

## The Rufford Small Grants Foundation

### Final Report

Congratulations on the completion of your project that was supported by The Rufford Small Grants Foundation.

We ask all grant recipients to complete a Final Report Form that helps us to gauge the success of our grant giving. We understand that projects often do not follow the predicted course but knowledge of your experiences is valuable to us and others who may be undertaking similar work. Please be as honest as you can in answering the questions – remember that negative experiences are just as valuable as positive ones if they help others to learn from them.

Please complete the form in English and be as clear and concise as you can. We will ask for further information if required. If you have any other materials produced by the project, particularly a few relevant photographs please send these to us separately.

Please submit your final report to [jane@rufford.org](mailto:jane@rufford.org).

Thank you for your help.

**Josh Cole Grants Director**

Grant Recipient Details	
<b>Your name</b>	Dr. Nilesh Kamalkishor Heda
<b>Project title</b>	Conservation of Riverine Resources through People's Participation: North-Eastern Godavari Basin Maharashtra, India.
<b>RSG reference</b>	<b>07.06.08</b>
<b>Reporting period</b>	February 2008 - August 2009 (RSG funds received in September 2008).
<b>Amount of grant</b>	£5991
<b>Your email address</b>	<a href="mailto:nilheda@gmail.com">nilheda@gmail.com</a>
<b>Date of this report</b>	03 September 2009

**1. Please indicate the level of achievement of the project's original objectives and include any relevant comments on factors affecting this.**

Objective	Not achieved	Partially achieved	Fully achieved	Comments
Quantitative estimation of fish fauna of River Adan.				Data was collected in the period from February 2007 to August 2008. In afore mentioned period 2386 individuals caught with 39 species from the River Adan.
Qualitative and quantitative estimation of habitat characteristics of River Adan.				Habitats along Adan river have been Identified and classified into various habitat types (pools, riffles, rapids, falls, runs, etc). Habitat characteristics like riparian vegetation, anthropogenic pressure, ground substrates, surrounding land use, etc, documented.
Setting upriver Conservation Societies in 3 villages.				River Conservation Societies have been set up at 2 places, Dhamani village and Manbha village. In addition, I have set up NREGA labour union, groups of college students and fishermen cooperative society registration is underway.
Setting up 2 FWPAs along Adan River through River Conservation Societies.				At only one place I was able to set up a Fresh Water Protected Area. In next round many more places will be identified and declared by local people as FWPA.
Preparation of database of lentic water bodies of Adan River basin.				The data base has been prepared access with front end Visual basic. A preliminary data base is ready; user interface is to be prepared.
Preparation of status report of Adan River basin. Status will include information about ecology of Adan River and state of people's occupation.				The status report preparation is underway.
Awareness generation campaign in Adan River basin				A very effective campaign has been initiated. Grassroots people, students, government officers have been involved in the same. The awareness campaign has been linked with the direct-action components like plantation of the trees along river.

**2. Please explain any unforeseen difficulties that arose during the project and how these were tackled (if relevant).**

- **Low Rainfall:** Last year there was severe drought in the area. The rainfall was just 300 mm as against average 1200 mm rainfall in this area. According to knowledgeable individuals this kind of drought was only appeared in the 1972. Thus, fish culture was not very much successful all though foundation in that direction has been laid. Due to lack of employment opportunities in the area I have moved my attention on the wise implementation of the NREGA, which shown very much positive results both for employment generation as well as river conservation. During this period foundation has been laid for the long-term implementation of the aquaculture. This preparation includes collection of the data for the preparation of the database of the local wetlands, identification of the sites for the aquaculture. In next phase this process will be strengthened. The low rainfall also created hindrances in the data collection about the various aspects of the river especially species inventory.
- **New Intervention:** In this area this kind of intervention is new. There are people working with the local people; however, their emphasis is basically on the “work for the people” not “with the people”. Thus, initially there was general disagreement regarding such kind of work. There was fear about the establishment of the ‘Fresh Water Protected Areas’ among the local stakeholders. People thought that due to the establishment of the FWPA’s they will not be able to use goods and services arising from such resources. However, by continuous capacity building and implementation of the concept of the ‘Sustainable Utilization’ people become ready for this initiative.
- **Information from government departments:** There were general disagreements among the government people regarding information disclosure. Government departments were not disclosing information regarding various aspects of the river, other lentic water bodies etc. However, using “Right to Information Act (RTI)” of Government of India information has been collected from two departments, state irrigation and fisheries department.
- **Registration of community structures:** We are trying to establish local community structure of the people for the livelihood generation as well as natural resource conservation. These structures need to be converted into government registered societies. We have started registration procedure of the one such Fishermen's Cooperative Society. There is widespread corruption in the government department during registration of such society due to which they have refused to register the same. Study group is trying to register the society without giving any bribe and in the future they will register for the same. In this situation, peaceful activism will be needed to ameliorate the situation.

