

# Global Impact Report 2017



*help...  
learn...  
explore!*





Projects Abroad supports the Sustainable Development Goals.

## I'm proud to present the 2017 edition of our annual Global Impact Report.

2017 was no ordinary year for Projects Abroad. We marked our 25th anniversary, and we celebrated it by making even more of a positive impact than ever before.

When our founder, Dr Peter Slowe, first sent volunteers abroad in 1992 he was not only driven to help in the most disadvantaged communities, he was also passionate about connecting people. In 2017, this remains a driving force behind Projects Abroad. Each year we build broader and deeper connections between volunteers and the communities where we work.

We could not have made it to our 25th anniversary without our partner organisations, our staff, and our volunteers. Because of you, we can celebrate 25 years of working together and making a difference through connections you create.

This was a special year for us, and so is this edition of our Global Impact Report. It shows that the work we do is part of a bigger picture, by connecting what we do with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

As a former volunteer, I can say how inspiring it is to know that you are part of something bigger than yourself; to know that you are part of efforts to make a long-term, sustainable impact where help is needed most.

I hope that you will become part of our global community!

**Greg Thomson**  
Projects Abroad CEO



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# HIGHLIGHTS

THANK YOU TO ALL OF OUR VOLUNTEERS WHO JOINED US ON OUR JOURNEY THROUGH 2017. YOU HELPED US:

PLANT over **52,700 trees**, including 38,000 mangroves

TEACH more than **8,000** children and adults about BEST HYGIENE PRACTICES

BUILD **15 bathrooms**, **16 classrooms**, and **4 homes**

MANUFACTURE **200 toilet bowls** and **20 water faucets** in the Philippines

Provide HEALTH CHECKS and BASIC HEALTHCARE services to **37,500 people**

Provide basic FIRST AID TRAINING to more than **3,400 people**

COMPLETE OUR **Disaster Relief Project** in Nepal

OFFER TEACHER TRAINING to **400** local English teachers in Peru

TEACH **100** students to read through literacy programmes

Provide EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION to **200 children** in centres FULLY FUNDED by Projects Abroad

RESCUE AND RELEASE more than **89,000 turtles** in Mexico and Peru

REMOVE MORE THAN **1,800** snares and wires during anti-poaching patrols in Botswana and Kenya

DISCOVER **16 new species of birds** at the Taricaya Ecological Reserve in Peru

PLANT more than **10,000 mangroves** in a day in Fiji, breaking our personal record!

Offer loans for **221** BUSINESS OWNERS to develop their businesses and increase their income

Have **88** juveniles released from a detention centre IN TANZANIA

Close **449** legal aid cases in South Africa

Issue **56 national ID cards** to vulnerable groups in Argentina

Clear up **13.1** tons of waste worldwide



# Our impact on PEOPLE around the world

In 2017, one of our biggest focuses was to help communities improve their health and wellbeing. Poor quality of life and a lack of services and opportunities can hold a community back. We wanted to help communities struggling with these challenges by connecting them with what they need. We identified various areas where we could help. This involved doing things like providing healthcare services in rural communities and building important infrastructure, like toilets.

Our work here links directly to several UN Sustainable Development Goals.



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## Promote Good Health and Well-being

Projects Abroad supports the Sustainable Development Goals.

**The third Sustainable Development Goal centres on ensuring healthy lives and promoting well-being for all ages. We take this to heart at all of our Medicine and Healthcare Projects. In 2017, we reached more than 37,000 people through medical outreaches and healthcare education!**

This staggering number is only possible because of the connections we have built in these communities. And because of our volunteers, we were able to:

- Provide free basic healthcare services for more than 2,000 people in Nanyuki, Kenya when doctors went on strike for 100 days.
- Run a deworming programme for more than 2,000 Kenyan children. This helped to reduce the spread of infections caused by parasitic worms.
- Teach basic first aid to 3,469 people worldwide.
- Teach 4,300 people about safe sex, to help prevent sexually transmitted diseases.
- Test 632 people for HIV around the world.
- Test 3,278 people for Hepatitis B in Ghana. More than a 100 tested positive. We referred them for further treatment.



In 2017, we reached more than  
**37,000 people**  
through medical outreaches  
and healthcare education.



We also tackled **mosquito-borne diseases**. Illnesses like dengue fever and malaria remain a significant threat, and kill thousands of people every year in countries like Ghana, Sri Lanka, and the Philippines. We want to equip communities with knowledge on how to prevent these diseases, and help people get treatment.

This is how our volunteers did this in 2017:

- They gave more than 50 talks to raise awareness.
- They destroyed mosquito breeding grounds near homes and public areas in Sri Lanka and the Philippines. It was especially significant that we were able to work with government officials in the Philippines to do this, as it helped us reach more people.
- They did free malaria tests in Ghana, Tanzania, and Togo during outreaches. We tested more than 500 people, and referred the 169 people who tested positive for treatment.

**Non-communicable diseases** are a rising threat in developing countries. Lifestyles are changing, and people are eating cheap processed food and exercising less. Unfortunately, this means more people are becoming diabetic, and getting conditions like high blood pressure. When infectious diseases and non-communicable diseases affect a country, it doubles the burden on the healthcare system. This is where we step in to help.

In 2017, we ran 400 medical outreaches in Belize, Fiji, Philippines, Samoa, and South Africa. These outreaches focused on blood pressure, blood sugar, and the importance of nutrition and gave free health checks. Through them, we reached more than **26,000 people!**

## IF WE LOOK AT THE NUMBERS, WE:



Ran  
**14,837**  
blood pressure tests



Ran  
**7,465**  
blood sugar level tests



Gave healthcare talks  
to more than  
**9,000**  
people

If anyone at one of our outreaches tested above the normal range, we referred them to the nearest hospital or clinic for treatment.

We have seen first-hand the positive effect education and regular healthcare services can have on the community. Our projects are doing this for the long-term, so we can have a tangible impact on community health.

