
The Rufford Foundation
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KENYA CONFERENCE REPORT
"Connect for Nature Conservation"
From 7th – 8th December, 2020
At Westwood Hotel, Nairobi Kenya

CONTENT

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

My special thanks go to The Rufford Foundation for fully funding this conference and more specifically Mr. Josh Cole, the director of the Rufford Small Grants, for guiding the organization of this conference and actively participating in the conference sessions.

I thank the conference Guest of Honour Dr. MAMO BORU MAMMO, The Director General of the National Environmental Management Authority (NEMA), Kenya, who represented the Kenyan Government and Decision Makers and officially opened the conference.

I again want to thank all the participants, presenters and session chairpersons. I also recognise an important role the Organising Team played to make this conference a success. My heartfelt appreciation goes to the conference team for their resourcefulness, time and effort committed to organising and making this conference a success.

Thank You All Once Again!
Alphonse Karenzi
The Rufford Kenya Conference Coordinator

THE GUEST OF HONOUR
Dr. MAMO BORU MAMMO,
The Director General of (NEMA), Kenya,
The Kenyan Government and Decision Makers Representative

Dr. Mamo thanked the Rufford Foundation for organizing such an important and relevant conference which connects the conservationists from across the region and creates regional partnerships. He mentioned that these regional conservation conferences and partnerships are greatly needed as the individual countries in the region haven't been able to implement the nature conservation project beyond their individual borders while the climate change effects know no border.

He recommended the Ruffford for having funded around 209 projects in Kenya and how the RSG Projects have had a large impact in the region. He too shared his personal experience during his recent field visit together with the cabinet secretary of the Ministry of Environment and Forests Hon. Keriako Tobiko. They met a group called Mipopo Pamoja funded by the Rufford Foundation to conserve mangrove in Kenya's south coast. They both were extremely surprised how this Small project could make such a huge impact at the global level. He shared several other examples of excellent and exemplary work that the Rufford Projects are doing in Kenya.

He officially opened the conference and welcomed the participants for discussions. The Participants embraced an opportunity to get in touch with this senior civil servant who is considered to be one of the busiest government officials in Kenya as He oversees all the environmental related affairs and projects in Kenya.

THE ORGANISING TEAM

Mr. Alphonse Karenzi
The Director of Sustaining Africa Youth Organization
A 5th Rufford Grant Recipient
The Conference Coordinator
karenzilife@gmail.com
From Rwanda

Addition to the well-known Rufford Small Grants, the Rufford Foundation has got another equally important resource to offer i.e. its grantees' useful knowledge and contacts. The Rufford conferences have been perfect medium for the grantees to interact, network and exchange that knowledge and contacts. These conferences also link the gap between the decision making and field conservation and strengthen the local partnership by engaging the government representatives in the RSG Grantees discusions.

The benefits from these conferences highly outweigh the costs. For instance, during the Nairobi Conference, the Recipients shared the relevant and trusted funding sources and grant opportunities worthy hundreds of thousands of British Pounds. The knowledge and contacts shared will help avoid many costly mistakes and save more resources and result into many greater proposals and effective implementations. In fact the field conservation life has become much easier for many Recipients and for me myself because of the useful knowledge and important contacts we gain from the Rufford conferences.

I'm a product of both the Rufford Grants and Rufford Conferences. The grants helped me to start the work but conferences, through learning from the senior grantees and getting connections, helped me to sustain and expand it. Now, my organization (SAYO) operates in three countries and is two years away from being one of the first youth self-sustaining organizations in Africa. Thanks to the Rufford Foundation and its conferences.

Prof. Peninah Aloo Obudho
The Zoology Professor and Deputy Vice Chancellor at the Karatina University
A 2nd Rufford Grant Recipient
The Conference Team Adviser and Envoy to Government Officials
obudhoaloo90@gmail.com
From Kenya

Prof. Peninah, who is considered by many the best exemplary female scholar and professor in Kenya, said "This was a great conference, well organised. It left a lot of impact as I acquired new knowledge and contacts". She added "the Rufford Funding and Conferences changed my life completely. I'm now a well-known Conservationist and a Board Member of NEMA. Our university collaborates with UNEP. Thanks to the Rufford."

Dr. Margaret Awuor Owuor
The Lecturer and Head of Department of Hydrology and Aquatic Science, South Eastern Kenya University
A 3rd Rufford Grant Recipient
The Conference Logistics In-Charge
awuorowuor@yahoo.com
From Kenya

The Just-Concluded Conference offered a great opportunity to network and share my experience with like-minded individuals aspiring to make a change in their communities. I met the Director General of NEMA and shared with him the challenges I face while implementing my RSG Project on Akara Hills being that his docket addresses such challenges. Talking to The DG and getting his contact has been a very special opportunity owing to his busy schedule.

Ms. Martha Nzisa
The Tour Leader at Intrepid Travel
A 2nd Rufford Grant Recipient
The Conference Photographer
marthanzisa@gmail.com
From Kenya

"I'm very grateful for this conference. It was great to learn about the rare projects focusing on less- common funded subjects, plants and insects. I made new contacts and someone gave me an opportunity of making a short video of their project. This has been a very important milestone for my career as I'm getting into conservation film making. Also my Fellow recipients supported my photography by purchasing my wildlife calendars" Martha said.

Mr. Tony Inganji
The CEO of Orators Africa
A Prospective Rufford Grant Applicant
The Conference Workshops Facilitator
inganjilife@gmail.com
From Rwanda

I used to perceive Rufford as just a project funding foundation but I now know that it is also a huge and rich network of intellectual individuals that love their nature. I met the senior conservationists in the conference, learnt a lot of new things and I have been very much inspired to continue pursuing my career as a conservationist and found it always a great privilege to be part of Rufford Family."

I. BACKGROUND

The Rufford Conference in Kenya was a two day meeting with the theme of “connect for nature conservation”, organised by the Rufford Foundation for its Regional Grant Recipients to share experience and knowledge and create direct communications and partnerships among themselves. This conference was originally planned to be held in Kigali, Rwanda but later moved to Nairobi, Kenya due to Rwanda’s Covid 19 travel restrictions and quarantine requirement. It took place on 7th and 8th December 2020, at West Wood Hotel, Nairobi, Kenya and brought together Twenty Seven (27) conservationists from Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania, U.K. and Uganda.

