their communities to build long term prosperity.

2. Project stakeholders/ partners

Blue Ventures (BV) launched its Timor-Leste country programme in 2016 at the invitation of the government of Timor-Leste. The purpose of BV's partnership with government and civil society organisations within Timor-Leste is to build national and local capacity for marine conservation and sustainable fisheries management. As project lead, BV is delivering the main activities for all project outputs. BV's resident in-country team focuses on all community-level consultations, training workshops and post-training support. The technical and support team provides the guidance for site selection, fisheries monitoring and assessment, impact evaluation and analysis, and the dissemination of project results to partner communities and national stakeholders.

In managing this project, BV has worked with a variety of partners and stakeholders, building strong relationships to ensure long-term impact of the project objectives in the coastal and fisheries management sectors. The partners have grown and expanded during this period, both at local and national levels.

Timor-Leste's **Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Forestry and Fisheries (MALFF)** (previously known as the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF)) is the central Government body responsible for the design, execution, coordination and assessment of the policy defined and approved by the Council of Ministers for the areas of agriculture, forestry, fisheries and livestock. BV continues to consult the Ministry as part of this project's efforts to promote community-led fisheries management.

The Ministry of Tourism and Environment (previously the Secretary of State for Environment) is responsible for the design, implementation, coordination and evaluation of relevant policies, defined and approved by the Council of Ministers. This Ministry supports the implementation of the "Blue Economy" development strategy. The "Blue Economy" concept emphasises sustainable use of ocean resources, economic growth, and environmental conservation. Blue Ventures continues to consult the Ministry as part of implementing Tara Bandu for marine areas.

Our partnership with **WorldFish** has strengthened our cooperation with government agencies and academia, with whom we have signed Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs). Formalising agreements with academic institutions such as the University of Timor-Leste (UNTL) enables knowledge sharing and has facilitated us to collaborate on survey and research activities, involving 12 (8 female and 4 male) university students in the socio-economic surveys, including training on how to use mobile phones to carry out data collection and leading focus group discussions. Collaboration with the government has facilitated government employees to have actively participated in workshops, community meetings, the presentation of LMMAs and Tara Bandu manuals, and data sharing workshops.

Dreamers Dive Academy (DDA) is an Instructor Training Facility led by experienced dive professionals passionate about marine conservation. Over the past year, DDA and BV have maintained their collaborative efforts in providing SCUBA training to Timorese youth and BV staff. Guided by experienced dive professionals at DDA, participants have refined their skills in marine conservation, mastered dive equipment and continued their dive training. In response to feedback from the Darwin Initiative suggesting that the biodiversity element of the project could be stronger, and following a successful pilot study using Baited Remote Underwater Video (BRUVs) surveys and Seagrass-Watch methodology to monitor seagrass in Hera, during the project year we have started to explore alternative, more cost-effective methods for conducting reef monitoring, such as the possibility of adapting the methodology to monitor coral reefs, as a more financially sustainable, and less staff-resource intense alternative to scuba-dive surveys.

In this context, we are collaborating with DDA to provide training and support to local youth or fishers to conduct reef monitoring. We will coordinate with DDA to organise planning and logistics for conducting safety at sea training in two-thirds of the coastal communities in Timor-Leste: during this reporting period, the activity is in the planning phase and will be carried out once Tara Bandu is established with the communities. **Assosiasaun Mariniero Timor Leste (AMTL)** is a Timorese seafarer association that promotes safety, security and protection between seafarers

and ship owners in Timor-Leste, and promotes gender equality within the maritime sector. BV aims to collaborate with AMTL, in close partnership with DDA, on a consultancy basis to support the delivery of safety at sea activities during the project. These safety at sea sessions aim to enhance the knowledge and skills of Tara Bandu committees or fishers' groups to empower them to better monitor the areas and to inform local management.

To strengthen collaboration at local level, during the reporting period we have started working closely with the newly elected Suco (village) Councils in relevant areas to support dissemination of small-scale fisheries programmes and LMMAs. The activities include being involved in the meetings, training, assessments, surveys and financial inclusion activities, and involving women representatives from the councils in savings and loans activities, to boost female participation in fisheries management through involvement in preparing village plans and making decisions in their respective council meetings.

3. Project progress

3.1 Progress in carrying out project Activities

Output 1: Savings and loans groups established and livelihood projects piloted with fishing dependent households, are improving the economic resilience of coastal community households and contributing to support for conservation goals by the end of the project period.

To establish savings and loans groups and pilot livelihoods, an initial questionnaire was developed and presented through focus group discussions (FGDs) in the aldeias (villages) of Biqueli Pala (Atauro island) and Ilimano, Manatuto Municipality (on the mainland). The aim of the questionnaire was to gather the communities' ideas for possible livelihood activities and provide guidance on how loans can be used (Activity 1.1).

Stakeholder consultations took place in early May, involving 47 community members (27 female, 20 male) from three bairros (sub-communities within the aldeia) in Ilimano (Activity 1.6). The findings revealed that the community's income is largely reliant on fishing activities. Some community members reported that they sell firewood, even though this is banned by the government. Building on the initial consultation, a training session on savings and loans was held in the same month, bringing together 25 participants (100% female), leading to the establishment of the BEMOS savings and loans group (see Annex 4, Supporting Document 1 (Annex 4.1)). Another savings and loans group (called Tahi-Opu) has also been established in the community of Biqueli Pala.

Support has been provided to the groups through monthly meetings, which are also used to track activity progress (Activity 1.5). During this reporting period, significant achievements have been made in savings and loans activities. Across the two groups there are now 33 members (26 women, 7 men) and money circulated in the groups totals \$2,457.50, which is used to support the group members in running their small business (Annex 4.1). The establishment of savings and loans has enabled members to access loans at lower interest rates (roughly 2%): previously, the majority of members accessed loans from the Timor-Leste Microfinance Institution with high interest rates (Activity 1.2).

The BV livelihood and savings and loans process has been further refined during the reporting period, including developing a household socio-economic survey (Activity 1.8) and training data collectors to record survey data using a digital tool (Kobo Toolbox). From 13th to 15th December 2023, surveys were completed for 71 households (more than half of the fisher families) across three bairros in Ilimano. A second survey was carried out 13-20th March 2024 with 141 households across a further two bairros in Ilimano and Iliknamu. The data was analysed and displayed using the automated Kobo system and linked dashboard (Annex 4.2).

From 12th to 16th February 2024, a workshop to introduce the savings and loans model and the training and skills required was delivered to the communities of Biqueli Pala, Iliknamu and in

Ilimano. Many of the fishers and communities showed interest in establishing a group, with the result that 7 new savings and loan groups were identified from the communities, and training will be held with them in April 2024 (Activity 1.4).

Internal capacity building on savings and loans has been provided to the region by BV's Global Technical Advisor for Financial Inclusion to enhance staff skills and knowledge in preparation for delivering training to the community groups. To combine learnings and processes from across our global programmes, a financial inclusion manual was developed and translated into Tetun, the local language (Annex 4.3-4.4).

Output 2: Local marine management plans in place, governed by effective LMMA committees and implementing sustainable marine management measures which reduce threats to biodiversity, by the end of the project period.

Under this output, BV aims to establish a total of five *Tara Bandu* by the end of the project. A desk-based assessment of nine potential locations/partner communities was carried out to identify communities to approach regarding working together to develop an LMMA, ranking them based on four criteria including ecological alignment, existing relationships with the community and alignment with other existing/planned work in the same area by government, other NGOs and businesses.

Assessments were conducted to identify five potential coastal communities (Activity 2.1) (Annex 4.5). Based on these criteria, three initial *aldeias* were identified to work with to establish local marine management measures using local *Tara Bandu*: Iliknamu (Atauro island); Biqueli Pala (Atauro island); and Ilimano (Manatuto Municipality, on the mainland). In July - August 2023, community consultations started in three communities who are now ready to work together to establish a *Tara Bandu* and LMMA committees. It has been noted that two further communities are already interested in exploring the prospect of establishing an LMMA after hearing about it from neighbouring communities. However, they are awaiting the results from the *Tara Bandu* in Ilimano, Biqueli Pala, and Iliknamu. This is a positive step towards BV's coordination with the local authorities of the further two communities to commence the LMMA process in the second half of the project.

Aldeia Ilimano, mainland

Initial consultation meetings with local authorities and community members, and information sessions with communities about the benefits of developing an LMMA have been carried out. Ilimano, during a meeting with 26 fishers and gleaners representatives, including the chief, voted unanimously to work with BV to develop a *Tara Bandu* to trial a rotational octopus closure. This will be the first known octopus closure in Timor-Leste. We have begun to hold meetings with six *bairros* in Ilimano to identify the closure area (Activities 2.2 & 2.3).

Following FGDs with 12 fishers, gleaners and community representatives (Activity 2.4), participatory mapping of fishing and gleaning areas was conducted. The progress was shared with the community and a two-day participatory assessment workshop was held to evaluate the options for the octopus *Tara Bandu* zone. Discussions culminated in a consensus to implement a three-month closure of the *Tara Bandu* for 1.18 km², followed by a two-week opening period.