## PROFILE

Our outreaches are about more than just the numbers. They are about the people we were able to help, like this woman in Cambodia:

**One of our free health checks helped us identify a woman who had suffered from hypertension for six years. Unfortunately, she could not afford medication to treat her symptoms. Our Public Health team have provided her with monthly follow-up consultations and free medication. Four months after her first meeting, her blood pressure had already decreased significantly. She now experiences fewer symptoms associated with her hypertension.**

"The most significant part in taking part of Projects Abroad was seeing that I made a difference in at least a few people's lives and that I did my part while over there.

My time with Projects Abroad motivated me to attend Graduate School for Global Epidemiology, after I complete my undergraduate studies. I saw the suffering of people and communities due to the lack of knowledge and resources and want to work to fix those exact problems around the world; and track the diseases I saw in Ghana."

Rebecca Chase, Public Health and Nursing volunteer in Ghana





Part of our efforts also focuses on **caring for the disabled**. They need specialised treatment, which can be expensive or simply unavailable due to a lack of training. Our Physiotherapy volunteers help provide this treatment. If volunteers have skills and experience, they also train local physiotherapists and students.

We have had enormous success with this approach, and have helped improve quality of life for many people affected by illnesses or disabilities. For example:

- Speech Therapy volunteers in Vietnam and Ghana introduced a Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS). Local teachers and other volunteers now use this tool to communicate with nonverbal children at special needs centres.
- In Cambodia, volunteers led workshops for local caregivers on recommended lifting techniques. These techniques help prevent injury and maintain patients' dignity. This is critical for local caregivers, as they rarely receive this kind of training.



We are especially proud of our work in the Philippines, where we founded our own rehabilitation centre.

## THE SAN REMIGIO PHYSIOTHERAPY AND REHABILITATION CENTRE

This is the first and only rehabilitation centre available in San Remigio, Philippines. It provides essential care to people who cannot afford to travel to hospitals and clinics for treatment. Our Physiotherapy and Occupational Therapy volunteers help with recovery, working directly with patients to develop and improve their mobility and skills. Some stroke victims, for instance, could learn to lift their affected limb, hold a cup of water, and walk slowly with assistance after just four sessions with a volunteer!

### PROFILES

- 1 Two-year-old Vincent has cerebral palsy and his single mother could not afford his physiotherapy treatment. Since hearing about the centre from her neighbour, she has been bringing Vincent in to receive treatment twice per week. He has slowly been regaining strength in his extremities. He can also do certain exercises with the support of our volunteers.
- 2 Cesar suffered from a stroke three years ago and could not afford his physiotherapy treatment. A health worker referred him to us and we have treated him twice a week for almost a year.
- 3 Wenceslao needed treatment following a motorcycle accident. He regained strength in his lower extremities after only eight sessions at the centre.







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## Ending the Problem of Hunger

**Our Nutrition Projects have been our main vehicle for working toward the second UN Sustainable Development Goal, zero hunger. The aim here is to tackle hunger and achieve food security, improve nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture. In 2017, we:**

- Monitored the growth of 1,200 children in South Africa. Through this programme, we identified children who are obese, overweight, malnourished, or stunted. We advised teachers, caregivers, and parents accordingly.
- Built vegetable gardens for more than 200 people to support healthy local produce. We also ran cooking classes.
- Taught 300 women about the importance of good nutrition during pregnancy at an antenatal clinic in Samoa.



We have already seen tangible results from our work in South Africa. Our efforts at Floreat Primary School over a period of 7-8 months in 2017 yielded: a decrease in stunting (from 6.25% to 2.57%) and underweight children (from 3.69% to 1.1%). This was among the 350 students measured and weighed.

We also have ongoing feeding programmes in several countries, namely Argentina, Ghana, and Jamaica. Through these programmes, we can guarantee access to this basic need on a regular basis. This is especially important for children and the homeless.

It's hard to learn on an empty stomach. In Argentina, Cambodia, and Madagascar, we make sure that children at our partner daycare centres get a meal or snack every day. Projects Abroad fully funds this work. We also continue to provide meals for the children who attend classes at our Surfing Project in South Africa.



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## Improving Access to Clean Water and Sanitation

**Having clean water and sanitation is something that is still out of reach for many rural and disadvantaged communities. We want to change this. Our main goal is to end open defecation and bathing, and give people back their dignity. This connects with the sixth UN Sustainable Development Goal.**

In the Philippines, thousands of families in San Remigio have no toilets at home. Many of these families care for a disabled person. If people only have the option of defecating outdoors, this makes disease and infection much more likely. To help with this, our volunteers built 200 toilet bowls for homes.

In Jamaica, we are in regular contact with the Health Department. They told us about a family in need. A single mother and her son lived in a run-down single room home. There was no bathroom, which forced

them to go outside. With the help of our volunteers, we renovated their home and built a full bathroom.

We are also extremely proud of our WASH programme in Madagascar that launched in 2017. This programme started as part of our Public Health Project in response to the needs we identified in the community. Poor sanitation has resulted in an increase in infectious and parasitic diseases. Our volunteers are working to solve this problem by raising awareness of good hygiene.



In all of the countries we work in,  
**6,350 people**  
 benefitted from educational talks on  
 general hygiene in 2017.



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## Ensure Inclusive and Quality Education for all and Promote Lifelong Learning

**At Projects Abroad, we believe that everyone deserves an education. This is line with the fourth UN Sustainable Development Goal of quality education.**

Learning does not stop once you leave school. In 2017, one of our proudest achievements was the work we did training local teachers in Peru. It was record setting for us, as more than **700 teachers** applied to attend!

Every year, we collaborate with the Ministry of Education in Peru to open this training programme for teachers during the school holidays. Many local teachers have limited English and need help to improve their conversation and pronunciation. The programme helps them advance their English and share new teaching techniques.