As Covid 19 worsened the isolation among the on-field conservationists, this conference was very needed by the regional recipients. In fact we received more than 120 attendance applications though we had to limit the number of participants to 27 in order to insure their safety and maintain the current Covid 19 spread prevention measures including social distancing. However, this conference had a huge success as it provided a safe place for the individual RSG Recipients and enabled them to know each other, exchange contacts, share experience and knowledge, and forge partnerships. The Government Officials were also engaged in discussions and networking in order to link the gap between decision makers and field workers. The participants left the conference with a prestige of being associated with other great Rufford grantees and proud of being part of the Rufford Family. Indeed, they felt appreciated, reconnected with like-minded, more informed, and connected with decision makers and therefore much inspired and empowered to do better job on the ground.

II. THE CONFERENCE THEME AND OBJECTIVES

Dr. Paul Webala from Kenya, a man who used the 3 Rufford grants to become one of the World's Renown Bats researchers and Conservationists, when was asked why, with all his busy schedules, he still believes and is eager to attend all the Rufford Conferences in the region, He replied: "the Rufford Conferences are very important for two reasons. One, they spread the gospel about an important source of funding. Two and most importantly they are interactive sessions where we learn from each other as recipients, both the experienced and the upcoming second generation conservationists."

THE THEME

This conference had a theme of "Connect for Nature Conservation" .

THE OBJECTIVES

The Rufford Kenya Conference had two main objectives below:

1. To enhance the direct communication and partnership between the regional RSG recipients themselves and with other partners including Government by providing a forum for them to know each other in person, discuss ideas and issues; share the lessons learnt and strengthen the regional RSG network;

2. To discuss issues facing the nature conservation and RSG projects in this time of covid 19 pandemic and to guide and motivate the Conservationists and Project Leaders to keep up with their good work of conserving nature during and after the pandemic.

III. THE CONFERENCE PARTICIPANTS

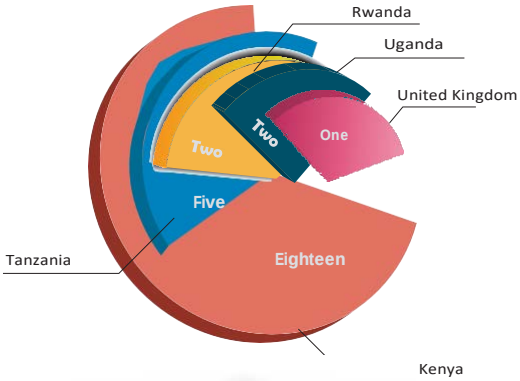
This conference was very successful in knowledge sharing and with a strong networking atmosphere mainly due to the high diversity of the participants. The participants came from;

a. Different Countries namely: Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda and UK.
b. Different Conservation Areas/ Focuses.
c. Different Levels of Experience/ Numbers of Grants Received.

Here below are the graphs and brief illustrations that give a picture of the conference participation and the diversification of the participants. The names and contact details of the participants are in the Annex Section of this report.

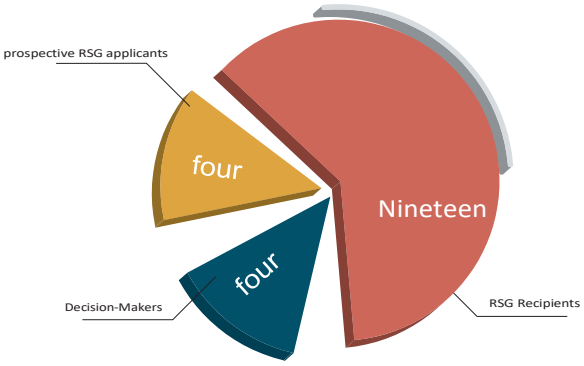
The Participants by Represented Countries

The participants presented five (5) countries: Kenya with the majority (18 people) followed by Tanzania with 5 people, followed by Rwanda and Uganda equally 2 people each and UK by one person.



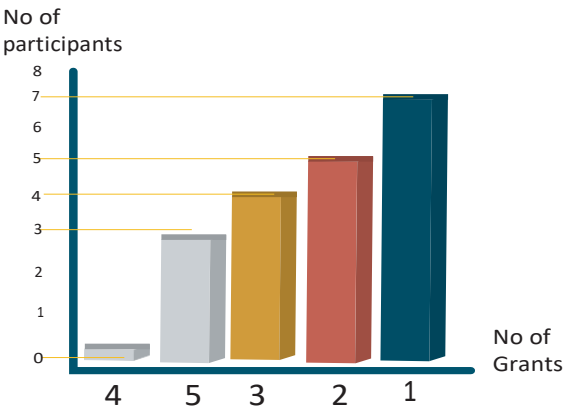
The Participants by Categories

There were three categories of participants: a) the RSG Recipients who were the majority (19 people), b) Decision Makers or Guests of Honour (4 people), and c) the interested conservationists or prospective RSG applicants (4 people).



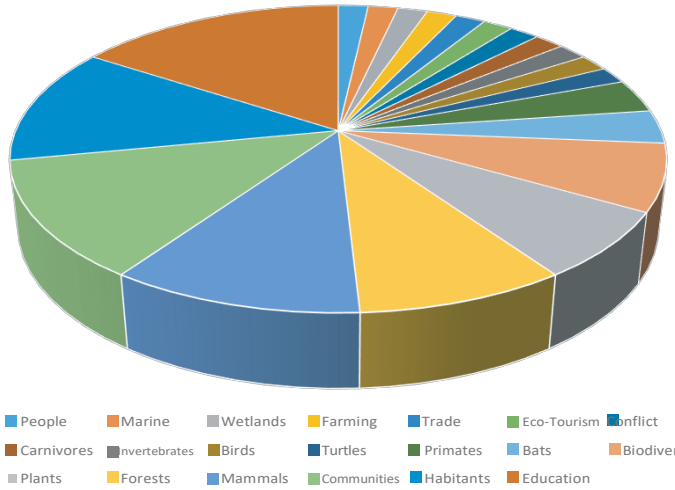
The RSG Recipient Participants by the number of grants received

There were 3 people who have attained the 5th Rufford grant stage, none was at 4th grant stage, 4 people attained the 3rd grant stage, 5 people attained the 2nd grant stage, and 7 people attained 1st grant stage to date.