The process has begun for drafting the *Tara Bandu* octopus regulations and the management agreement. In addition to our commitment to the octopus *Tara Bandu* consultation process with the community, BV has further developed its collaboration with MALFF through regular attendance at meetings and updates on the project activities as they progress (Activity 2.12, helping facilitate the development of a guide on the LMMA process which will be presented to MALFF later on in the project, Activity 2.8).

Aldeia Iliknamu, Atauro island

Initial outreach was made in August with a wider community meeting on 13th September with more than 70 fishers, gleaners and local leaders. BV presented an overview of local marine

management and Tara Bandu, reasons why other communities have chosen to use Tara Bandu, and shared an overview of BV's community consultation and community-based fisheries monitoring (CFM) process. The meeting was also an opportunity to share a presentation on the importance of seagrass as a key habitat for healthy fisheries and a near-shore habitat in Iliknamu (Activities 2.2 & 2.3). Community members self-organised an additional meeting to vote, with 70 community members voting unanimously to work with BV in a community consultation process to establish a fisheries Tara Bandu.

Consultation continued following local council elections in November, and, on the 9th of February 2024, participatory mapping of fishing and gleaning areas in Biqueli village was conducted, supported by one CFM member and seven fishers, along with representatives of customary elders from the community. Based on the mapping results in Iliknamu, seagrass, coral, and mangrove habitats were identified and two potential areas pinpointed for the Tara Bandu zone, extending from Anno Ai'i Ina to Uhu Rua. After participatory mapping, a two-day participatory assessment took place, engaging local authorities, community members, fishers, and gleaners to discuss and decide on implementing Tara Bandu (Activity 2.4). The 82 participants (45 female and 37 male) voted on various options and unanimously agreed on establishing a 1.11 km² Tara Bandu area and initiating a five-year general Tara Bandu or fisheries closure. Based on the recommendations from the fishers during the participatory workshop in Iliknamu, two zones of Tara Bandu will be established: one to prohibit any activities such as anchoring, fishing and boat passage, but permitting tourists to engage in diving and snorkelling; and one to prohibit anchoring, fishing, and gleaning but allow boat passage. The Tara Bandu fish regulations and the management agreement are being drafted.

Aldeia Biqueli Pala, Atauro island

Initial outreach followed the same process as above and led to the aldeia chief and fisher representatives all being in favour of working together. Subsequently, on 7th February a meeting took place with Atauro municipality, attended by representatives from the Fisheries and Environment Department, the Biqueli Suco Council, and the aldeia chiefs. The 70 community members present voted to implement a Tara Bandu, however there was only one vote from the women/gleaners. Consequently, the aldeia chief proposed another meeting with all the fishers and gleaners to conduct a second vote, and for this the chief has decided to wait until the LMMA process in Iliknamu is completed before coordinating with BV to conduct the vote, tentatively in August 2024. In the interim, the participatory mapping process in Biqueli Pala was completed and the potential area for the Tara Bandu was defined.

Output 3: Communities are engaged in collecting ecological and fisheries data, which is being regularly analysed and fed back to communities to inform marine-management decisions.

Collecting ecological and fisheries data is integrated as part of the Tara Bandu community consultation process. As outlined above, meetings have been held to identify the first three communities, followed by consultations in the second half of Year 1 and the establishment of CFM groups. A volunteer contract was developed to be used for recruiting community members (including women) to form CFM groups across the project locations (Activity 3.4). Furthermore, the existing CFM data collection protocols were assessed and the methodology adapted specifically to community needs (Activity 3.1). This includes developing a data collection methodology to support fin-fish management, which is expected to be a focus of several of the project communities.

The new methodology and Kobo Toolbox (a mobile monitoring tool) forms were contextualised and translated into Tetun, with local language fish names added. In preparation for providing training to CFM groups on the protocol and use of Kobo (Activity 3.5), BV staff were trained on the new protocol on 25-28th September, which included a day of office-based training and three days' field training in an existing partner community (Activity 3.7).

Meetings were held with new members interested in joining CFM groups in the aldeias of Ilimano and Biqueli Pala to introduce CFM initiatives, outlining the objectives and the advantages of participation in this monitoring approach. During the sessions the data collection procedures were explained, including a 10-day landing profile assessment, followed by 30 days of landings monitoring, and subsequent daily monitoring for two weeks until the Tara Bandu opening. Additionally, we discussed the criteria and requirements for CFM membership - community members with fishing backgrounds, aged 18 and above, and proficient in mobile phone usage (or able to learn). As of March 2024, 10 women from Ilimano and 16 women from Iliknamu were successfully recruited to join the CFM groups (Activity 3.4) (Annex 4.6).

Additionally, as part of BV's global strategy, during this reporting period we have been working with external consultants to build a data analysis pipeline to streamline data from Kobo through to a user-friendly dashboard with real-time analysed data (Activity 3.3). Ahead of introducing this automated data system to Timor-Leste communities, the M&E Coordinator and LMMA team received initial training on how the dashboard and the linked, semi-automated data validation system works. The system was piloted and updated in November 2023, and training was carried out with 21 CFM members on how to use it to collect fisheries data. The data will be used to create landing profiling which will support informed decision-making in fisheries management in the project communities.

3.2 Progress towards project Outputs

Output 1: Savings and loans groups established and livelihood projects piloted with fishing dependent households, are improving the economic resilience of coastal community households and contributing to support for conservation goals by the end of the project period.

In Year 1 of the project, savings and loans groups were established with the two communities of Ilimano and Biqueli Pala (Indicator 1.1.1) (Annex 4.1). A further seven communities have shown interest in establishing savings and loans groups, with further training being delivered in April-May 2024. Areas of opportunity for livelihood work started to be identified through FGDs with three communities, and a consultation took place with MALFF in March 2024 to identify fisher livelihood improvement opportunities, highlighting potential for fish processing (Indicator 1.2.1).

Progress against this output has built the foundations for the next two years of the project. Initial data has been gathered through socio-economic surveys in five communities, serving as a baseline against which to measure the impact of savings and loans groups and livelihood pilots on household income (Indicator 1.3) and support for LMMAs (Indicator 1.4). The communities engaged in the savings and loans and livelihood pilot programme are now able to develop better financial resilience and management which will be linked to sustainable LMMA management measures (Indicator 1.2.3).

Gender training and financial literacy will take place with savings and loans groups in Year 2, after Training of Trainers and training on the savings and loans manual (which was developed this year) have taken place (Indicators 1.1.2, 1.1.3 & 1.2.2).

Output 2: Local marine management plans in place, governed by effective LMMA committees and implementing sustainable marine management measures which reduce threats to biodiversity, by the end of the project period.

Work towards achieving Output 2 has progressed well over Year 1, starting with identification and rapid assessment of communities with whom an LMMA can be developed during the project, and the selection of three initial communities to work with. Consultations, mapping and zoning of Tara Bandu areas have taken place, positioning the project well to support these three communities with establishing an LMMA committee by the end of Year 2, and with interest from a further two communities to support in Year 3 (Indicators 2.1 & 2.3). The process for drafting the Tara Bandu management agreement has already begun in two communities, which will formalise their rights to implement sustainable management measures (Indicator 2.2) such as temporary octopus closures, leading to the next stages in achieving this output.

Output 3: Communities are engaged in collecting ecological and fisheries data, which is being regularly analysed and fed back to communities to inform marine-management decisions, by the end of the project period.

Community ecological and fisheries data collection is integrated as part of the process for establishing LMMAs. Progress has been made to identify and begin LMMA work with the first three communities, and CFM groups were established in two communities, with a total of 26 members (10 members in the Ilimano group and 16 in the Iliknamu group), 100% of whom are women. Therefore, the project is on track to meet the targets for Indicators 3.1, 3.2, 3.4 and 3.5, with activities under Indicator 3.3 to take place further into the project lifetime.

3.3 Progress towards the project Outcome

Outcome: Reducing fishing pressure and protecting biodiversity in five coastal communities in Timor-Leste through community-based marine resource management and sustainable livelihoods benefits 3,210 people.

In Year 1 of the project, an initial three communities were supported in the early stages of their establishment of LMMAs and CFM groups, and 26 women from two communities were successfully recruited to join the CFM groups (Indicators 0.2 & 0.4) (Annex 4.6). Consensus was reached in two of the communities to implement marine management measures (with consultations in the third community ongoing) and areas for management were zoned, covering a total of 2.29 km² of ocean. These management measures will be initiated in Year 2 of the project (Indicator 0.1). Two savings and loans groups were established and baseline data gathered to measure household economic resilience over the duration of the project (Indicator 0.5). The number of fishers under community-based management (Indicator 0.3) will be measured based on fishers who participate in community-based management after the formalisation of the Tara Bandu agreements, as well as fishers/gleaners who are part of the LMMA management committee or group structure - as these are currently being developed and drafted, we will be able to report on this indicator in Year 2. As such, the project is on track and positioned well to achieve the Outcome by the end of the project period.