Although so many teachers applied, we could only accept 400. To accept more teachers, we need more volunteers to join and meet the demand for training!



In 2017, our volunteers ran workshops for **400 local teachers** in Peru to help improve their English, and to share new teaching techniques.





Our volunteers also did a lot for young students in 2017. One of our goals for education is to make sure our partner schools have the equipment and resources to teach effectively. This work lets us help students feel comfortable and thrive in their learning environment.

Our volunteers did this and used their own hands to build, renovate, or paint:



42  
classrooms



11  
care centres



5  
playgrounds in Argentina,  
Fiji, and Jamaica



2  
school halls in  
Senegal and Nepal



2  
libraries in Cambodia  
and Ghana



1  
school dining hall  
in Ghana



Multi-sensory spaces for  
disabled children in  
Sri Lanka, and Ethiopia

In the aftermath of the earthquakes that struck Nepal in 2015, we set up a Disaster Relief Project to rebuild classrooms. By March 2017, our volunteers had built

**96 classrooms at 9 schools.**

This helped 2,160 students return to school! We had done everything we set out to achieve, however there is still work to be done in Nepal. We are continuing these efforts through our General Building Project in Nepal.



## GROUP PROFILES

In 2017, groups travelling with us also had a significant impact on our work for improving learning environments. Here are some of the highlights:

1. **The SmithCorp Charitable Trust group** rebuilt a remote school near Barra Honda National Park in Costa Rica. An earthquake destroyed the school six years ago. After the earthquake struck, the school consisted of a floor with tarpaulin walls and a simple roof held up by six tree trunks. After completing the school, the SmithCorp Charitable Trust donated £13,000 to build a playground and toilets, and add desks, chairs, materials, and fire safety equipment.
2. **The Royal Air Force Air Cadets** took on an unfinished library at a school in Ghana. The school ran out of funding and construction stopped, so this group finished the job.
3. **A group of Anglia Girl Guides** built a bus shelter and path for a kindergarten in Natalau Village in Fiji. This helps keep the children dry during rainy weather, and stops them from walking in mud, which in turn keeps the kindergarten clean.

These are all great examples of how a group of volunteers can make a big difference in a short amount of time!





## OUR APPROACH TO COMMUNITY-BASED CARE AND EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

**In 2017, Projects Abroad announced its decision to remove all volunteers from orphanages.** We believe that placing a child in an orphanage or residential home is a last resort. This is why we shifted our focus to community-based programmes. This type of care allows children to stay with families, and has a more positive effect on communities.

As part of our community based-care approach, we focus on early childhood development. This means volunteers:



**Work with small groups**  
to accommodate  
individual learning styles



**Create fun and relaxed open spaces**  
where children can  
enjoy learning



**Run remedial classes**  
for young children ages 2-6  
who need extra support



We focus on early childhood development at all of our Care Projects. We also support and have set up programmes in more remote and severely disadvantaged areas in the countries below.

## CAMBODIA

We sponsor three childcare centres in Phnom Penh through our partnership with Khemara, a local NGO. Daycare services have a very small fee (between \$0.75 and \$1 per day), so both parents can focus on earning an income, knowing their children are in a safe place.

109 children attend these centres. With financial support from Projects Abroad, Khemara is able to employ more teachers and cooks to help care for them. In addition, the children benefit from additional educational support from volunteers, especially with learning English. At the end of 2017, because of this support, 22 children were able to enroll successfully in primary school.



## MADAGASCAR

Our Early Childhood Development (ECD) Centre in Madagascar is fully funded and run by Projects Abroad. It was set up in response to a need we identified in the village of Andasibe.

School in Madagascar is free. However, the cost of uniforms, books, and other supplies forces disadvantaged families to keep their children at home. In addition, many children do not have the skills to cope if they do start the first grade, and drop out.

Our centre helps young children learn the skills they need to enter and thrive in primary school. Our volunteers teach basic reading, writing, and mathematics. Once they graduate, we make sure they get the financial support they need for primary school. This is thanks to our collaboration with a local NGO, Handasibe, who sponsors graduates' educations.

At the end of the 2016-2017 school year, five out of eight children eligible for primary school successfully enrolled in the local primary school. After talking to the parents of the remaining children, we agreed that they would benefit from another full year at the centre before going to school.

In the new school year, 25 children of various ages enrolled at the centre. We expect that at least five of the children who are the right age will be ready for primary school by the end of the school year, thanks to our volunteers!

## MONGOLIA

In Mongolia, we work with a community centre that cares for children from single-parent families. Some of these children have disabilities. Our volunteers are a critical source of support for the 15 children who attended the centre in 2017. They did things like:

- Insulate the building for protection against the cold
- Built the foundations for the building extension
- Set up bookshelves
- Support early childhood development and education every day



## TANZANIA

For the Meserani community in Tanzania, the pre-school run by Projects Abroad is the only early childhood education institution in the area. We fund the school ourselves, and pay the salaries of two teachers, a cook, a cleaner, and a builder.

In 2017, we had 70 students. Projects Abroad covers all of their school-related costs, from educational supplies to food.

Our volunteers play a crucial role in supporting the teachers and helping small groups of young students. The pre-school has now become the main feeder for the nearby public primary school, and 24 of our students successfully transitioned to primary school in 2017.

The feedback from the primary school teachers has been extremely positive. They confirm that students enrolling from the pre-school adapt quicker and perform better than children who have not received prior education!





“One child in particular shaped my whole experience; he was 10 years old, had never been to school before, came from a Spanish-speaking home and did not know his alphabet,” says Maddy.

“It was a slow start as he was timid at first, and it took a couple of weeks for him to build up enough trust in me to open up and really embrace our lessons. We went through each letter of the alphabet individually, and set him more frequent goals, to give him motivation and a sense of accomplishment each time he met a target. We also made his own ‘Alphabet Tree’ - each time he mastered a letter he could add it to the tree!”