THE RUFFORD CONSERVATION AREAS AND THEIR REPRESENTATION

The 23 Attended Conservationist, according to their projects and area of interest, represented 20 out of 28 Rufford funded conservation areas (focuses). One participant could refer to more than one rufford conservation focuses. The following are the twenty represented areas and the number of participants represented each: Habitats (represented by 7 Participants) , Communities (7 Participants), Biodiversity (4), People (1 Participant), Forests (5), Marine (1), Wetlands (1), Plants (4), Farming (1), Trade (1), Eco- Tourism (1), Education (9), Conflict (1), Mammals (6), Carnivores (1), Invertebrates (1), Birds (1), Bats (2), Turtles (1), and Primates (2)



IV. THE CONFERENCE SUCCESS AND IMPACT

THE CONFERENCE SUCCESS

The following are some of the aspects that made this conference extremely successful, engaging and impactful:

1 A safe place to freely share experience in the midst of a pandemic

Covid 19 caused disconnection and isolation among many conservationists. So, the conservationists especially Rufford Early Career Conservationists yearn for peer reconnecting and meetings but it is very hard to create a safe place for such meetings in the midst of a pandemic. So, one of the success factors of this conference, was the ability to provide a safe environment - the West Wood Hotel, a hotel authorised by the Kenyan Ministry of Health to host meetings during the pandemic. This high quality serene hotel in the famous Karura Forest, represented well the Excellent Image of the Rufford Foundation before the Recipients (beneficiaries) and the Kenyan Government (important partner for ground project implementation and monitoring). It made it possible for high profile officials to attend the conference and enabled a safe and free networking and knowledge sharing through different creative activities such as outdoor powerpoint presentations, social distanced group discussions, penal discussion and one-on-one interactions in the garden outdoor settings.

> 10 out of 10 Post Conference Interview Respondents admitted that they liked the venue and felt safe and free to share experience in it. 7 added that they enjoyed their whole conference time and felt very honoured to be invited to the conference and the Rufford Network. Tony Inganji from Rwanda expressed his feelings "This was the most well organized conference I have ever attended. Being with great minds in such a beautiful safe environment, in a covid loneliness time like this, it feels like a Christmas morning for me!"

2 Diversified and Inclusive Participation

The diversity of the participants was the greatest asset of this conference which made the knowledge sharing and networking very vast and interesting. For instance:

27 Participants and their projects represented the 20 out of 28 Rufford funded conservation areas: This diversity shows how rich and vast was the knowledge and experience shared. The difference in the area of focus sometime could be a negative thing for some conferences as for instance; a presentation on birds protection may be boring to someone whose concern is fishes. But for the Kenya Conference, being a project leaders' experience sharing and common challenges discussion which go beyond single focus, this diversity actually was an advantage as every project leader wanted to learn how the counterparts deal with the common problems in different areas.

The participants came from 5 different countries: The project experience was different and network was vast. Every participant was eager to learn and network with the fellow country mates but more passionately with the foreign counterparts to expand their views and networks.

A mixture of young conservationists and the senior Rufford Recipients: there was much learning from the senior Rufford Recipients who are well known professors and researchers. The young conservationists found it very interesting and inspiring to share with these seniors at personal experience level. And the seniors alike enjoyed learning the creative works by younger ones and found it a prestige to mentor and share wisdom with the fellow young conservationists.

The Decision-Makers (government officials) were also engaged: it is extremely important and inevitable to engage the government concerned entities in the Rufford Conference as they have an influential role to play in solving the discussed conservation challenges and in the Rufford field project planning, authorization,implementation, and monitoring.

> For instance; we invited different government ministers in the 2014 rufford conference in Rwanda, as a result they recognised the potential of RSG projects and included their activities in the Districts' Joint-Action Plan where the majority of the Rufford funded projects and results are monitored and evaluated by the districts in Rwanda.

On the other hand, the RSG Recipients often spend much time and effort seeking these officials' connections because, they need them, on one hand, for information, services and official documents, on the other hand they need to share their field project and research findings to engage them. So one of the best things the Rufford conferences can and have done is to connect its recipients with these government officials. They get to know each other, create connections, and discuss issues concerning their projects and conservation in general. .

> The field life becomes easier for Recipients having contacts of high profile government officials and the conservation becomes much more effective as the gap between the decision makers and field conservationists decreases for instance
>
> Dr Margaret Awuor Owuor is one of the most connected RSG Recipients in kenya. She too admitted that the most important thing the Kenya conference did for her was to met the Director General of NEMA and share with him the challenges she faces while implementing my RSG Project owing to his busy schedule. She believes she will get solutions as long as she is in touch with him.

Usually we ask different in-country recipients to recommend the influential officials we can invite. When we invite them, they look at the Rufford profile and conference agenda and irresistibly get interested. However, their second question always is which venue? That's why we always make sure we get a fair quality venue and treat these official well.

> In fact there are many examples of the excellent services and opportunities the recipients get from the government just because of the respect the government officials hold for the Rufford Foundation after the conference. For instance: after attending the Rufford Conference in Livingstone Town, Zambia, the Mayor of Livingstone authorised the availing of the ample free land to any Rufford Recipient who wants to plant trees in Livingstone.

3 Creative and Participant-based Conference Format

With the flexible and energising conference format and the creative activities like 10 minutes power point presentations with 5 minutes Question & Answers; Group Discussions; Panel Discussions; Educative Ice-Breakers and One-On-One Interactions, this conference gave an opportunity and enough courage to every (even the most timid) recipient to share and learn from others freely and passionately.

THE CONFERENCE IMPACT

Below are some of the benefits and impact that the Kenya conference left:

1 27 Individual Conservationists Connected

Covid 19 caused disconnection and isolation among many conservationists. This conference has been able to bring together and connect Twenty Seven (27) conservationists from different fields and parties of Africa. The participants felt reconnected with like-minded people. They left the conference much inspired for new opportunities through new connections and therefore better expanded impact. Their direct communications will result into invaluable solutions and continuous process of mitual learning and helping each other.

2 Incredible Experience and Knowledge Shared Freely and Passionately

This conference was very successful in sharing knowledge and the value of the knowledge shared is immeasurable. There are many successful proposals and projects that are going to come out from this knowledge. Many mistakes are going to be corrected and many resources are going to be saved or wisely used. In fact, the 80% of the Interview Respondents mentioned that they learnt something new and useful and/or got an answer for their disturbing questions or challenges.