3.4 Monitoring of assumptions

Outcome assumptions

Assumption: Communities and other stakeholders are willing to participate in collaborative co-management of marine resources.

Comments: Assumption is still valid, as shown by communities during the LMMA consultation process. Ilimano, Iliknamu and Biqueli Pala have agreed to work with BV to develop a Tara Bandu to trial a rotational octopus closure and establish LMMAs.

Assumption: There is no significant unexpected increase in demand for marine resources (i.e. Covid-19 outbreaks).

Comments: Assumption is still valid. There have not been and it is not anticipated that there will be imminent restrictions put in place due to Covid-19 outbreaks.

Assumption: Political strategies are favourable to the sustainable management of natural resources.

Comments: Assumption is still valid. The outcome of this project is still aligned with the government National Strategic Plan 2011-2030 in order to increase community resilience to climate change, supporting coastal communities to protect and manage their own resources by implementing customary law (Tara Bandu).

Assumption: Engaging with project activities and access to economic incentives will improve attitudes towards protection of marine biodiversity.

Comments: Assumption is still valid. During consultations, community members, predominantly women, showed enthusiasm to participate in savings and loans and livelihood activities linked with LMMA establishment for the protection of marine biodiversity in coastal waters.

Assumption: Socio-economic assessments are able to accurately define households' relationship with marine and coastal resources.

Comments: Assumption is still valid. Socio-economic assessments are a useful entry point to support the community to decide for the implementation of LMMAs, and the information from the assessments provided data on community marine resource usage.

Assumption: Improved marine management measures will contribute to a long-term aim (10 years) to halt declines in fisheries productivity.

Comments: Assumption is still valid as this project is supporting sustainability in marine resource usage, including in developing community-led fisheries management measures that are informed by data.

Assumption: Savings and loans groups and livelihood schemes will be sufficient to increase household financial security within the project lifespan.

Comments: Assumption is still valid and will be monitored throughout the project period. Thus far, savings and loans group members have saved \$2,457.50 and have accessed loans to run small businesses. Savings and loans groups have received training on how to manage their income.

Output 1 assumptions

Assumption: There are a suitable number of livelihood interventions identified that community members are interested in and that do not have a negative impact on marine conservation.

Comments: Assumption is still valid and will be monitored as livelihood interventions are implemented throughout the project.

Assumption: Savings and loans groups and livelihood schemes will be sufficient to increase household financial security within the project lifespan.

Comments: As above: assumption is still valid.

Assumption: Income from livelihoods acts as a catalyst for further local natural resource management and provides resilience to global shocks.

Comments: Assumption is still valid.

Output 2 assumptions

Assumption: Communities wish to continue with management measures after the project ends.

Comments: Assumption is still valid as the LMMAs activities strengthen customary law, the community will manage their own resources by using the existing traditional law.

Assumption: Legislation and policies in Timor-Leste do not change, and/or the legal provision for allowing locally-led marine resource management is maintained.

Comments: Assumption is still valid: the government priority remains to support small scale fisheries to enable coastal communities to utilise their resources sustainably.

Assumption: There are no natural disasters or other unforeseen events that affect managed areas.

Comments: Assumption is still valid. Thus far, there have been no natural disasters or other unforeseen issues affecting the areas managed.

Output 3 assumptions

Assumption: Community members are interested and have the time and ability to be part of participatory monitoring.

Comments: Assumption is still valid. Communities have thus far been involved in meetings, with women voluntarily involved in the community fisheries monitoring group.

Assumption: Knowledge from participatory monitoring is used to design community-led management plans.

Comments: Assumption is still valid.

Assumption: Ecological data collection is not delayed by adverse weather or other unforeseen events.

Comments: Assumption is still valid.

3.5 Impact: achievement of positive impact on biodiversity and poverty reduction

The project has made progress towards achieving a positive impact on biodiversity and poverty reduction. The project aims to support 3,210 people across five coastal communities to establish effective management of their fisheries to secure livelihoods, improve food security and build financial resilience, through three linked interventions; strengthening fisher household financial resilience, scaling up locally led management, and community data collection for local decision making. In Year 1 significant progress has already been made to implement these interventions with three communities.

To strengthen fisher household financial resilience, we have established two fisher savings groups in two communities. We continue to carry out monthly monitoring and mentoring of these groups, and have seen significant progress in their savings. Fisher savings groups help with the upfront costs of more effective and sustainable fisheries management and allow fishers to remain economically stable during the implementation of LMMAs and during fluctuating fishing income, allowing them to increase their ability to build household financial resilience.

We are still in the early stages of implementing new LMMA livelihood activities, which will include equipping fishers with the tools/training they need to improve the quality of their catch, reduce wastage and reach high value markets to reduce poverty. However, we have started to hold weekly meetings with BV's Indonesia team to learn from their experience in improving the market prices of catch through market and value chain assessments. We have carried out community consultation in three bairros (Marmer, Lian-Lidu and Behau) in Ilimano to gather information on capacity gaps and training needs on how to improve catch quality through better catch processing (fish cleaning and drying), which fish species to target, and which equipment to use to reduce spoilage.

We continue to promote the use of customary-based law, Tara Bandu, as the predominant participatory management tool throughout the project to scale up locally led management and achieve positive impact on biodiversity. We are working with communities to gain formal tenure and rights to their fishing grounds, and have already facilitated consultations and support towards the development of local marine management plans to be endorsed and ratified by the national government. We completed initial consultation meetings in three communities, which included community representatives including fishers and gleaners, to discuss the potential for a Tara Bandu for the octopus fishery. As a result, it was agreed that the octopus Tara Bandu will be implemented in two communities. For Biqueli Pala, participants plan to implement a Tara Bandu by the end of 2024. By managing the octopus fishery, this can potentially reverse declines in catches, and prevent losses in associated fisher earnings and food security. Using Tara Bandu, which is endorsed by communities and authorities, increases the area of marine habitats under local protection, improving ecosystem health and the preservation of nearshore biodiversity, at the same as building community resilience.

4. Project support to the Conventions, Treaties or Agreements

The project is contributing to all three main objectives of the CBD (ratified by Timor-Leste in 2006), particularly Articles 6, 8, 10 and 11 (3). The project is strongly aligned with the Programme of Work on marine and coastal biodiversity (4) by promoting participation of communities in the establishment and maintenance of LMMAs in line with decision VII/28 on protected areas. By working in a participatory manner with fishers to manage biodiversity with the goal of reducing poverty and protecting preferential access rights, the project is fulfilling articles 7 and 8 of the basic principles of this Programme of Work. In this reporting period we have reinforced the effective management of marine resources through the initial stages of development of Tara Bandu to manage the octopus fishery in three communities, a practicable action to rebuild fish populations and protect key habitats, helping protect critical ecosystems and ensure local communities are able to benefit sustainably from biodiversity; helping Timor-Leste achieve CBD Aichi Biodiversity Targets 6, 10, 11 and 14 (5), and contributing towards Timor-Leste's commitment to Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 14, including: effectively regulate harvesting and end overfishing and destructive fishing practices and implement science-based management plans, in order to restore fish stocks; and to enhance the contribution of marine biodiversity to the development of developing countries (8).

We have taken initial steps to develop livelihood options, which through fisheries and marine ecosystem-based bio-physical resources is supported by the Timor-Leste National Adaptation Plan (under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)) and the Timor-Leste Strategic Plan 2011-2030 (6), in order to increase community climate-resilience. Our project activities are supporting the Timor-Leste Government's goal to work alongside national and international organisations to safeguard coastal and marine resources, ensuring sustainable food production (7).

5. Project support for multidimensional poverty reduction

Timor-Leste's coral reef and small pelagic fisheries underpin the livelihoods and food security of coastal communities. The project is an important connection between community-level management and household-level benefits, this project aims to directly integrate proven mechanisms to improve financial resilience, and help fisher households retain, manage and safeguard income from their fisheries and maintain a financial safety-net for fluctuation in income.

The project focuses on delivering activities (targeting at least 50% women) that are expected to strengthen the financial resilience of communities, whilst ensuring links with marine ecosystem health outcomes. Economic resilience strategies linked with participatory monitoring, marine resource management and capacity building of communities are expected to enable fishers to sustain these actions in the long term. The project will introduce participatory marine monitoring and fisheries management, targeting fisheries that are of particular importance to women - already in Year 1, the initial stages have been achieved through establishing monitoring groups and preparing to deliver the necessary training to facilitate robust data collection methods with two communities. Marine management interventions will subsequently be formalised within an LMMA, established using Tara Bandu, incorporating work to develop new and improve existing livelihoods to address community income as a whole. This will increase the area of marine habitats under local protection, and bring local fisheries under community management.

6. Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI)

The project activities are designed to be gender sensitive, supporting SDG Goal 5, including: women's rights to economic resources, using technology to promote empowerment of women and ensuring women's participation in decision making. Livelihood activities will benefit entire households, and improved economic empowerment will reduce gender gaps in employment and the vulnerability of women to gender-based violence.