Two months later, Maddy’s young student completed Level One of the programme, after mastering the English alphabet.

Maddy, Teaching volunteer in Belize

## LITERACY PROGRAMMES

Learning to read and write are some of the most important skills a person can learn. Our volunteers help hundreds of children learn or improve these skills. In 2017, we made significant progress around the world with literacy, and we want to share the success we had in one particular country, Belize.

Our volunteers in Belize have played a significant role in the expansion and success of a literacy programme for primary school children. There are only six local volunteers involved with the programme, and they desperately needed extra help to run remedial classes. These remedial classes teach a range of skills, from basic phonics to reading comprehension. Students need the extra support so they can keep up in class.

Thanks to our volunteers, the literacy programme expanded to a second school in September 2017. Both programmes are able to run full time. Capacity increased from 45 children in August 2016 to 70 children today – and 28 more on the waiting list!

By the end of the 2017 school year in Belize, 11 students graduated from the programme, and other students made significant progress as well.

Daniel, a local teacher with eight students in the literacy programme, has noticed a vast improvement in the students’ literacy levels. Two students who started the school year unable to speak English can now follow along with his class. He has found the students have a more positive view towards reading and learning in general, and that the programme has also had a positive impact on their confidence in speaking in class.



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## Preserving Cultural Heritages

Projects Abroad supports the SDGs.

**One of the targets of the eleventh UN Sustainable Development Goal is to protect cultural and natural heritages around the world. This is what we work toward at our Archaeology Projects in Peru and Romania. To do this, we work with local governments, museums, and professional archaeologists.**

At the beginning of 2017, Projects Abroad got permission from the Peruvian Ministry of Culture to start excavation work at Pikillaqta and Sacsayhuaman Archaeological Parks. We excavated an Inca ceremonial site, and did maintenance work to remove lichen from walls. This is critical work, as we can now protect and maintain these sites.

We also discovered and registered new petroglyphs in three previously unknown locations in the Southern valley in the Tipón region. This information was passed on to the Peruvian Association of Rock Art for further studies.

In Romania, our Archaeology volunteers helped complete excavation of a rescue dig site in the heart of the Alba Iulia Citadel. Once the site is preserved, a hotel will be built there. All the artifacts found at the digging site were taken to the museum of Alba Iulia to be cleaned, studied and appear in exhibits. Our volunteers found artifacts such as silver coins, an iron sword, and a blade.



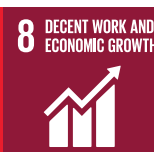
Become part of our long-term efforts to support people and communities. Find out how you can get involved at [www.projects-abroad.net](http://www.projects-abroad.net).





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## Ending Poverty and Promoting Economic Growth

For Projects Abroad, helping local communities also involves empowering people. Our aim is to promote sustainable economic growth and employment for all through Microfinance Projects. This is directly in line with the first and eighth UN Sustainable Development Goals.

In 2017, our Microfinance volunteers helped **221 entrepreneurs** receive loans to expand their small businesses. This has allowed people to save small amounts and pay school fees. Some are even looking at investing in a new house or opening their first bank accounts!

We are especially proud of our work in Ghana. In 2017, we had given communities in Akuapem Hills all the support we could. When they no longer needed us, we moved the Microfinance Project to Cape Coast. Our Microfinance volunteers started working with entrepreneurs at a leprosy camp, and women from a fishing village.

People living in the leprosy camp are especially vulnerable, because of the stigma against them. We are the only organisation that offers them financial support and business training.



**"Most of these people really need the help and the Microfinance Project is going to be one of the best things for them as getting a loan is challenging. Living here is difficult and the project will help people put food on the table, which is something they struggle with every day."**

Leader of the leprosy camp in Ghana.