Indeed, being an experience sharing meeting between the fellow project leaders and like-minded conservationists with an excellent venue, diversified participants and participant-based conference format, this conference gave an opportunity and enough courage to every recipient (even the most timid ones) to share and learn from others passionately. The Rufford Alumni Panel Discussion greatly impacted the participants as the advanced career recipients shared and taught useful skills from how to write a good proposal to successful implementation and reporting of the results.

> Mecklina Mbundi, a 1st RSG Recipient from Tanzania, shared "This is the first Rufford and international conference I have ever attended. My biggest achievement in this conference is that I have been able to present my project and get feedback from other recipients." She added "I was inspired by a kenyan project educating prisoners to plant tree nurseries. It was my first time to hear about making prisoners useful to the community and nature. I will start a project like this in my country soon.
>
> "When Prof. Peninah was presenting her school trees project I asked her how she managed to keep the young students motivated. Her answer fixed my two-years-old- challenge of keeping our project youth motivated. Her experience has saved my projects and I have also learnt from this conference some new components to consider in my future project.'' Teresah Mumbi from Kenya narrated.
>
> "From this conference I have got three new burning ideas of how I can save the forests in our region. How lacking were my past project proposals. My proposals are going to take a whole new level. Because of this conference I will surely win the Rufford grants and other grants and expand my impact" Umaru Mugisha from Uganda said.

3 Many funding and partnership opportunities shared: The participants and presenters were encouraged to share opportunities including funding, scholarship and other opportunity sources during their presentations and discussions. At the end, the tried and trusted funding opportunities shared alone worthy hundreds of thousands British pounds. Forinstance:

> Edward Mwamuye, a 5th Rufford Grant Recipient from Kenya, shared the six funding sources worthy hundreds of thousands of British pounds that He has benefited from and believes can be beneficial to the fellow recipients.
>
> Mecklina Mbundi, a 1st RSG Recipient from Tanzania, said through the conference I'm now able to communicate with other conservationists through a whatsapp group called Marine Ocean Opportunity where we share different opportunities and ideas in conservation.
>
> Martha Nzisa, a 2nd Rufford Grant Recipient from Kenya, shared "I made new contacts and someone gave me an opportunity of making a short video of their project. This has been a very important milestone for my career as I'm getting into conservation film making. Also my Fellow recipients supported my photography by purchasing my wildlife calendars".

4 New contacts and long term partnerships created

The Government Contacts and good will were gained during this conference. on the other side, the young conservationists found it very interesting and inspiring to share and connect with the senior Rufford recipients at personal experience level. The seniors alike enjoyed learning and connecting with younger ones for their creativity and found it a prestige to mentor and share lessons with the fellow young conservationists. Partnerships and Mentorship Commitments were honestly made between many participants. For example:

> Alphonse Karenzi, Edward Mwamuye, and Evarastus Obura, the three 5th Rufford Grant Recipients, discussed and came up with a partnership idea. They want to work together and establish a mentorship and knowledge sharing program that will enable the RSG Alumni like them to mentor young conservationists and share knowledge.

> Dr. Faith Muniale, a 3rd RSG Recipient who has found her passion in mentoring young people, commented "the Nairobi Conference made our relationship better because it promoted both professional and social interactions. I got connected to people I can mentor and to those who can mentor me".

5 New Inspirations and Motivation for Better Work

Especially young conservationists were discouraged and felt disconnected due to covid 19. But through meeting with others, sharing experiences, getting encouragement from the senior conservationists, sharing contacts and proposing partnerships and networks, they all felt more inspired. Many Participants expressed sincere appreciation for the Rufford Foundation to consider them, provide a safe place for them and bring them together in such a time of isolation. They promised to do better in their work during and after covid19 pandemic.

6 RSG Proceedings and Recommendations Documented

The V Section of this conference contains the proceedings of this conference. It features the impacts that the RSGs have made, the common challenges the Recipients meet and the recommendations made. All this was the outcome of the enabled good discussions.

7 Improved relationship and perspective towards The Rufford Foundation

> Evarastus Obura, a 5th Rufford Grant Recipient from Kenya, said "it is very important for a Granter to build relationship with the Grantees as it inspires them more towards delivery of results and being proud to work as agents of the Granter. So, the Rufford Foundation should up her game on building relationship with the grantees and taking advantage of what they have invested to chart new frontiers in their work.

Indeed, this conference improved the relationship. The Recipients left the conference with a pleasure and pride to be part of the Rufford Family with feelings of being appreciated, recognised and cared for by the Rufford Foundation and therefore inspired to do better work. Especially those who attended the Rufford Conference for the first time, they were pleased to know that Rufford cares for their growth and direct communications. And many have been proud of the Rufford for the respect it has from the government and the rich knowledge and large network of like-minded conservationists.

> Alphonse Karenzi shared "many People now know the Rufford for its conservation grants but only few, who have attended the Rufford conference, know the Rufford by its important asset of powerful knowledge and contacts through its Grants Recipients."

> Inganji Tony, the conference facilitator, said "I used to perceive Rufford as just a project funding foundation but I now know that it is also a huge and rich network of intellectual individuals that love their nature. I met the senior conservationists in the conference, learnt a lot of new things and I have been very much inspired to continue pursuing my career as a conservationist and always be part of Rufford Family."

V. THE CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS

During this two-day discussions and experience sharing, the participants shared how the Rufford Funding has impacted their personal and career development, the education and research, the local and regional nature conservation, and the local community capacity building. They discussed also the challenges they face and made some recommendations to both the fellow conservationists and the Rufford Foundation.

The majority of the participants appreciated how the conference was organized especially the panel discussion and powerpoint presentation Q&A session. The Participants also requested that more conferences can be organised in Kenya and thanked the Rufford Foundation for funding them through the RSGs and for bringing them together through the conferences. Below is a summary of the key points discussed during the conference:

THE IMPACT OF THE RSGs

1. Rufford funding has enabled exceptionally large and tangible conservation impacts to be delivered

The Rufford Funded Projects have made extraordinary tangible conservation impacts according to the Recipients from all the four represented countries. The Government of Kenya also recommended the Rufford for the excellent work and exceptionally large impact the RSG projects have delivered.