The project aims to engage women, particularly through fisheries monitoring groups, and prioritise the inclusion of women in LMMA management groups. Building on this, collaboration

with the government is building to promote women’s participation in national level forums on fisheries management.

This project builds on our existing work, and aims to empower women to have a more equitable role in resource management and decision-making. In this reporting period, we successfully recruited and selected 10 women from Ilimano, and 16 women from Iliknamu, to join CFM groups. Evaluation work by BV has highlighted the positive social impact for women engaged in CFM groups, and how their provision of data elevates their voice in decision making forums, highlighting the valuable role women can play in marine management.

In this reporting period, women representatives from the Suco Councils were selected to be part of the savings and loans groups. The Tahi-Opu group has grown to 23 members (16 women, 7 men), making women’s voices heard in community and council decision-making.

In the following reporting periods we will deliver gender training for those participating in marine management, to increase gender-inclusivity and ensure an inclusive process for all stakeholders.

| | |
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| Please quantify the proportion of women on the Project Board ¹ . | 100% |
| Please quantify the proportion of project partners that are led by women, or which have a senior leadership team consisting of at least 50% women ² . | For project partners such as government entities (MALFF) this can be hard to verify. None of the project partners are receiving subgrants under the project, therefore we do not have access to this information on organisational structure. WorldFish: Senior Management 20% women Dreamers Dive Academy (DDA): Team Assosiasaun Mariniero Timor Leste (AMTL): unknown |

| GESI Scale | Description | Put X where you think your project is on the scale |
|--------------------------|--|--|
| Not yet sensitive | The GESI context may have been considered but the project isn’t quite meeting the requirements of a ‘sensitive’ approach | |
| Sensitive | The GESI context has been considered and project activities take this into account in their design and implementation. The project addresses basic needs and vulnerabilities of women and marginalised groups and the project will not contribute to or create further inequalities. | X |

¹ A Project Board has overall authority for the project, is accountable for its success or failure, and supports the senior project manager to successfully deliver the project.

² Partners that have a formal governance role in the project, and a formal relationship with the project that may involve staff costs and/or budget management responsibilities.

| | | |
|-----------------------|---|--|
| Empowering | The project has all the characteristics of a 'sensitive' approach whilst also increasing equal access to assets, resources and capabilities for women and marginalised groups | |
| Transformative | The project has all the characteristics of an 'empowering' approach whilst also addressing unequal power relationships and seeking institutional and societal change | |

7. Monitoring and evaluation

BV delivers projects using principles of adaptive management, as part of a cycle that moves from project design, implementation and monitoring, to reviewing results, and back to project design (adapting/revising strategy and plans). Review happens at a range of frequencies, with the day-to-day implementation of activities reviewed more frequently (at least monthly).

BV Timor-Leste has a dedicated in-country Monitoring and Evaluation Coordinator. This increased capacity has allowed us to build the M&E programme in Timor-Leste from the ground up, focusing on establishing robust systems and ensuring all staff and stakeholders feel a sense of ownership. Following BV's communities first approach, the project M&E is participatory and primarily community-led.

We use data from M&E activities to continually assess the project and the assumptions that underpin it, reviewing the relevance of the outputs and activities of the project. In May 2023 we submitted a logframe change request to ensure activities reflected key findings as a result of pilot studies and/or community surveys which took place or were finalised between proposal submission and the beginning of the project, and, in response to subsequent feedback from NIRAS, this was followed by an amendment to ensure the logframe indicators are time bound (approved in March 2024). Expected results for the reporting period have been met. Communities have begun to draft management measures, which contribute to conservation targets. Participatory monitoring (habitat and fisheries) has proven to be a suitable approach and is progressing, collecting baseline information to inform marine management. A smart phone-based data collection methodology is being implemented for fisheries monitoring, starting with training data collectors in the use of the tool, and by doing so, we will gather the necessary data needed to work towards achieving the project outcome of reducing fishing pressure and protecting priority biodiversity in Timor-Leste and using these data to inform decisions.

Methodologies for key aspects of the project are outlined below:

Livelihoods and savings and loans: Opportunities explored within the project will be based on community needs assessments and community consultations, which began in Year 1 of the project through household socio-economic surveys and participant surveys to establish baseline data. These surveys will also be conducted at the end of the project to monitor and evaluate the success of the schemes, and any challenges communities may have encountered.

Securing tenure: In line with BV's participatory approach we have conducted FGDs with fishers and other stakeholders to determine support for LMMAs and identify community concerns about fish stocks. This information will then be used to adapt activities as needed to address these concerns. This will be complemented by end of project surveys to assess community support for the LMMA management measures implemented, to ensure a community-led approach.

Fisheries and habitat monitoring: Supporting and expanding our women-led community based fisheries monitoring programme (CFM) has begun by recruiting female data collectors who have been trained in digital data collection techniques using smartphones and syncing findings to our

online platform, where they will be interpreted, summarised and fed back to communities in near real-time, as well as sharing data summaries with the MALFF - strengthening the connection between monitoring data and evidence-based decision-making in government. Alongside habitat monitoring, these data will be presented back to communities, providing crucial information on the changing condition of the marine environment through time, connecting directly to local decision making about the access, use and protection of habitats and the fisheries they support, and enabling adaptive decision making based on the data available.

Our monitoring systems have not changed since the project inception. We continue to investigate how these monitoring plans and systems might change in the future, including following the life of this project.

8. Lessons learnt

Early on in the project, the Conservation Science Senior Manager transitioned into a new role. This unfortunately coincided with a change in Country Director. Thus, the start of some activities were put on hold until the beginning of August, when an interim Programme Manager - LMMAs was appointed, followed by the new Country Director starting in September. The project implementation timetable was updated to account for the delay, and ensure that all project activities will be successfully delivered within the project timeframe. Following the departure of the interim Programme Manager - LMMAs in February 2024, the recruitment of a Project Manager is in progress to support the work, and will be on board in Year 2. To support supervision and ensure the progress of activities as based on the project timeframe, the Timor-Leste Country Director is providing additional project management support until the new Project Manager is onboarded. Staff resourcing was subsequently increased on the project in the remainder of year one and a budget change request was submitted in December 2023 to reflect the change in resource needs in Year 1.

9. Actions taken in response to previous reviews (if applicable)

Feedback and questions posed when the project was funded were addressed with the submission of the half year report. Feedback shared by NIRAS in January 2024 on the project logframe was incorporated and submitted via a formal change request, which was approved in March 2024.

10. Risk Management

An updated version of the risk register can be found in Annex 4.7.

11. Sustainability and legacy

The project is reinforcing the effective management of marine resources through LMMA measures such as Tara Bandu, practicable actions to rebuild fish populations and protect key habitats, and helping protect critical ecosystems and ensure local communities are able to benefit sustainably from biodiversity; helping Timor-Leste achieve CBD Aichi Biodiversity Targets 6, 10, 11 and 14.

We have taken the first steps to developing livelihood options which support the Timor-Leste Government's goal to work alongside national and international organisations to safeguard coastal and marine resources, ensuring income stability and sustainable food production. We are building community financial resilience, fisheries management and ecological monitoring, grounded in well-established participatory and incentive-based models that help ensure long-term community engagement.

This reporting period, an exchange visit took place between the communities of Ilimano, Hera, Iliknamu and Biqueli Pala, and representatives from the Ministry of Aquaculture and Fisheries and the General Director of Environment. The exchange was an opportunity for fisher-fisher education to build support for maintaining community-based fisheries management, creating a culture and tradition of conservation to ensure that actions continue beyond the project term.

The legacy of Darwin's support will include increased engagement with the Government, providing the potential to achieve impact on a national scale and a project that has been based on community priorities and inclusion participation.

12. Darwin Initiative identity

This reporting period we have worked with various government, civil society and community partners to implement project activities and have openly and transparently acknowledged the Darwin Initiative and the UK Government's funding of these activities as part of a larger programme. Partners and communities in the project host country are well-informed of BV's activities funded by the Darwin Initiative. Programme updates are shared through a Facebook page: www.facebook.com/BVTimorLeste. [This post](#) was shared in February 2024 on the LMMA consultation process in Ilimano.