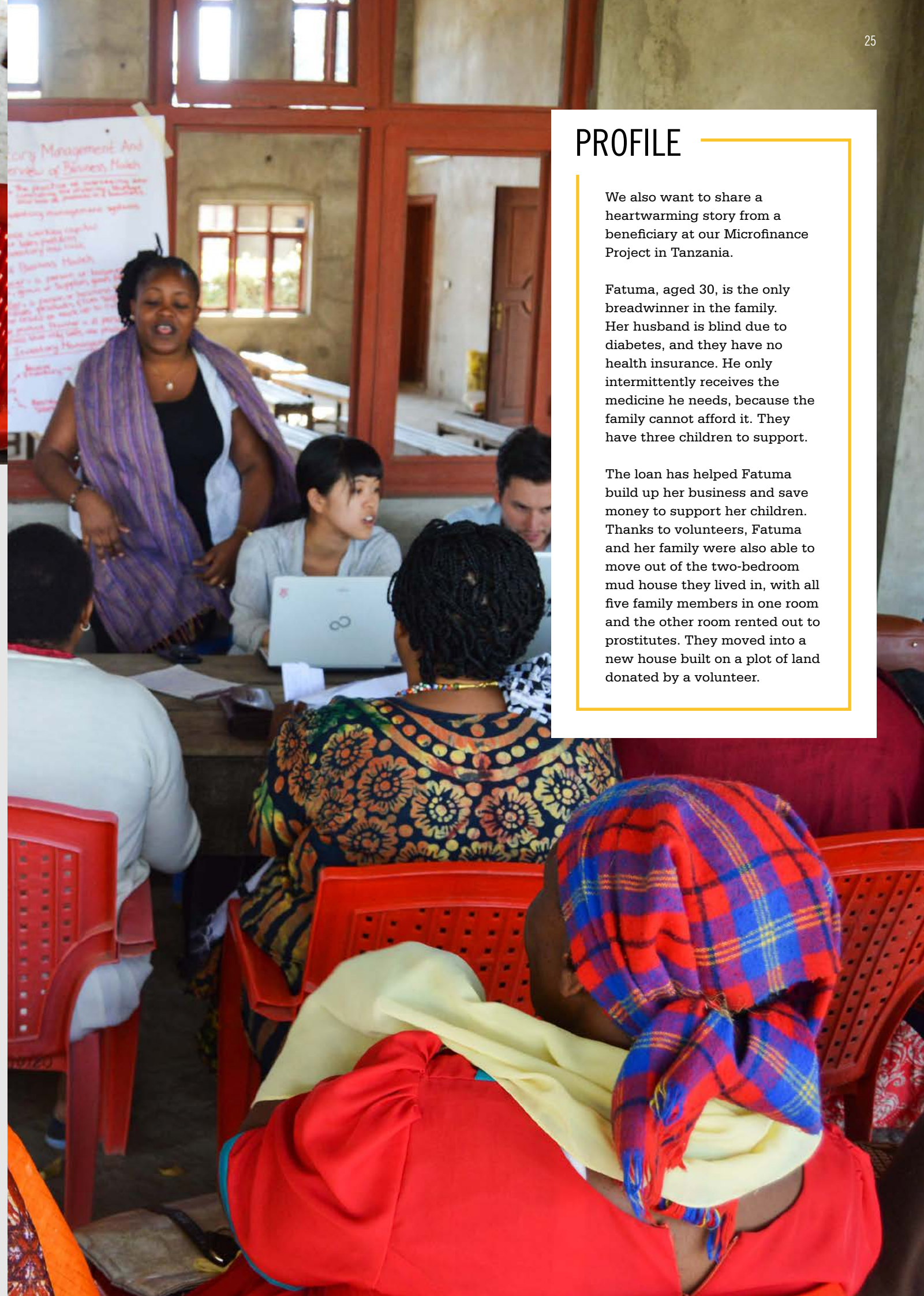


## PROFILE

We also want to share a heartwarming story from a beneficiary at our Microfinance Project in Tanzania.

Fatuma, aged 30, is the only breadwinner in the family. Her husband is blind due to diabetes, and they have no health insurance. He only intermittently receives the medicine he needs, because the family cannot afford it. They have three children to support.

The loan has helped Fatuma build up her business and save money to support her children. Thanks to volunteers, Fatuma and her family were also able to move out of the two-bedroom mud house they lived in, with all five family members in one room and the other room rented out to prostitutes. They moved into a new house built on a plot of land donated by a volunteer.







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## Working toward Gender Equality and Empowering Women and Girls

The fifth UN Sustainable Development Goal grew out of the need for gender equality. With movements like #metoo, the spotlight was on women and their rights in 2017.

Empowering women and girls is hugely important for us. In Ghana and Tanzania, we support female entrepreneurs at Microfinance Projects. By providing free daycare services in countries like Argentina, Cambodia, and Madagascar, we have given mothers the freedom to pursue employment.

Our Human Rights Projects educate women and girls on their rights. Our volunteers run workshops, and encourage women to become ambassadors within their communities. They talk about issues like domestic violence, female genital mutilation, inheritance laws, divorce, and more. In addition, they help women resolve legal problems, like divorce and child maintenance.

## PROFILE

In 2017, our Law and Human Rights volunteers in South Africa helped a woman divorce her abusive husband. When we met her, she was living at a shelter for abused women and feared for her own safety, and that of her children. Our volunteers and staff assisted her with the divorce process. She is now divorced, has moved out of the shelter, and is now working happily as a school teacher! She also knows more about her rights now, thanks to the workshops volunteers ran at the shelter and the legal advice we continue to give her.



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## Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions

The sixteenth UN Sustainable Development Goal focuses on promoting just, peaceful, and inclusive societies. This ties in with our Law and Human Rights work across the developing world. Here is a snapshot of what our volunteers accomplished for this goal in 2017:

- Researched and wrote pleas for juveniles' cases in Tanzania. These efforts released 88 young people. Youth charged with petty crimes can wait for months in detention centres before they first appear in court. In 2018, we will run a follow-up vocational skills programme for these freed youth.
- Successfully closed 449 legal cases in South Africa. The free services we provide in disadvantaged areas are critical, as people cannot afford legal services. Most cases we work with involve refugee rights, property cases, family law, and more.
- Helped 56 disadvantaged or homeless people get national ID cards in Argentina. With an ID, they can now access government-funded services.



## PROFILE

While volunteering at a correctional facility in Ghana, a professional social worker identified a boy, named Kwache, with special needs. The volunteer succeeded in having Kwache transferred to a special needs school, where the staff are better trained to meet his educational needs. This was the first time he stepped out of the correctional facility for three years! During her twelve weeks working with Kwache to improve his speech, he went from saying nothing to using basic words.



# Our impact on NATURE AND ANIMALS

Connecting to the environment and protecting it is critical. We must take action before it is too late. One of the key ways we do this is by helping local NGOs and government agencies gather data. They use the data we collect to formulate the best and most effective environmental policies.

We work toward three UN Sustainable Development Goals at our Conservation Projects.



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13 CLIMATE ACTION



## Climate Action

**We need urgent action to fight climate change and lessen the impact of humans on the earth.**

**We believe that to bring about change, we must lead by example in the battle against climate change. Here is a snapshot of the steps we took to combat climate change in 2017:**

- Collected **13.1 tons** of rubbish during **86** clean-ups on dives, on beaches, in parks and reserves, and in communities. This helps reduce the impact of waste on nature and wildlife, especially plastic.
- Planted **52,700** trees worldwide. In Madagascar alone, we planted more than 13,000 endemic trees to replace lost rainforest!
- Built **9** eco-stoves in Madagascar to cut down on the amount of wood used for fuel by 25%.
- Launched an “Ecobrick” initiative in Cambodia. This involves filling recycled plastic bottles with plastic waste, and using these to build walls, furniture, and gardens. This is especially significant on Koh Sdach, the island where we work. There is no formal waste management or recycling system. We taught children about “Ecobricks” and now some of them collect waste and make them on their own!