Dr. Mamo, the NEMA Director General, said "We can give very many examples of an exemplary work that the Rufford Foundation has implemented in our country having funded more than 209 projects in Kenya only. Recently with my cabinet secretary Hon. Keriako Tobiko, we visited a Rufford funded project of Mangrove Conservation by the group called Mipopo Pamoja in Kenya's South Coast. We both were greatly surprised that in addition to restoring the mangroves at community level, this Rufford funded project added mangrove cover at a global level and led the ecosystem being lifted from the IUCN Red List where they were currently listed as highly threatened.

Many other examples were given by the recipients showing how the small projects funded by the Rufford have made a large impact. For instance:

a The Rufford funded kay apple plants project has resulted into extraction of invasive that can be widely used in the region for weed control;

b The Rufford funded Mau forest conservation project has enabled the creation and implementation of The Joint Forest Management Plans for Community Forest Association. This has been a benchmarking initiative with such great impact on the Mau forest.

c The Rufford funded ecotourism project in western and south coast now generates income for the local communities at a large scale.

d The Mipopo Pamoja, that the Director of NEMA talked about, has restored 15 hectares of Magrove due to the Rufford Grant.

e Rufford assisted in reaching and training over 10000 school children and over 5000 local communities in nature conservation practices.

f The Rufford Grant helped in protecting endangered species. For instance; 400 species of Green turtle have been released back to the ocean.

g The RSG cheetah project has trained over 200 community members.

h The Rufford projects in Tanzania have promoted the growing indigenous trees as opposed to exotic trees and this resulted into large impact on biodiversity conservation as the indigenous trees present a higher capacity of accommodating more ecosystem.

i Mapping of migratory corridor for wild animals at the Mara ecosystem has improved conservation research and informed actions and therefore enabled better results for nature conservation in the region.

2. The RSG Projects locally developed approaches to biodiversity management

The RSG Projects presented were unique and have uniquely developed different local approaches to biodiversity management including:

a Community engagement. For instance: the RSG Projects in Maasai Mara have successfully involved the Maasai community in conservation.

b Income generation based groups. For instance establishment of the bee keeping groups.

c Engaging Youth, Schools and Community trainings. For example establishing and working with the wildlife clubs and school environmental clubs

d The community forest associations establishment

e Establishing and engaging the water users associations

3. Community Capacity building

The majority of the presented projects had at least a community capacity building component. They provide the local community with the environment friendly alternative sources of revenue including beekeeping, tree planting, and poultry. The RSG Project also trained local community members, established and strengthened local groups and associations, and empowered their environment conservation programmes. All this was because of the Rufford Funding.

4. Support Early Career

The Rufford support has enabled early career conservationists achieve their goals and expand their projects/ impact. In fact most of the RSG Recipients in the region have acquired or are studying Masters and Doctorate Degrees and they admit the role that the Rufford first grants/ research played in helping them get admissions and scholarships. For instance:

a. The RSG has funded several Post graduate students' research from regional universities including the Nelson Mandela University, Masai Mara University, Makerere University, University of Rwanda, and others.

b. The simplicity and transparency of the RSG application process has helped the young conservationists to get small grants and take the environmental careers.

c. Students and young career conservationists have graduated and accomplished their school research requirements through the RSG research funding.

5. The Rufford grant has helped species that are difficult to fundraise for

Rufford Grants has uniquely funded the conservation of the species and ecosystem which are less commonly funded. Most of the available research grants focus on large famous animals and species listed within the IUCN (status). But the RSGs have enabled research on small and neglected species including bats, baobab and insects and fragile ecosystems including less known wetlands.

6. Rufford Grant as a seed funding:

The Rufford Foundation often starts as a seed granter opening doors to other granters supporting similar projects. The RSGs have grown the Recipients' profiles for other grants and partnerships and built the capacity of students, communities and conservationists in general. Several presenters shared how they used the Rufford Grants as their first grant for researching about a problem, training their teams and connecting with the community and thereafter accessed bigger grants from other sources. For instance; Prof. Peninah Aloo Obudho's Rufford Project enabled her university to secure a UNDP collaboration. Edward Mwamuye, Paul Webala and many other recipients shared how the RSGs opened doors to many other bigger grants.

7. Rufford funding helped train future conservationists:

Apart from the fact that the majority of the Presented RSG Projects had youth and student training components, the majority of the RSG Grantees are examples themselves of how the Rufford has helped train the future conservationists. The Rufford started funding them at their early career stage and now they have become experienced conservationists. Many examples were given where the projects focused on training school pupils and students who are growing up with the nature conservation passions. A Rufford Project in Kenya assisted in reaching and training over 10000 school children and over 5000 local young people.

8. Publications:

The Rufford grantees have published important biodiversity information including field and academic research and professional knowledge products. In fact the RSG Research projects have made many recipients well-known researchers in Africa. Their publications and reports have been published in refereed journals including African journal of ecology, Global ecology conservation science, journal of biodiversity and environmental science. The RSG publications are also published widely on different institutions websites and shared with stakeholders. The Rufford Funding has also promoted capacity development through essay writing, booklet and brochure, songs, drama, and habitat restoration among others (seed collection, propagation, seedling management and planting). This has promoted conservation and outreach that can be replicated.

CHALLENGES FACED AND ISSUES RAISED

Apart from the impact of the Rufford Funding, the participants discussed also the challenges they face during the course of their projects. Below are some of the common challenges that the RSG Participants mentioned:

1. The Stakeholders' High Expectations: he RSG Recipients face difficulties in working with local groups, local leaders, government agencies and even some project team members due to their high expectations. They expect to be paid for their participation, the thing that RSG projects cannot afford.

2. The Rufford Policy of sending grants through institution bank accounts: this has resulted into many problems including:

a. The overhead charges by some institutions which interfere with project objectives.
b. The institutional bureaucracy and delay in releasing the fund which delay the project activities.
c. Bribe demanding by some of the institution leaders which lead to misuse of funds through unnecessary incentives and bribery and/ or difficulties in getting the funds.
d. The risk of Funds Loss and holding on of funds by dishonest institution leaders
e. The RSG director Josh explained the reasons why the funds are paid through an NGO and that the foundation is aware of obstacles. they also have provisions in place to reduce conduit overheads and tackle fraud.