13. Safeguarding

| | |
|--|--------|
| Has your Safeguarding Policy been updated in the past 12 months? | Yes/No |
| Have any concerns been investigated in the past 12 months | Yes/No |

| | | |
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| Does your project have a Safeguarding focal point? | Yes/No [If yes, please provide their name and email] Name: Bernardete [REDACTED] Email: [REDACTED] | |
| Has the focal point attended any formal training in the last 12 months? | Yes/No [If yes, please provide date and details of training] Date: 7th September 2023 Details: Training on BV's Safeguarding framework included Our Commitment to Safeguarding, our policies (the Protection Policy for Children and Vulnerable Adults, and the Code of Conduct), and how to report a safeguarding concern through the Whistleblowing and Reporting Procedure. | |
| What proportion (and number) of project staff have received formal training on Safeguarding? | Past: 85% [11] Planned: 100% [2] | |
| Has there been any lessons learnt or challenges on Safeguarding in the past 12 months? Please ensure no sensitive data is included within responses. Robust safeguarding policies and procedures are in place at BV, and ongoing staff training and proactive communication with stakeholders continue to be important - a lesson learnt is to ensure safeguarding information is disseminated to all staff and communities. | | |
| Does the project have any developments or activities planned around Safeguarding in the coming 12 months? If so please specify. Safeguarding policies and procedures are reviewed regularly. BV intends to integrate sharing of safeguarding information and staff training in the project work plan over the coming year to ensure widespread awareness and accountability regarding safeguarding practices. | | |
| Please describe any community sensitisation that has taken place over the past 12 months; include topics covered and number of participants. N/A | | |
| Have there been any concerns around Health, Safety and Security of your project over the past year? If yes, please outline how this was resolved. N/A | | |

14. Project expenditure

Table 1: Project expenditure during the reporting period (1 April 2023 – 31 March 2024)

| Project spend (indicative) since last Annual Report | 2023/24 Grant (£) | 2023/24 Total Darwin Costs (£) | Variance % | Comments (please explain significant variances) |
|---|-------------------|--------------------------------|------------|---|
| Staff costs | [REDACTED] | [REDACTED] | [REDACTED] | |
| Consultancy costs | [REDACTED] | [REDACTED] | [REDACTED] | |
| Overhead Costs | [REDACTED] | [REDACTED] | [REDACTED] | |

| | | | |
|------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|--|
| Travel and subsistence | | | |
| Operating Costs | | | Purchasing internet for CFM members has been delayed |
| Capital items | | | |
| Others | | | Purchasing some equipment to establish CFM groups has fallen into year 2 |
| TOTAL | £100,310 | £100,310 | |

Table 2: Project mobilising of matched funding during the reporting period (1 April 2023 – 31 March 2024)

| | Secured to date | Expected by end of project | Sources |
|--|-----------------|----------------------------|---|
| Matched funding leveraged by the partners to deliver the project (£). | | | We have secured match funding from Wilstar Social Impact from November 2022 - October 2025. |
| Total additional finance mobilised for new activities occurring outside of the project, building on evidence, best practices and the project (£) | £0 | £0 | N/A |

15. Other comments on progress not covered elsewhere

N/A

16. OPTIONAL: Outstanding achievements or progress of your project so far (300-400 words maximum). This section may be used for publicity purposes

I agree for the Biodiversity Challenge Funds Secretariat to publish the content of this section (please leave this line in to indicate your agreement to use any material you provide here).

| File Type (Image / Video / Graphic) | File Name or File Location | Caption, country and credit | Online accounts to be tagged (leave blank if none) | Consent of subjects received (delete as necessary) |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|--|--|
| Photographs | Annex 4.8 | Blue Ventures Timor-Leste | www.instagram.com/blueventures/ www.facebook.com/BVTimorLeste | Yes / No |

Annex 1: Report of progress and achievements against logframe for Financial Year 2023-2024

| Project summary | SMART Indicators | Progress and Achievements April 2023 - March 2024 | Actions required/planned for next period |
|---|---|---|---|
| <p>Impact: Healthy and diverse marine ecosystems in Timor-Leste are effectively managed and monitored to form a foundation for local coastal communities to improve their livelihoods, food security and climate resilience.</p> | | | |
| <p>Outcome - Reducing fishing pressure and protecting biodiversity in five coastal communities in Timor-Leste through community-based marine resource management and sustainable livelihoods benefits 3,210 people.</p> | <p>0.1 Area of ocean under community management increases by 2km² by end Yr 2 and at least 5km² by the end of the project</p> | <p>The areas for management were zoned in two communities, (Iliknamu, Atauro and Behedan, Ilimano), and cover a total of 2.29 km² of ocean. These management measures will be initiated in Year 2 of the project.</p> | <p>In Year 2 plans are in place for coverage to increase to 3.47 km², with management measures implemented.</p> <p>On track to meet the target of 5 km² by the end of Year 3.</p> |
| | <p>0.2 Five communities are supported to establish LMMAs and CFM groups (three communities by end Yr 2, and an additional two by end Yr 3)</p> | <p>An initial three communities have been supported in the early stages of their establishment of LMMAs and CFM groups using local Tara Bandu: Iliknamu (Atauro island); Biqueli Pala (Atauro island); and Ilimano (Manatuto Municipality, on the mainland). 10 women from Ilimano and 16 women from Iliknamu were successfully recruited to join the CFM groups.</p> | <p>A marine Tara Bandu will be drafted and submitted in Year 2 with these three communities. The CFM groups will be supported through training to begin their data collection activities. A further two communities will be identified and engaged by Year 3.</p> |
| | <p>0.3 At least 500 fishers under community-based management (260 fishers by end Yr 2 and an additional 240 by end Yr 3)</p> | <p>The number of fishers under community-based management will be measured based on fishers who participate in community-based management after the formalisation of the Tara Bandu agreements, as well as fishers/gleaners who are part of the LMMA management committee or group structure - the initial stages to develop LMMA committees has begun in Year 1. These are currently in the process of</p> | |

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| | | being developed and drafted, we will be able to report on this indicator in Year 2. | |
| | 0.4 Fisheries data collected by CFM groups used to inform management measures that protect biodiversity in five sites by the end of the project (data collected by three groups by end Yr 2, and an additional two by end Yr 3) | In the first year of the project, we established two CFM groups with 26 members, all of whom are women. These groups will be supported to begin collecting data in Year 2. | Data collection training for CFM groups will be delivered in April 2024 in Iliknamu (fish) and June 2024 in Ilimano (octopus). |
| | 0.5 By project end, at least 50% of households participating in savings and loans groups and/or livelihoods schemes for more than one year have improved economic resilience compared to baseline. | Two savings and loans groups were established with 33 members. Household socio-economic surveys were conducted, the data for which serves as a baseline to measure this indicator. | In Year 2, the project will engage with community members and households to foster the establishment of savings and loans groups. Building strong financial networks through these groups can significantly contribute to the overall wellbeing of the community. |
| Output 1 - Savings and loans groups established and livelihood projects piloted with fishing dependent households, are improving the economic resilience of coastal community households and contributing to support for conservation goals by the end of the project period. | <p>1.1.1 Establish savings and loans groups with four communities by end of project (one by end Yr 1, and additional two by end Yr 2, and a further two by end Yr 3)</p> <p>1.1.2 40 savings and loans group members receive gender training (members from three groups by end Yr 2, total of five groups by end Yr 3)</p> <p>1.1.3 40 savings and loans group members receive financial literacy and/or business training (members from three groups by end Yr 2, total of five by end Yr 3)</p> <p>1.2.1 Areas of opportunity for livelihood work identified in consultation with three communities</p> | <p>Savings and loans groups were established with two communities (Annex 4.1). A further seven communities have shown interest in establishing savings and loans groups, with further training being delivered in April-May 2024. Areas of opportunity for livelihood work started to be identified through FGDs which took place with three communities. A consultation took place with MALFF in March 2024 to identify fisher livelihood improvement opportunities, and fish processing was highlighted: technical training will be delivered to fishers in Year 2.</p> <p>Initial household data has been gathered through socio-economic surveys in the communities of Marmer, Lian-Lidu, Behau and Behedan in Ilimano, and Iliknamu in Atauro, serving as a baseline against which to measure Indicators 1.3 and 1.4. The communities engaged in the savings and loans and livelihood pilot programme are now able to develop better financial resilience and management which will be linked and contribute to Indicator 1.2.3.</p> <p>Gender training and financial literacy will take place with savings and loans groups in Year 2.</p> | |

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| | <p>(one by end Yr 2, an additional two by end Yr 3)</p> <p>1.2.2 Individuals taking part in livelihood projects receive technical training/support</p> <p>1.2.3 Livelihood projects linked to sustainable LMMA management measures that reduce threats to biodiversity piloted in at least three communities by project end</p> <p>1.3 50% of households participating in savings and loans groups and/or livelihoods projects for more than one year have increased household income or wealth by project end compared to baseline</p> <p>1.4 >20% of households participating in savings and loans groups and/or livelihood schemes have increased support for having an LMMA in their community by project end compared to baseline</p> | | |
| Activity 1.1 Conduct preliminary community consultations with communities about savings and loans groups | | An initial questionnaire was developed and presented through focus group discussions (FGDs) to gather the communities' ideas for possible livelihood activities and provide guidance on how loans can be used. | |
| Activity 1.2 Pilot savings and loans scheme with fisher groups in four communities | | Savings and loans groups were established in two communities. | 7 new savings and loan groups have been identified, and training will be held with them from April 2024. |
| Activity 1.3 Conduct gender training with savings and loans group members | | Starting in Year 2 | Start with preparing ToR for recruiting the facilitator to deliver the gender training. |
| Activity 1.4 Conduct financial literacy and/or business training with savings and loans group members | | Starting in Year 2 | Training of trainers will be delivered in financial literacy and business, followed by |