Awareness is vital for fighting climate change. In most of the communities where we work, we are sharing knowledge to change attitudes about sustainable living.



In 2017, our volunteers ran campaigns and talks on environmental issues for nearly **3,000 people** around the world. They talked about topics like why waste management and recycling are so important.





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## Life below Water

The fourteenth UN Sustainable Development Goal urges us to protect oceans, and use marine resources in a sustainable way. This is how we do our part at our Conservation Projects.

### MAD ABOUT MANGROVES

We planted **38,000** mangroves in 2017. We also set a personal record for Projects Abroad by planting over **10,000** mangrove propagules in a single day in Fiji!

Why do we care so much about mangroves?

- They are more efficient than other trees when it comes to storing carbon dioxide
- They provide a habitat for marine life
- They protect coastlines from soil erosion
- We have already **lost almost 50%** of the mangroves on this planet
- They help in the fight against climate change. Plant mangroves, and you can help offset your carbon emissions.

### Fun Fact!

Did you know that some mangroves produce enough nectar to make honey? This means we can use mangroves to support local beekeepers and increase honey production. Our volunteers did this in Thailand by digging new waterways for mangroves in a self-sufficient and environmentally-friendly beekeeping community enterprise.



### TACKLING THE PROBLEM OF CORAL BLEACHING

Coral reefs are home to thousands of marine species, and help protect coastlines from powerful waves. Unfortunately, they are in great danger. Climate change has warmed our oceans, which has had a devastating effect on coral reefs. They become weaker and stop reproducing, which turns them a ghostly white colour. This process is known as coral bleaching.

Marine conservationists around the world are turning to coral farming as a solution to bleaching. So are we.

In 2017, we kick-started a coral propagation initiative in Thailand to help reefs recover within the Phi Phi National Park. Since August, our staff and volunteers have propagated **435** corals. Their survival rate has jumped to 88%, which is a fantastic achievement! Our team in Thailand were also successful in having our nursery sectioned off in a no-boat zone for long-term protection.

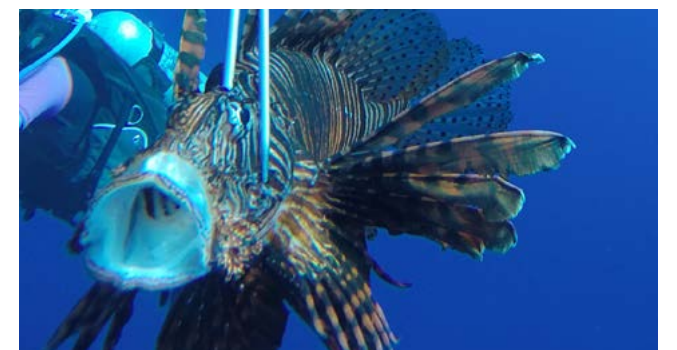
In coming years, we hope to start similar programmes at our other Marine Conservation Projects. In the meantime, we continue to monitor reefs in Belize, Fiji, and Thailand. The data we collect is used to advise international organisations like Coral Watch and local governments. This helps them create better protection policies.

### A DIFFERENT SIDE TO CONSERVATION: KILLING TO PROTECT

Very few predators eat lionfish. This means that lionfish populations spiral out of control very quickly, and threaten other marine species. A large lionfish population has become a major problem in Belize. They are not endemic to Belize, and have no natural predators to help control the population. To protect the coral reef and endemic fish species, our Marine Conservation volunteers spear and kill lionfish during dives.

Fortunately, we found a use for the lionfish. They are delicious with a squeeze of lemon! This means that they can become a source of income for local fishermen and restaurants.

Since December 2016, our volunteers have eradicated **1,842** lionfish.



British volunteer Susannah Jones worked at our Conservation Project for 24 weeks. She was involved with our efforts to control lionfish from the beginning in November 2016. "I do not like killing anything, but as a diver who has completed more than 200 dives around the world, I have seen lionfish before and I understand the problems they cause. I know killing lionfish benefits everything else."





## | HELPING ENDANGERED TURTLES SURVIVE AND THRIVE

Sea turtles desperately need protection from the elements, pollution, and poachers. The statistics are frightening: there are only 2,300 female adult Pacific Leatherback turtles left.

In Mexico, our Conservation volunteers worked hard to protect sea turtles by patrolling beaches at night for more than 800 hours, and building a new incubation area. Their efforts resulted in a staggering achievement:

We successfully  
released nearly  
**90,000**  
baby turtles  
in 2017!



**626**

Leatherback turtle hatchlings



**512**

Black Turtle hatchlings



**88,736**

Olive Ridley turtle hatchlings

We also released close to 1,000 baby turtles in Peru. Female turtles always return to the beach where they hatched to lay their eggs. This is important, as we are slowly seeing an increase in the number of nests we collect and move to safe incubation areas. This is almost certainly a result of our released babies returning once they start reproducing!

“Most likely, probably in 20 to 25 years, if we do not radically change how we preserve our oceans, the population of Pacific Leatherback [sea turtles] would disappear.”

”

Pablo Lobera, Conservation Project Manager in Mexico





Projects Abroad supports the SDGs.

ProjectsAbroad



## Life on Land

**Our Conservation volunteers and staff also did incredible work on land in 2017. Their efforts are in line with the fifteenth UN Sustainable Development Goal. This involves sustainably managing forests, fighting desertification, stopping and reversing land degradation, and preventing biodiversity loss.**



## ANTI-POACHING INITIATIVES

Poaching remains a major contributor to species extinction in Africa. Our Conservation volunteers in Botswana and Kenya support local rangers in their anti-poaching patrols. They also help remove snares and wires to reduce threats to wildlife. In 2017, we removed 1,800 of these snares that could have killed wildlife.