3. Covid-19 pandemic delayed completion of projects and some projects have past the deadlines.

4. Covid-19 pandemic made transport and many other project activities more expensive.

5. Community myths about some species like Bats which is currently thought to be the cause of Covid 19.

6. Political agenda interference and lack of good will.

7. Insufficient time: the community and partners need to change their attitudes towards conservation. And changing attitudes is a challenging job that takes more time than what the Rufford guidelines allow.

8. Lack of incentives and alternative incomes: most of the environment destruction practises provide livelihoods. So it is very difficult to change the mind-set of communities about their traditional unsustainable income without providing them with alternative incomes.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Recipients recommended:

1. The Rufford to organise more conferences and facilitate more project participants attending the conferences. The local young people in the hosting country, to be given an opportunity to be part of the organizing team.

2. Despite the current pandemic situation, conservation work is going on therefore the funds can be released.

3. The Grantees must send the reports on time.

4. The Grantees must make sure they implement the project activities as planned.

5. The Grantees should network and continously share knowledge with fellow grantees.

6. There should be no more use of plastic water bottles but in the time of covid 19 it was our safest option.

Even the certificates were given in a social distanced manner

VI. ANNEX

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

No	Name	Email	Country	Field	Grants
1	Martha Mutiso	Marthanzisa@gmail.com	Kenya	Habitats/ Wetlands	2
2	Sospeter Kibiwot	sospeterkib@gmail.com	Kenya	Bats, Forests, Mammals	1
3	Margaret Owuor	awuorowuor@yahoo.com	Kenya	Communities, People	3
4	Edward Mwamuye	emwamuye@yahoo.com	Kenya	Education, Marine, Turtles	5
5	Evarastus Obura	evarastus@yahoo.com	Kenya	Communities, Education	5
6	Faith Muniale	fngugi2001@gmail.com	Kenya	Communities, Education	3
7	Paul Webala	paul.webala@gmail.com	Kenya	Bats, Mammals	3
8	Allai Chrispo	aorimba@yahoo.com	Kenya	Mammals	2
9	Peninah Aloo Obudho	obudhoaloo90@gmail.com	Kenya	Communities, Education, Plants	2
10	Teresah Mumbi for Nzilili Cosmas	sikizanatrust@gmail.com	Kenya	Education	1
11	Alphonse Karenzi	karenzilife@gmail.com	Rwanda	Forests	5
12	Warda Kanagwa	kanagwawarda@yahoo.co.u k	Tanzania	Biodiversity, Communities, Habitats	1
13	Necklina Micheal	mbundim@nm-aist.ac.tz	Tanzania	Biodiversity,	1
14	Scholastica Mbinile	mbiniles@nm-aist.ac.tz	Tanzania	Education, Mammals, Primates	1
15	Upendo Nsalilwa	msalilwau@nm-aist.ac.tz	Tanzania	Biodiversity, Forests, Plants	2
16	Simuja Maijo	maijocmla@yahoo.com	Tanzania	Communities, Habitats, Mammals, Primates	2
17	Umaru Mugisha on Behalf of Nile Discourse Forum	mugishaumaru@gmail.com	Uganda	Forests, Habitats, Farming	1
18	Zephaniah Migeni	ajode.zephaniah@gmail.co m	Kenya	Education, Habitats	3
19	Faith Mugah	0719815183	Kenya	Carnivores, Conflict, Mammals	1
20	Tony Inganji	inganjilife@gmail.com	Rwanda	Communities, Education, Trade	applicant
21	Kemigisha Josephine	0782036958	Uganda	Habitats, Burds, Eco-Tourism	applicant
22	Eric Awuonda	0723130950	KENYA	Education, Habitats	conversationist
23	Brian Waswala	0733428581	KENYA	Biodiversity, Forests, Plants	conversationist

NO	NAME	ROLE IN THE CONFERENCE	POSITION / ORGANIZATION
1	Mr. Josh Cole	The Rufford Foundation Representative	The Director of Rufford Small Grants
2	Dr. MAMO BORU MAMMO	The Kenya Government Representative and Guest of Honour	The Director General of the National Environmental Management Authority (NEMA), Kenya
3	Agnes Kamiri	The Official Reporter	The Communications Officer of the National Environmental Management Authority (NEMA), Kenya
4	RICHARD KIRUNDI	The Kenya National Conservation Analyst	The President of Rotary Eco-Club Kenya

CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

On the page below there is a two day conference schedule.

Day	Time	Activity	Facilitator
Sun 6th	09:00-19:00	Welcoming the participants and check-in at Westwood Hotel	Umaru Mugisha & Tony Inganji
	19:00-20:30	Welcoming Dinner in the West Wood Hotel Restaurantl	Umaru Mugisha
MONDAY 7TH	6:00-8:00	Hotel Break-fast for accommodated participants	West Wood Staff
	8:00-8:30	Participants' Registration in the Westwood Garden	Umaru Mugisha
	9:00-09:30	- Rufford Brief Introduction by Alphonse Karenzi - Keynote address by Dr. Mammo Boru Mammo, theProf. Peninah Aloo Obudhod director General of NEMA.	Prof. Peninah Aloo Obudho
	109:30-10:20	Alumni (10 min for presentation + 5 min for Q&A each). The list of presenters is attached.	Prof. Peninah Aloo Obudho
	10:20-10:50	Coffee Break /Networking/ group photo	Umaru Mugisha
	10:50-10:55	Words Vs Actions Exercise	Tony Inganji
	10:55-11:40	Experience Sharing Presentations by 3 selected RSG Recipients (10 min for presentation + 5 min for Q&A each).	Selected from the RSG Alumni
	11:40-11:45	Ice-breaker	Tony Inganji
	11:50-12:35	Experience Sharing Presentations by 3 selected RSG Recipients (10 min for presentation + 5 min for Q&A each).	Selected from the RSG Alumni
	12:35-13:40	Lunch Break & Networking	Umaru Mugisha
	13:40-14:50	Discussions and experience sharing within three small groups.	Everastus Obura
	14:50-15:50	Proposal Writing, Fundraising and Conservation Success Stories by RSG Alumni & Expert Panellists	Faith Muniale
	15:50-16:10	Coffee break/ networking	
	16:10-16:30	Way Forward, closing remarks and vote of thanks	Allai Chrispo & Edward Mwamuye
	16:30-18:30	Nairobi Self Organised Tour and Networking	Self-organised
	18:30-20:30	Dinner at Indigo Restaurant	Tony Inganji