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| | | training delivered by those trainers. |
| Activity 1.5 Provide ongoing support for savings and loans groups including regularly attending meetings | Conducted monthly monitoring and mentoring to the two established groups. | The two existing groups will become independent by the end of the project. |
| Activity 1.6 Conduct stakeholder consultations and focus group discussions in communities to identify areas for livelihoods interventions | Stakeholder consultations took place in early May 2023 in Ilimano. The findings revealed that the community's income is largely reliant on fishing activities. Conducted the stakeholder meeting with CARE Timor-Leste on a school feeding programme, and identified opportunities for fishers to sell their fresh fish. | Connect fishers with a school feeding program. |
| Activity 1.7 Conduct market and value chain assessments in three identified communities | Scheduled for Years 2 and 3 | Pilot in one community first after that will expand to other communities |
| Activity 1.8 Baseline household socioeconomic survey | Baseline household socio-economic surveys completed for more than half of the fisher families across in Ilimano and Iliknamu, a total of 112 households. | |
| Activity 1.9 Early stage implementation of other new LMMA livelihood activities as identified from community consultations, focus group interviews and market and value chain assessments | Started weekly meetings to share experiences across the BV Asia programmes on carrying out market and value chain assessments. Engaged with MALFF to support the delivery of value chain training. | Pilot in one community and will expand to other communities |
| Activity 1.10 Surveys at baseline and project end to assess community support for LMMA management measures | See Activity 1.8 | |
| Activity 1.11 Provide focused livelihood technical training to fisher groups depending on interests identified during stakeholder consultations (fish cleaning, drying fish, targeting larger fish, equipment training etc.) | Consultations completed in three communities to understand the priorities for livelihood technical training which will be delivered in Years 2 and 3. | Work with MALFF to facilitate the training. |
| Activity 1.12 Endpoint household socioeconomic survey | Scheduled for Year 3 | |

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| <p>Output 2 - Local marine management plans in place, governed by effective LMMA committees and implementing sustainable marine management measures which reduce threats to biodiversity, by the end of the project period.</p> | <p>2.1. At least five communities with an established LMMA committee (three communities by end Yr 2, and an additional two by end Yr 3)</p> <p>2.2. At least five communities implementing sustainable management measures that reduce threats to biodiversity (e.g. no-take zones or gear restrictions) (three communities by end Yr 2, and an additional two by end Yr 3)</p> <p>2.3. At least 30 people directly involved in marine management by the end of the project (active LMMA committee members); disaggregated by sex (20 people end Yr 2, and an additional 10 by end Yr 3)</p> <p>2.4. 30 individuals receive management, advocacy or data literacy training</p> <p>2.5. Compliance with management measures stable or increasing from Yr 2 to Yr 3</p> | <p>Three communities were supported through consultations, mapping and zoning of Tara Bandu areas as the starting point to establishing an LMMA committee by the end of Year 2.</p> <p>Three communities have agreed to implement sustainable management measures in Year 2, with agreements being drafted to formalise the communities' rights.</p> <p>Work towards Indicators 2.3 - 2.5 will begin in Year 2.</p> | |
| <p>Activity 2.1 Identify potential communities using rapid assessment of environmental and social factors for site selection</p> | <p>Assessments were conducted to identify five potential coastal communities (Annex 4.5).</p> | <p>By the end of September 2024, we will identify two more potential communities, who have shown interest in Tara Bandu after hearing about the process from neighbouring communities.</p> | |
| <p>Activity 2.2 Initial consultation meetings with local authorities and community members</p> | <p>Initial consultation took place with the Suco Council of Uma-Caduac (Ilimano, mainland), and with Iliknamu and Biqueli Pala (Atauro island) including the community, fishers and gleaners, who have decided to implement Tara Bandu's at varying points through Year 2.</p> | | |

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| <p>Activity 2.3 Information sessions with communities about the benefits of developing an LMMA</p> | <p>Consultations, mapping and zoning of Tara Bandu areas have taken place with three communities prior to establishing LMMA committees.</p> | |
| <p>Activity 2.4 LMMA consultation process with five priority communities and support them to develop and implement marine management measures</p> | <p>Consultations, mapping and zoning of Tara Bandu areas have taken place in the two communities engaged to date, positioning the project well to support the establishment of an LMMA committee in Year 2.</p> <p>For Biqueli Pala 70 community members voted to implement a Tara Bandu, however there was only one vote from the women/gleaners and so a second vote will be held</p> <p>For Behedan, in Ilimano, participatory mapping of fishing and gleaning areas was conducted February-March 2023 and a two-day participatory assessment workshop (with 49 community members, 23 female & 26 male) led to consensus to implement a three-month closure of the Tara Bandu for 1.18 km², followed by a two-week opening period.</p> <p>House to house visits took place in Behedan (Ilimano) to share and obtain feedback on the proposed Octopus Tara Bandu boundaries and other information during the participatory octopus assessment workshops. These activities are part of the next steps of Tara Bandu consultation to the wider community in the area.</p> <p>For Iliknamu, in Atauro, participatory mapping of fishing and gleaning areas was conducted in two different areas along with a two-day participatory assessment workshop (with 82 participants, 45 female and 37 male), where 87% of community members voted to ban all fishing activity in the Tara Bandu area (1.11</p> | <p>Before the end of August 2024, the final review of the maps will be delivered.</p> <p>Writing formal Tara Bandu regulations with suco council, fisher and gleaner representatives and establishing CFM groups before closures start in September 2024.</p> |

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| | | km ²) and no boats are allowed in the area for five years. Initial mapping of the areas was done, which will be verified with GPS | |
| Activity 2.5 Develop materials and deliver a public awareness campaign to new and existing LMMA communities on basic ocean ecology, focused on fish life-cycles and how reef, seagrass and wider marine ecosystem health affects fish populations | | Scheduled for Year 2 | |
| Activity 2.6 Provide capacity building support, including management, advocacy and data literacy training to LMMA committee members | | Scheduled for Year 2 | |
| Activity 2.7 Provide ongoing monitoring and support to LMMA committees and suco and aldeia leaders in managing the LMMA | | Scheduled for Year 2 | |
| Activity 2.8 Develop a guide on how to facilitate and co-design the LMMA process to be presented to the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries (MAF) in order for it to be used nationally | | Scheduled for Year 2 | |
| Activity 2.9 LMMA peer-to-peer knowledge exchanges (Yrs 2 and 3) | | From the 29th of June to 1st July 2023, the representatives from the communities of Lian-Lidu, Marmer, Behau (Ilimano), Sukaer, Ailok, Moris Foun (Hera) and Iliknamu and Biqueli Pala (Atauro island), alongside representatives from MALFF met on Atauro Island for the first LMMA exchange. | A second LMMA exchange that will bring more community representatives, fishers, collectors, and fisheries monitoring group members from across the sites will be held in the first half of 2024. |
| Activity 2.10 Yearly compliance surveys | | Scheduled for Year 2 | Compliance surveys will be in the second half of Year 2 after the first temporary closures are implemented |
| Activity 2.11 Safety at sea training in five communities as a means of engagement, building relationships and improving the safety of fishers | | Scheduled for Year 2 | |
| Activity 2.12 Increase engagement with the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries (MAF), including regularly attending meetings and providing summarised data | | Scheduled for Years 2 and 3 | |
| Output 3 - Communities are engaged in collecting ecological and fisheries data, which is being regularly analysed and fed back to communities to inform marine- | 3.1. Five new or existing CFM groups supported (100% women) at sites with LMMA consultations, by project end (three communities by end Yr 2, and an additional two by end Yr 3) | Two CFM groups have been established, with a total of 26 members, 100% of whom are women. The members will begin data collection Year 2, followed by further training in Years 2 and 3. Landings surveys are planned to follow the first temporary closures in late 2024; subsequently, the data will be shared with the communities via data sharing events in Years 2 and 3. | |

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| <p>management decisions, by the end of the project period.</p> | <p>3.2. Number of women participating in fisheries monitoring increases by 40 (24 by end Yr 2 and an additional 16 by end Yr 3)</p> <p>3.3. CFM group members receive leadership and gender training by end Yr 3</p> <p>3.4 At least four data sharing events facilitated in each of five communities to share analysed fisheries data among community members and wider stakeholder groups (Yrs 2 and 3)</p> <p>3.5 Ecological data collected in each LMMA site based on habitat present (seagrass, mangrove or reef)</p> | | |
| <p>Activity 3.1 Assess existing CFM data collection protocols and amend as required to adapt to management needs</p> | <p>Existing CFM data collection protocols were assessed and the methodology adapted to support fin-fish management, which is expected to be a focus of several of the project communities.</p> | | |
| <p>Activity 3.2 Continue our support to community members to collect fisheries catch data through five new or existing CFM groups</p> | <p>Scheduled for Years 2 and 3</p> | <p>The next steps involve organising training sessions on octopus landing profiling and monitoring, followed by initiating the very first octopus data collection in April 2024 (to be reported in Year 2).</p> | |
| <p>Activity 3.3 Analysis pipeline automated to produce near real-time summarised data</p> | <p>A data analysis pipeline has been built to streamline data from Kobo through to a user-friendly dashboard with real-time analysed data.</p> | | |
| <p>Activity 3.4 Recruit at least 24 women to form three new CFM groups in communities with an LMMA</p> | <p>16 women have been recruited to join the two newly established CFM groups (Annex 4.6)</p> | | |