**3. Briefly describe the three most important outcomes of your project.**

**1) Establishment of Community structure for river conservation:**

In the present-day Indian villages, traditional structures of the decision-making and conflict resolution are broken down due to party politics. In the Adan River basin, I have started to build River Conservation Societies. At two places [Dhamani Village (20°22'39.16"N, 77°27'22.46"E) and Manbha Village (20°30'40.27"N, 77°37'51.62"E)] such societies has been built and both societies are taking part in the various river conservation work like watershed development, plantation along rivers etc. For various diverse interest local people united. These interests range from the livelihood generation through NREGA or union of the local people to fight against encroachment of the river to

save them from flood. At every instance the issue has been linked with the conservation of natural resources. However, this kind of efforts should be spread in whole of the basin area and there is need to establish cross linkages among them.

## **2) Livelihood generation while conservation of rivers:**

For rivers of our area, we have a basic problem of siltation, depletion in the ground water, encroachment of the water bodies etc. Destruction of the vegetation in the river basin leads to siltation. Abundant silt entering in the river chokes up springs and pools converted into other type of habitats. In this situation Watershed Development is an important work to be carried out. The National Rural Employment Guaranty Scheme (NREGA) of Government of India can be utilized to restore the degraded riverine resources. The law stipulates that 80 % development work should be of Watershed Development. Through the RSG grant I have concentrated my attention on the wise implementation of the NREGA for riverine resource conservation. This initiative generates 17 small ponds on the streams entering into Adan River basin and other watershed conservation work. People of the Dhamani village got a total of 600,000 Rupees (about £6000) of employment up to the end of August 2009 divided amongst 200 labours. They have also established a union and helping us to conserve river. The union also decided to take water bodies on lease for the aquaculture purpose in the coming monsoon so that they can lower their dependency on riverine fish and can get sustainable livelihood.

## **3) Establishment of FWPA:**

On Adan river at Bhan Doh (a traditional name to the pool along Adan River) (20°24'44.45"N, 77°28'33.81"E to 20°25'6.29"N, 77°28'44.10"E) a 0.78 km long patch was chosen as place for the FWPA. Local people are about to declare this place for FWPA. However, this process of the FWPA should be strengthening in the future.

## **4. Briefly describe the involvement of local communities and how they have benefitted from the project (if relevant).**

The basic theme of the project was to involve local people especially fishermen in the conservation of the riverine resources and livelihood generation for them. Thus, people's involvement was the basic pre-requisite for the project and 100% involvement of the local people has been ensured. Initially fishermen of this area (locally called BHOI) have been targeted. Latter on, labourers, marginal farmers and other ethnic groups have also been involved in the project.

The benefits to local people are of two categories: short-term which involved livelihood generation through NREGA work and fish culture and long-term involving increasing sustainability of the riverine and other natural resources.

There are many indirect benefits to societies also like, due to creation of the small water tanks the water level of the surrounding area increased substantially, increase in soil moisture, increased water availability for wild animals, soil conservation, increase in the vegetation etc. In addition, due to creation of the local institutional structures local people handling local issues collaboratively.

## **5. Are there any plans to continue this work?**

Yes. Through this project a small demonstration of the future work has been portrayed. This was a small regional effort. The lessons learnt from this small period project and rapport built with the local people should be utilized, spread and replicated in the other part of the basin and to another basin.

## **6. How do you plan to share the results of your work with others?**

Since June 2008 we are publishing monthly newsletter named JAL SAMVARDHAN (Water Conservation) in local *Marathi* language. The newsletter is in both forms, printed copies and as E-Publication. Through this media the results of the RSG project have been distributed and will be continued in the future. Every month, project news has been published in the newsletter which is used to write final project report and provide direction to other people too. Editorial section of the newsletter was written by me provide firsthand analysis of the gathered information. The collection of the editorials will be published in the future in the form of a book. All monthly issues of the newsletter can be downloaded from this link: [www.samvardhan.page.tl](http://www.samvardhan.page.tl).