TUESDAY 8TH	6:00-8:40	Break-fast	Umaru Mugisha
	8:40-9:00	Driving to Karura Forest and Registration at Karura	Umaru Mugisha
	9:00-11:30	Karura Forest Conservation and Communit Activism Discussion and One-On-One Interactions	Daniel, the Karura Guider
	11:30-11:45	Driving back from Karura to Westwood Hotel	Umaru Mugisha
	11:45-12:30	Debriefing and Farewell Lunch	Umaru Mugisha
	12:30	Departure	Tony Inganji

THE PANEL DISCUSSION ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

According to the participants' post conference interview feedback, the panel discussion was one of the most interesting sessions of the conference. Many skills and lessons were shared by the pan- ellists. Below is a brief compile of the two Approaches to writing competence statements taught during the Panel Discussion by Dr. Faith Muniale. Many thanks to Dr. Faith for compiling this brief yet detail document.

Approaches to writing your competence statements

Competencies are the skills, knowledge and behaviours that lead to a successful performance. They are short statements, describing a time in which you have displayed the behaviours needed to perform well in a particular job or role. It allows you to demonstrate what you are capable of, and shows that you can apply the same behaviours to a new role. The competency approach cen- tres on 'how' you achieved the outcome. Therefore, it is important that you show how your behav- iour led to the outcome.

Competency examples requires more than just information about what you did, it requires you to explain. There are many different approaches you can take to writing competencies, such as the STAR, or the CAR methods. As to which one you chose to use, it's down to your personal style of writing.

The STAR method

Using the STAR method, allows you to set the scene, show what you did and how, and the overall outcome. This is then used to gather the relevant information about a specific capability that the job /role requires.

Situation - Describe the situation you found yourself in. You should describe a specific event or situation. Be sure to give enough detail for the reader to understand.

Where are you
- Who was there with you?
- What had happened?

Task - The reader will want to understand what you tried to achieve from the situation you found yourself in.

What was the task that you had to complete and why?
- What did you have to achieve?

Actions - What did you do? The reader will be looking for information of what you did, how you did it and why. Keep the focus on you. What specific steps did you take and what was your contribution? Remember to include how you did it, and the behaviours you used. Try to use "I" rather than "we" to explain your actions that lead to the result, without taking credit for something that you did not do.

Results - Don't be shy about taking credit for your behaviour. Quote specific facts and figures easily understandable.

What results did the actions produce?

- What did you achieve through your actions and did you meet your goals?
- Was it a successful outcome? If not what did you learn from the experience?

Not everyone can relate to the STAR method, so an alternative approach is:

The CAR approach

Context - Explain the situation; what, where and when. Simply describe the challenge that you faced. Give the reader some background, just enough to set the scene.

Actions - Make sure that you explain how you did something not just what you did. What action or steps did you take? How did you do it? For some jobs, it might be quite detailed, but don't talk about every single thing. Summarise as best as you can.

Results - What was the outcome? What results did you achieve? Talk about the results. Use numbers and percentages whenever possible. Remember if your result is not positive, describe what you have learnt.

THE RSG PUBLICATIONS AND REFERENCES

Below are but a few examples of the publications by the RSG Recipients. These Researchers confirm that without the Rufford Funding these important publications wouldn't be possible.

Publication by Kanagwa Warda, a 1st Rufford Grant Recipient from Tanzania:

1. Kanagwa et al., 2020. Effectiveness of Zygogramma bicolorata as a biocontrolagent against Parthenium hysterophorus in Arusha, Tanzania

Publication by Mecklina M. Mbudi, a 1st Rufford Grant Recipient from Tanzania:

1. Mecklina M. Mbudi et al 2019. Invasive prosopis juliflora reduces density and species composition of co-occuring woody plants in the
lower Moshi Rangelands, Tanzania.

Publication by Muniale Faith, a third rufford grant recipient from Kenya:

1. Muniale F.M; Mtakwa P.W; Muyekho F.N; Baanda A.S; Massonga C., (2019). The role of Conservation Agriculture in management of Fall Army Worm Spodoptera frugiperda in Southern Tanzania. Global Journal of Scientific Research, GJSR Journal. Vol. 7(2), pp. 27-31, 23 October, 2019 E-ISSN: 2311-732X

2. Muniale F.M; Mtakwa P.W; Muyekho F.N; Kazururu B., and Mbazi E.M., (2019). The Smallholder farmers perception towards conservation agriculture. Global Journal of Scientific Research, GJSR Journal. Vol. 7(2), pp. 32 - 36, 23 October, 2019 E-ISSN: 2311-732X

3. Mtakwa, P. W., Urio, N. N., Muniale, F. M. W., Mtakwa, A. P., Lal, R., & Singh, B. R. (2019). Conservation Agriculture in Tanzania. In Advances in Soil Science. Soil Degradation and Restoration in Africa (pp. 195–226). CRC Press, Taylor & Francis Group.

4. Pocock, Michael; Roy, Helen; August, Tom; Kuria, Anthony; Barasa, Fred; Bett, John; Githiru, Mwangi; Kairo, James; Kimani, Julius; Kinuthia, Wanja; Kissui, Bernard; Madindou, Ireene; Mbogo, Kamau; Mirembe, Judith; Mugo, Paul; Muniale, Faith; Njoroge, Peter; Njuguna, Edwin; Olendo, Mike; Opige, Michael; Otiengo, Tobias; Ng'weno, Caroline; Pallangyo, Elisha; Thenya, Thuita; Wanjiru, Ann; Trevelyan, Rosie (2018). Developing the global potential of citizen science: Assessing opportunities that benefit people, society and the environment in East Africa. J Appl Ecol. 2 018; 0 0:1–8. https://doi.org/10.1111/1365-2664.13279.

5. Colin, J.; Muniale, F M. and Tincani, L (2016); Programme Evaluation of the WASH results programme: Country report for Kenya. Produced through Oxford Policy Management for review by the Department for International Development, United Kingdom (DFID)

6. Muniale F. M. (2016) Community resource mapping for sustainable management of Loita landscape. Paper presented at the National Conference on Sustainable Land Management held on 1st – 4th June 2016 by Global Environmental Fund and Ministry of Livestock Kenya.