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| Activity 3.5 Provide training to new group members on data collection protocols and use of kobotoolbox | The system was piloted and updated in November 2023, and training was carried out with CFM members on how to use it to collect fisheries data. | The data training will be continued to other new CFM members which are planned to be recruited in Year 2. |
| Activity 3.6 Data literacy training for new CFM members and refresher training for existing members | Scheduled for Year 2 | |
| Activity 3.7 Data analysis training for Blue Ventures staff (fisheries and M&E) | BV staff were trained on the new Kobo protocol on 25-28th September, which included a day of office-based training and three days' field training in an existing partner community. | Refresher training on data collection will be continued in Year 2 to update all information to BVTL fisheries and M&E staff. |
| Activity 3.8 Fisheries Landings Profiling survey carried out by CFM groups with support from Blue Ventures staff | Scheduled for Years 2 and 3 | Training on data collection is planned for Year 2. |
| Activity 3.9 Intensive 30-day fisheries monitoring survey as baseline for each LMMA carried out by CFM groups with support from Blue Ventures staff | Scheduled for Years 2 and 3 | Training on data collection is planned for Year 2. |
| Activity 3.10 Regular (weekly) fisheries monitoring carried out by CFM groups with support from Blue Ventures staff | Scheduled for Years 2 and 3 | |
| Activity 3.11 Monthly meetings with CFM groups to review data collected and identify/deliver any training needs | Scheduled for Years 2 and 3 | |
| Activity 3.12 At least four data sharing events held with each community to share analysed ecological data among stakeholder groups and community members | Scheduled for Years 2 and 3 | |
| Activity 3.13 At least two local CFM peer-to-peer knowledge exchange (Yrs 2 & 3) | Scheduled for Years 2 and 3 | |
| Activity 3.14 Leadership and gender training for CFM members | Scheduled for Years 2 and 3 | |
| Activity 3.15 Collect appropriate ecological data on reef, seagrass and/or mangrove habitat quality in each of the five LMMA sites | Scheduled for Years 2 and 3 | |

Annex 2: Project’s full current logframe as presented in the application form (unless changes have been agreed)

| Project summary | SMART Indicators | Means of verification | Important Assumptions |
|---|--|--|--|
| <p>Impact: Healthy and diverse marine ecosystems in Timor-Leste are effectively managed and monitored to form a foundation for local coastal communities to improve their livelihoods, food security and climate resilience.</p> | | | |
| <p>Outcome - Reducing fishing pressure and protecting biodiversity in five coastal communities in Timor-Leste through community-based marine resource management and sustainable livelihoods benefits 3,210 people.</p> | <p>0.1 Area of ocean under community management increases by 2km² by end Yr 2 and at least 5km² by the end of the project</p> <p>0.2 Five communities are supported to establish LMMAs and CFM groups (three communities by end Yr 2, and an additional two by end Yr 3)</p> <p>0.3 At least 500 fishers under community-based management (260 fishers by end Yr 2 and an additional 240 by end Yr 3)</p> <p>0.4 Fisheries data collected by CFM groups used to inform management measures that protect biodiversity in five sites by the end of the project (data collected by three groups by end Yr 2, and an additional two by end Yr 3)</p> <p>0.5 By project end, at least 50% of households participating in savings and loans groups and/or livelihoods schemes for more than one year have improved economic resilience compared to baseline.</p> | <p>0.1 Documents for Tara Bandu and/or community signed zoning/delineation maps, recorded annually</p> <p>0.2 Documents for LMMA management groups and CFM groups</p> <p>0.3 Fisheries profiling data</p> <p>0.4 Fisheries monitoring data collected by CFM groups, calculated annually</p> <p>0.5 Household socioeconomic surveys, baseline and endline</p> | <p>Communities and other stakeholders are willing to participate in collaborative co-management of marine resources.</p> <p>There is no significant unexpected increase in demand for marine resources (i.e. Covid-19 outbreaks).</p> <p>Political strategies are favourable to the sustainable management of natural resources.</p> <p>Engaging with project activities and access to economic incentives will improve attitudes towards protection of marine biodiversity.</p> <p>Socio-economic assessments are able to accurately define households’ relationship with marine and coastal resources.</p> <p>Improved marine management measures will contribute to a long-term aim (10 years) to halt declines in fisheries productivity.</p> <p>Savings and loans groups and livelihood schemes will be sufficient to</p> |

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| | | | increase household financial security within the project lifespan. |
| Output 1 - Savings and loans groups established and livelihood projects piloted with fishing dependent households, are improving the economic resilience of coastal community households and contributing to support for conservation goals by the end of the project period. | <p>1.1.1 Establish savings and loans groups with four communities by end of project (one by end Yr 1, and additional two by end Yr 2, and a further two by end Yr 3)</p> <p>1.1.2 40 savings and loans group members receive gender training (members from three groups by end Yr 2, total of five groups by end Yr 3)</p> <p>1.1.3 40 savings and loans group members receive financial literacy and/or business training (members from three groups by end Yr 2, total of five by end Yr 3)</p> <p>1.2.1 Areas of opportunity for livelihood work identified in consultation with three communities (one by end Yr 2, an additional two by end Yr 3)</p> <p>1.2.2 Individuals taking part in livelihood projects receive technical training/support</p> <p>1.2.3 Livelihood projects linked to sustainable LMMA management measures that reduce threats to biodiversity piloted in at least three communities by project end</p> <p>1.3 50% of households participating in savings and loans groups and/or livelihoods projects for more than one year have increased household income or wealth by project end compared to baseline</p> | <p>1.1 Savings and loans group meeting minutes, documents, training records and attendance sheets</p> <p>1.2. Livelihoods strategy outline completed</p> <p>1.3 Savings and loans groups organisational documents</p> <p>1.4 Livelihood intervention project reports</p> <p>1.5. Household socioeconomic surveys conducted pre- and post- savings and loans group establishment and/or livelihood pilots</p> <p>1.6. Participant surveys conducted pre- and post- savings and loans group establishment and/or livelihood pilots</p> <p>1.7 Training records and attendance records</p> | <p>There are a suitable number of livelihood interventions identified that community members are interested in and that do not have a negative impact on marine conservation.</p> <p>Savings and loans groups and livelihood schemes will be sufficient to increase household financial security within the project lifespan.</p> <p>Income from livelihoods acts as a catalyst for further local natural resource management and provides resilience to global shocks.</p> |

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| | 1.4 >20% of households participating in savings and loans groups and/or livelihood schemes have increased support for having an LMMA in their community by project end compared to baseline | | |
| Output 2 - Local marine management plans in place, governed by effective LMMA committees and implementing sustainable marine management measures which reduce threats to biodiversity, by the end of the project period. | <p>2.1. At least five communities with an established LMMA committee (three communities by end Yr 2, and an additional two by end Yr 3)</p> <p>2.2. At least five communities implementing sustainable management measures that reduce threats to biodiversity (e.g. no-take zones or gear restrictions) (three communities by end Yr 2, and an additional two by end Yr 3)</p> <p>2.3. At least 30 people directly involved in marine management by the end of the project (active LMMA committee members); disaggregated by sex (20 people end Yr 2, and an additional 10 by end Yr 3)</p> <p>2.4. 30 individuals receive management, advocacy or data literacy training</p> <p>2.5. Compliance with management measures stable or increasing from Yr 2 to Yr 3</p> | <p>2.1. LMMA management committee agreements</p> <p>2.2. Management plan documenting management measures, map of closure area(s)/ calendar of seasonal restrictions</p> <p>2.3. Census and local authority records</p> <p>2.4. LMMA management committee agreements, activity reports and meeting attendance records (disaggregated by male and female association members)</p> <p>2.5. Training records and attendance records</p> <p>2.6. Yearly compliance surveys</p> | <p>Communities wish to continue with management measures after the project ends.</p> <p>Legislation and policies in Timor-Leste do not change, and/or the legal provision for allowing locally-led marine resource management is maintained.</p> <p>There are no natural disasters or other unforeseen events that affect managed areas.</p> |
| Output 3 - Communities are engaged in collecting ecological and fisheries data, which is being regularly analysed and fed back to communities to inform marine-management decisions, by the end of the project period. | <p>3.1. Five new or existing CFM groups supported (100% women) at sites with LMMA consultations, by project end (three communities by end Yr 2, and an additional two by end Yr 3)</p> <p>3.2. Number of women participating in fisheries monitoring increases by 40 (24 by end Yr 2 and an additional 16 by end Yr 3)</p> | <p>3.1. CFM training records</p> <p>3.2. CFM training and meeting attendance/participation records</p> <p>3.3. Biannual data sharing workshop attendance records.</p> <p>3.4. Ecological monitoring data records</p> | <p>Community members are interested and have the time and ability to be part of participatory monitoring.</p> <p>Knowledge from participatory monitoring is used to design community-led management plans.</p> |