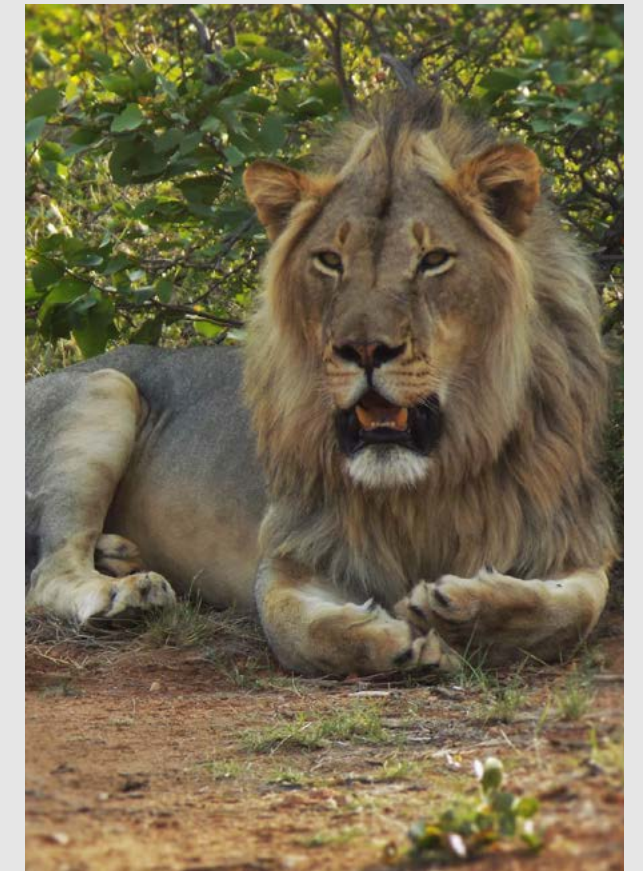
In addition to removing snares, our volunteers helped rescue 8 caught or shot animals, including zebras. All of the incidents and statistics are reported to local authorities. A decrease in the number of snares found during patrols indicates that poaching is being discouraged and snare laying is on the decline thanks to our ongoing efforts.

Poaching also affects wildlife in Latin America. Scarlet macaws are especially in danger because they are hunted for their beautiful feathers, and sold as pets illegally. In Costa Rica, our Conservation volunteers helped protect five scarlet macaw nests from poachers. This ensured that three new chicks were able to hatch and fly in 2017. These efforts are helping to raise scarlet macaw numbers, as we recorded 17 birds in the area this year, compared to 11 birds in 2011.

## WILDLIFE RESERVES AND PROTECTION

The lion population is steadily declining in Kenya. Part of the problem is that lions feed on livestock, and farmers kill the lions to protect their herds. To make sure that the farmers and lions can live together peacefully, our Conservation team is reinforcing traditional cattle enclosures. This stops lions from getting in, and protects them from the farmers.

In Southern Africa, drought has a severe impact on wildlife. In Botswana, our volunteers helped build two new waterholes, and repaired four others. These waterholes are equipped with solar pumps that provide up to 10,000 litres of water per day for local wildlife. Animals like elephants, leopards, and lions now come to these waterholes in large numbers since access is easy.





## REHABILITATION AND RESCUE WORK IN PERU

The Amazon Rainforest is one of the richest ecosystems in the world. We have a piece of it to protect, the Taricaya Ecological Reserve in Peru, and we need your help to do that.

One of our major focuses at the reserve is the rehabilitation and release of animals back into the wild. 2017 was our most amazing year yet at Taricaya. **We released 21 animals into the reserve, to live free and safe. This was our largest release in the history of Taricaya!**

Government officials attended the release, along with film crews and representatives from our partner, Animal Defenders International.

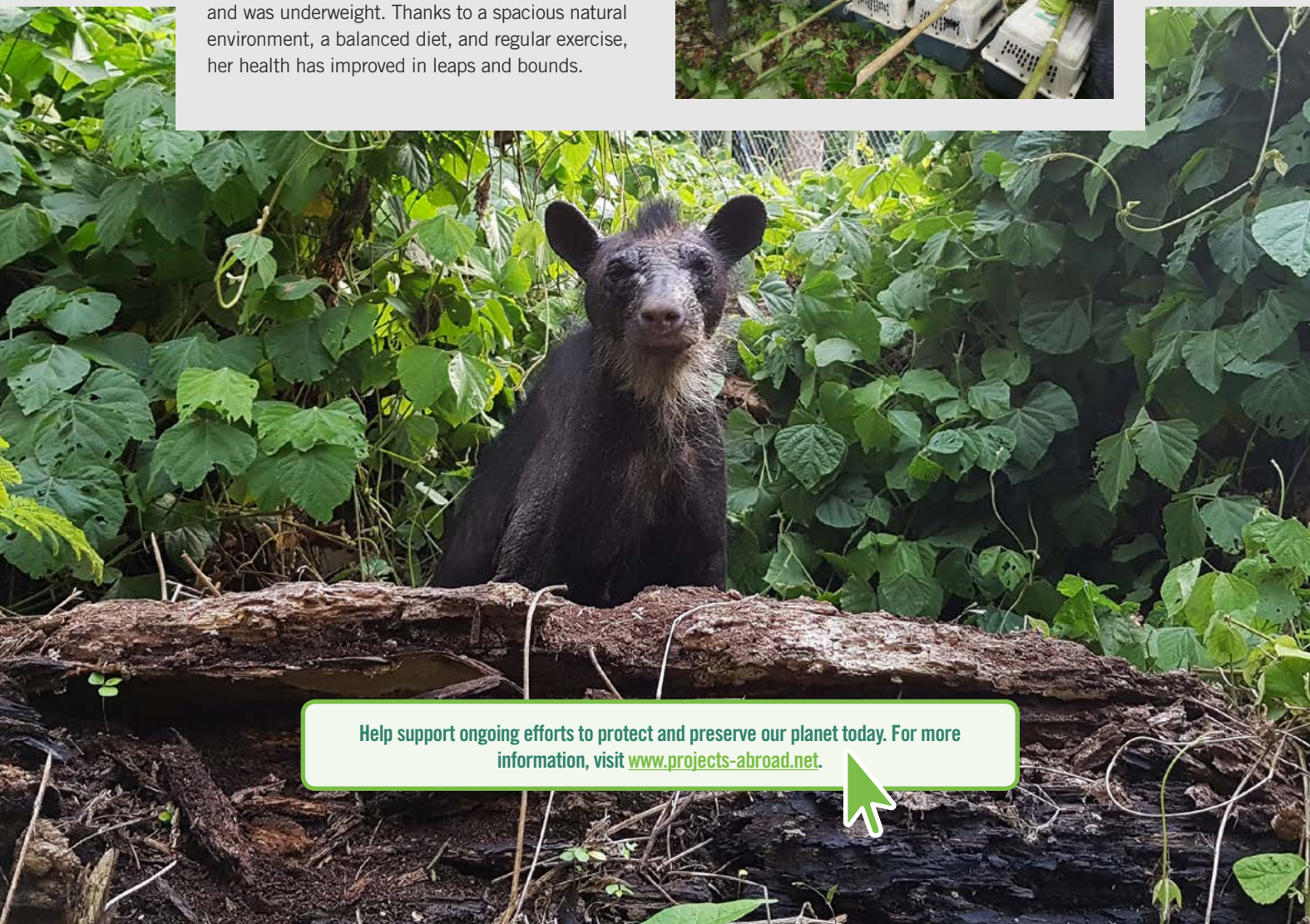
In 2017, we also welcomed new arrivals at the rescue centre. They included baby blue and yellow macaws, a baby red brocket deer, and our fourth Spectacled Bear. Our volunteers helped hand- and bottle-feed the babies until they were old enough to feed themselves.