7. Wanjiru, M. N; Schweitzer, R.; Muniale, Faith Milkah and Tulay, H.B (2015); WASH Sustainability Index Tool Assessment: Liberia, Final Report. Produced for review by the United States Agency for International Development

8. Muniale, Faith Milkah; Muchemi, J. and Esipila, T. (2015). Sustainable Environmental management and livelihoods improvement for forest adjacent communities in Kenya. Proceedings of Environmental Science and Technology conference 2014 by American Academy of Science

9. Muniale, Faith Milkah, Wegulo F; Shivoga W. and Muchane, M. (2014). Birds in fragmented Eastern Mau Forest. Global Journal of Scientific Research. Vol. 2(1), pp. 27-30

10. Muniale, F. M W., Wegulo, F. and Shivoga, W.A. (2013). Fragmentation of the Eastern Mau Forest and its Effects on Avifauna's Composition and Diversity in published proceedings forMaiden Students Conference Book of Abstracts with the theme: Biodiversity in Africa:Present State, Challenges and Prospects for its Conservation Edited by Folaranmi D. Babalola.

11. Ogiek People Ancestral Territories Atlas (OPAT Atlas): (2013), By Julius Muchemi and Albrecht Ehrensperger. (Contributing team: Muniale Faith Milkah, Kakwetin Lesingo, Sang Joseph). Safeguarding territories, Cultures and Natural Resources of Ogiek Indigenous People in the Eastern Mau Forest, Kenya; Published by ERMIS Africa and CDE, 2009: ISBN 978-9966-7321-0-1

12. Julius Githinji Muchemi, Muniale Faith Milkah, Miriam Nyambura and Beneah Manyuru Mutsotso (2012). Environmental and Social Impact Assessment and Resettlement Action Plan of the Kenya-Tanzania Power Interconnection Project. Final Full ESIA Report. Report presented to Nile Basin Initiative/NELSAP

13. Electronic Waste management and distribution in Kenya: By Coauthors Julius Muchemi and Maina Karume and contributing authors Florence Kinyua and Faith Milkah Muniale. Mapping and analysis of electronic wastes in various counties in Kenya; the implications on environmental management. Published by ERMIS Africa, 2012: ISBN 978-9966-7321-2-8

14. Ngugi, Faith Milkah; Shivoga, W.A.; Muchiri, Mucai; Miller, Scott N. (2006), Effects of land use changes on bird composition along River Njoro: A watershed of Lake Nakuru, Published in: Odada, Eric & Olago, Daniel O. & Ochola, Washington & Ntiba, Micheni & Wandiga, Shem & Gichuki, Nathan & Oyieke, Hilda (Ed.) Proceedings of the 11th World Lakes Conference: vol. 2, 2006. p. 540-543.

15. Rehabilitation of River Njoro; stakeholders and their stakes. 2013. (Poster)

16. Forest fragmentation, what does it mean to birds in Eastern Mau Forest 2008 (Poster)

Publications by Owuor Margaret, a third grant Recipient from Kenya:

1 Owuor, Margaret. Awuor, 2020. Working with local communities: Trees as Nature-Based Solutions: A GlobalSouthPerspective,OneEarth, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.oneear.2020.07.008

2 Owuor, Margaret. Awuor, 2012. Can the community save Akara Hills in Kenya? In: Gaesing, Karin (ed.): Collaborative Protected Area Management -. Lessons from Sub-Saharan Africa. (SPRING Research Series 57), ISBN 3-934525-57-1. TU Dortmund, pp. 49-55.

Publications by Paul Webala, a third Rufford Grant Recipient from Kenya:

1. Ngatia, D.K., P.W. Webala, M.J. Mware, T.M. Butynski, Y.A. de Jong, A.W. Ferguson (Paper Accepted – in press). Biogeography of the Egyptian mongoose Herpestes ichneumon (Linnaeus, 2 1758) in Africa, with first records for Laikipia County, central Kenya. African Journal of Ecology

2. Kareinen, L., Ogola, J., Kivistö, I., Smura, T., Aaltonen, K., Jääskeläinen, A. J...., Webala, P. W., Forbes, K. M., Sironen, T. (2020). Range Expansion of Bombali Virus in Mops condylurus Bats, Kenya. Emerging Infectious Diseases, 26(12), 3007-3010. https://dx.-doi.org/10.3201/eid2612.202925.

3. Jocelyn P. Colella, Bernard Risky Agwanda, Faisal Ali Anwarali Khan, John Bates, Carlos A. Carrión Bonilla, Noé U. de la Sancha, Jonathan L. Dunnum, Adam W. Ferguson, Stephen E. Greiman, Prince Kaleme Kiswele, Enrique P. Lessa, Pamela Soltis, Cody W. Thompson, Maarten P. M. Vanhove, Paul W. Webala, Marcelo Weksler and Joseph A. Cook (2020). Build international biorepository capacity. Science 370 (6518), 773-774. https://doi.org/10.1126/science.abe4813

4. Rossoni DM, Demos TC, Goodman SM, Yego RK, Mohlman J, Webala PW, Patterson BD (2020). Genetic, morphological and acoustic differentiation of African trident bats (Triaenops, Rhinonycteridae). Zoological Journal of the Linnean Society, zlaa098, https://doi.org/10.1093/zoolinnean/-zlaa098

5. Katunzi, Thomas, Soisook, Pipat, Webala Paul, W., Armstrong Kyle, N., and Bumrungsri, Sara (2020). Bat activity and species richness in different land-use types in and around Chome Nature Forest Reserve, Tanzania. African Journal of Ecology 00: 1 - 15. https://doi.org/10.1111/aje.12783

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12. Nziza J, Goldstein T, Cranfield M, Webala PW, et al. (2019). Coronaviruses detected in bats in close contact with humans in Rwanda. EcoHealth. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10393-01901458-8

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18. Patterson BD, Webala PW, Kerbis Peterhans JC, Goodman SM, Bartonjo M, Demos TC (2019) Genetic variation and relationships among Afrotropical species of Myotis (Chiroptera: Vespertilionidae). Journal of Mammalogy 100: 1130–1143. https://doi.org/10.1093/jmammal/gyz087.

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