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| | <p>3.3. CFM group members receive leadership and gender training by end Yr 3</p> <p>3.4 At least four data sharing events facilitated in each of five communities to share analysed fisheries data among community members and wider stakeholder groups (Yrs 2 and 3)</p> <p>3.5 Ecological data collected in each LMMA site based on habitat present (seagrass, mangrove or reef)</p> | | <p>Ecological data collection is not delayed by adverse weather or other unforeseen events.</p> |
| <p>Activities (each activity is numbered according to the output that it will contribute towards, for example 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3 are contributing to Output 1)</p> <p>Output 1 - Savings and loans groups established and livelihood projects piloted with fishing dependent households, are improving the economic resilience of coastal community households and contributing to support for conservation goals.</p> <p>1.1 Conduct preliminary community consultations with communities about savings and loans groups</p> <p>1.2 Pilot savings and loans scheme with fisher groups in four communities</p> <p>1.3 Conduct gender training with savings and loans group members</p> <p>1.4 Conduct financial literacy and/or business training with savings and loans group members</p> <p>1.5 Provide ongoing support for savings and loans groups including regularly attending meetings</p> <p>1.6 Conduct stakeholder consultations and focus group discussions in communities to identify areas for livelihoods interventions</p> <p>1.7 Conduct market and value chain assessments in three identified communities</p> <p>1.8 Baseline household socioeconomic survey</p> <p>1.9 Early stage implementation of other new LMMA livelihood activities as identified from community consultations, focus group interviews and market and value chain assessments</p> <p>1.10 Surveys at baseline and project end to assess community support for LMMA management measures</p> <p>1.11 Provide focused livelihood technical training to fisher groups depending on interests identified during stakeholder consultations (fish cleaning, drying fish, targeting larger fish, equipment training etc.)</p> <p>1.12 Endpoint household socioeconomic survey</p> <p>Output 2 - Local marine management plans in place, governed by effective LMMA committees and implementing sustainable marine management measures which reduce threats to biodiversity.</p> <p>2.1 Identify potential communities using rapid assessment of environmental and social factors for site selection</p> <p>2.2 Initial consultation meetings with local authorities and community members</p> <p>2.3 Information sessions with communities about the benefits of developing an LMMA</p> <p>2.4 LMMA consultation process with five priority communities and support them to develop and implement marine management measures</p> | | | |

- 2.4.1 Consultations start-up meetings and focus group discussions with fishers, gleaners and other stakeholders to agree consultation process and establish relationships with key community contacts
 - 2.4.2 Participatory mapping of fishing and gleaning area
 - 2.4.3 Participatory fish assessment workshop with each community
 - 2.4.4 Community workshop(s) to discuss options for management measures and management area location
 - 2.4.5 Via a combination of techniques e.g. community meetings, house to house canvassing, Focus Group Discussions, work with community representatives to carry out in-depth community consultations with relevant stakeholders, including neighbouring villages on proposed management area and management measures
 - 2.4.6 After each LMMA consultation activity, BV staff to analyse data from participatory workshops, surveys, mapping and community consultations and share results with community.
 - 2.4.7 Community workshop/meeting to share results of wider community consultation on proposed management area and management measures, and adjustment of proposed measures and management area as necessary based on feedback from consultation process
 - 2.4.8 GPS mapping of proposed LMMA areas
 - 2.4.9 Meeting with stakeholders and local authorities to draft LMMA management agreement and decide structure of LMMA management committee
 - 2.4.10 Support suco and aldeia leaders and community representatives to establish structure and roles and responsibilities of LMMA management committee, ensuring representation from women and men
 - 2.4.11 Share draft LMMA management agreement with local authorities, neighbouring villages, local and national administration and the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries (MAF)
 - 2.4.12 Erect signs and place marking buoys to delineate LMMA areas, and hold opening ceremony for LMMA
 - 2.4.13 Publicise and socialise new LMMA areas and management measures with fishers from other relevant areas who fish in the area
 - 2.4.14 Hold formal local traditional Tara Bandu (local management law) launch ceremony with community, MAF and other relevant stakeholders
- 2.5 Develop materials and deliver a public awareness campaign to new and existing LMMA communities on basic ocean ecology, focused on fish life-cycles and how reef, seagrass and wider marine ecosystem health affects fish populations
- 2.6 Provide capacity building support, including management, advocacy and data literacy training to LMMA committee members
- 2.7 Provide ongoing monitoring and support to LMMA committees and suco and aldeia leaders in managing the LMMA
- 2.8 Develop a guide on how to facilitate and co-design the LMMA process to be presented to the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries (MAF) in order for it to be used nationally
- 2.9 LMMA peer-to-peer knowledge exchanges (Yrs 2 and 3)
- 2.10 Yearly compliance surveys
- 2.11 Safety at sea training in five communities as a means of engagement, building relationships and improving the safety of fishers
- 2.12 Increase engagement with the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries (MAF), including regularly attending meetings and providing summarised data
- Output 3 - Communities are engaged in collecting ecological and fisheries data, which is being regularly analysed and fed back to communities to inform marine-management decisions.
- 3.1 Assess existing CFM data collection protocols and amend as required to adapt to management needs
 - 3.2 Continue our support to community members to collect fisheries catch data through five new or existing CFM groups
 - 3.3 Analysis pipeline automated to produce near real-time summarised data
 - 3.4 Recruit at least 24 women to form three new CFM groups in communities with an LMMA

- 3.5 Provide training to new group members on data collection protocols and use of kobotoolbox
- 3.6 Data literacy training for new CFM members and refresher training for existing members
- 3.7 Data analysis training for Blue Ventures staff (fisheries and M&E)
- 3.8 Fisheries Landings Profiling survey carried out by CFM groups with support from Blue Ventures staff
- 3.9 Intensive 30-day fisheries monitoring survey as baseline for each LMMA carried out by CFM groups with support from Blue Ventures staff
- 3.10 Regular (weekly) fisheries monitoring carried out by CFM groups with support from Blue Ventures staff
- 3.11 Monthly meetings with CFM groups to review data collected and identify/deliver any training needs
- 3.12 At least four data sharing events held with each community to share analysed ecological data among stakeholder groups and community members
- 3.13 At least two local CFM peer-to-peer knowledge exchange (Yrs 2 & 3)
- 3.14 Leadership and gender training for CFM members
- 3.15 Collect appropriate ecological data on reef, seagrass and/or mangrove habitat quality in each of the five LMMA sites

Annex 3: Standard Indicators

Table 1 Project Standard Indicators

| DI Indicator number | Name of indicator | Units | Disaggregation | Year 1 Total | Year 2 Total | Year 3 Total | Total to date | Total planned during the project |
|---------------------|--|-----------------|--|-------------------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|---|
| DI-A01 | Number of people from key national and local stakeholders completing structured and relevant training. | People | Gender | 37 (33 women and 4 men) | - | - | 37 | <p>The project aims to deliver training on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gender training - Financial literacy and/or business training - Technical livelihoods training/support - Management, advocacy or data literacy training - Leadership and gender training (CFM group members) <p>These trainings will be delivered to members from three savings and loans groups by end Yr 2, total of five savings and loans groups by end Yr 3, and to CFM group members.</p> |
| DI-D01 | Hectares of habitat under sustainable management practices | km ² | - | 0 | - | - | 0 | 2km ² by end Year 2 and 5km ² by the end Year 3 |
| DI-D16 | Number of households reporting improved livelihoods. | Households | As measured through household surveys, livelihood metric (income, education, health etc.). | 0 | - | - | 0 | The baseline surveys are carried out in Years 1 & 2. By the end of Year 3, the project aims for 50% of the households participating in livelihoods and/or savings and loans activities report improved livelihoods, compared to baseline. |

Table 2 Publications

| Title | Type (e.g. journals, manual, CDs) | Detail (authors, year) | Gender of Lead Author | Nationality of Lead Author | Publishers (name, city) | Available from (e.g. weblink or publisher if not available online) |
|--|--|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|
| Women pilot savings and loan scheme in Timor-Leste to introduce alternative livelihoods in communities | Blog | Natercia Verdial, 2023 | Female | Timorese | Blue Ventures | https://blog.blueventures.org/en/women-pilot-savings-and-loan-scheme-in-timor-leste-to-introduce-alternative-livelihoods-in-communities/ |
| | | | | | | |

Annex 4: Onwards – supplementary material (optional but encouraged as evidence of project achievement)

Supporting Documents

Annex 4.

1. Savings and loans members
2. Ilimano and Iliknamu socio-economic survey dashboard
3. Financial Inclusion Manual (English)
4. Financial Inclusion Manual (Tetun)
5. Community Selection Criteria
6. CFM group members
7. 30-027 Darwin Initiative Risk Register (April 2024)
8. 30-027 Project Photos Year 1