The Spectacled Bear was brought to us after being rescued from a zoo by Animal Defenders International in February 2017. The bear, named Dominga, had no fur, had a skin fungal infection, and was underweight. Thanks to a spacious natural environment, a balanced diet, and regular exercise, her health has improved in leaps and bounds.

We also have a romance blossoming at Taricaya! Two of our other Spectacled Bears, Lucho and Sabina, are now a breeding pair. We are working with the Peruvian government to allow for the potential release of any young bears born in Taricaya. A reintroduction programme would have a massive positive impact on Spectacled Bear numbers.

In view of our pioneering work with bears in Peru, our team spoke at the first Spectacled Bear Conservation Convention in Cusco in March 2017.

Running such a large animal rescue centre requires a lot of time, money, dedication, and physical labour. Every day all the animals must be fed, cages cleaned, pools drained and refilled, and medicines applied where necessary. None of this would be possible without the help of industrious volunteers guided by our professional and dedicated staff.



Help support ongoing efforts to protect and preserve our planet today. For more information, visit [www.projects-abroad.net](http://www.projects-abroad.net).



## PROTECTING AND DISCOVERING BIRDS IN THE GALAPAGOS AND PERU

In Ecuador, we have an official partnership with the Galapagos National Park. We are the only volunteer organisation to do so. We work with the staff here to protect the island and its endemic species, many of which are only found in Ecuador.

The Galapagos petrel, a marine bird, is one of these species. Unfortunately, the petrel population is under threat because of a rising number of rats on the islands. Rats attack nesting birds and eat their eggs. In response to this, Projects Abroad and the Galapagos National Park Agency got a special poison designed to attack the rats' immune systems. This poison does not affect other animals, and helps control the rat population.

Our volunteers monitored the petrel breeding population, and we are thrilled to see that their numbers have increased by 10%! We can link this directly to the fact that rat numbers have dropped by 40%.

2017 was an exciting year for birds at our Amazon Rainforest Conservation Project in Peru. Our volunteers and staff discovered **16 new bird species** at the Taricaya Reserve!

This brings our total bird count to 498 different species, which is more than the whole of continental Europe. After 15 years of investigation and research, it is incredible we continue to make discoveries in this part of the Amazon. This has only been possible thanks to volunteers' hundreds of thousands of hours in the field.





## Our impact on LOCAL ECONOMIES

In every developing country we work in, Projects Abroad contributes to the local economy. One of the biggest ways we do this is by employing local people to help run our projects, and guide our volunteers. By getting local people directly involved in our work, we can build stronger relationships with the community, and our projects have a bigger impact.

## Financial Support in Local Communities

Thanks to our volunteers, we are able to give financial support in various ways. In 2017, we:

- Employed 300 people in the countries we work in
- Employed 74 temporary staff to help over the summer from June to August
- Supplemented the incomes of 88 host families





In addition, we also fund and run more than 50 projects and initiatives ourselves, thanks to our volunteers. We receive no outside financial assistance, so we need volunteers to help run and sustain these programmes. These programmes include:



12

Conservation Projects



3

Care centres in Cambodia, Madagascar, and Senegal



2

schools in Ghana and Tanzania



The Incan & Wari Archaeology Project in Peru



7

Building Projects



7

Public Health programmes



6

Human Rights offices and programmes



2

Sports Projects: a football club in Ghana and a community surfing project in South Africa



4

Microfinance Projects



3

Nutrition Projects



2

Journalism Projects and their publications







# THANK YOU

Because of our volunteers, staff, and partner organisations, 2017 was an extraordinary year for Projects Abroad. Everything you just read was only possible because of you!

We want to say thank you. Thank you for all of the great work you help us do. Thank you for your support. It means the world to us to be able to help and make a positive impact on the world.

If you would like to learn more about helping, learning, and exploring with Projects Abroad, please visit [www.projects-abroad.net](http://www.projects-abroad.net).





*help...  
learn...  
explore!*

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