We built very good rapport with editor and journalist of local newspapers. The regularly appearing news in the local paper about project was used for reporting as well as created awareness among other sections of the society. All published articles written by me in local language can be seen at <http://nheda.blogspot.com>.

A website has been developed and information has been uploaded at the same. The website can be accessed at [www.samvardhan.page.tl](http://www.samvardhan.page.tl). Monthly reports to RSG office also uploaded on web at <http://monthlyupdateruffordsmallgrant.blogspot.com/>.

Regular blogs related to RSG project has been written and can be seen at the <http://nheda.blogspot.com/>

In coming future especially students will be targeted to spread the results of the RSG project. I am having good orator skill and educational institutions seldom invite me to give lecture on the various topics related to RSG project.

## **7. Timescale: Over what period was the RSG used? How does this compare to the anticipated or actual length of the project?**

RSG grant has been utilized in the period of September 2008 to August 2009. However, actual work has been started in the February 2008 (please see detailed project report). RSG grant was received in September 2008. The revival and conservation of rivers, like ours, is at least the work of 5 years continuous efforts. Thus, present work can be considered as preparative stage for the project.

**8. Budget: Please provide a breakdown of budgeted versus actual expenditure and the reasons for any differences. All figures should be in £ sterling, indicating the local exchange rate used.**

Item	Budgeted Amount	Actual Amount	Difference	Comments
Salary of PI	1602.33	1602.33	0	
Salary Project Assistant	480.7	480.7	0	
Office rent	218.5	218.5	0	
Travelling expenses. Fieldwork to various places along river.	932.27	1151	-218.73	
Capacity building workshop.	971.11	1200	-228.89	A river conference national level programme arranged.
Stationery and consumables. Internet, phone, postage etc.	291.33	305	-13.67	
Equipment	433.37	98	335.37	The amount has been spent on capacity building workshop.
Honorarium	194.22	200	-5.78	
Travel to university, Zoological Survey of India office, Central Fishery Institute, library etc.	262.2	304	-41.8	
Printing of capacity building material, posters, banners, small booklets.	254.92	259.5	-4.58	
Hiring fisherman for fish sampling	58.27	98	-39.73	Due to drought more time and money had to spend on fish inventorying.
Financial help to RIVER CONSERVATION SOCIETY.	291.33	72.83	218.5	Financial help has been provided to only one River Conservation Society to build a shed to arrange meetings.
	5990.55	5989.86	0.69	

**Local exchange Rte on 3 September 2009: 1 £ = 82 INR.**

**9. Looking ahead, what do you feel are the important next steps?**

In coming future, following 10 step programme will be implemented in the whole Adan River and other associated river basins of the area.

1. Livelihood generation while doing effective conservation: Sensitizing local administration and local people for more river conservation work through NREGA.

2. Livelihood generation and conservation of local fish fauna: Culture of the indigenous species of fishes through local fish culture groups. Capacity building of the people regarding scientific fish culture.
3. Status Report: Compilation of the collected data in the first step of RSG and completion of the Status Report in local as well as English language. Distribution of the same to local people as well as policy makers of the area.
4. RDBMS: Preparation of Relational Database Management System (RDBMS). Completion of the database of the water bodies of the area in both languages, local and English, and its distribution to local people.
5. FWPA: Strengthening previously established FWPA and creation of the more in Adan and other river basins.
6. Strengthening community structures: Strengthening previously established community structures and creation of the more in Adan and other river basins.
7. Student's power: Deploying student's power for data collection and awareness generation. Creation of the student's groups in schools and colleges.
8. Popular material: Creation of the popular material on the relevant government resolutions, acts, rules for the help of local people. Creation of the material on the wetland conservation issues for common man and creation of the material on the scientific fish culture.
9. Fish and habitat inventorying: More fish fauna inventorying events to assess fish fauna of Adan River basin.
10. Plantation along Adan River: 5000 plants of locally available plant species will be planted along river Adan in next RSG phase.

**10. Did you use the RSGF logo in any materials produced in relation to this project? Did the RSGF receive any publicity during the course of your work?**

Yes. At all capacity building programs on main banner RSG logo has been printed. Also, on the front page of the already mentioned popular news letter logo has been printed. On every popular material RSG logo printed.

**11. Any other comments?**

When we apply ecosystem approach to the conservation work it needs consistency in the work. Such consistency maintained by the continuous supply of the resources for some time until and unless system becomes self sustaining. Thus, to maintain the tempo of our work financial resources are expected in coming future as soon as possible.