

## 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>	DE RIDDER BENJAMIN
<b>Project title</b>	HONCO Mangrove Conservation & Education
<b>RSG reference</b>	RSG 10.08.07
<b>Reporting period</b>	01/01/2008 – 01-03-2009
<b>Amount of grant</b>	£ 5000
<b>Your email address</b>	deridder_benjamin@yahoo.com
<b>Date of this report</b>	19/03/2009

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

<b>Objective</b>	<b>Not achieved</b>	<b>Partially achieved</b>	<b>Fully achieved</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Identification of suitable mangrove sites and motivated local communities			Fully achieved	The mangroves north of Toliara have been degraded and overexploited for many years. With the arrival of our project local communities are learning and are motivated to safeguard the future of these ecosystems.
Socio-economic studies and training			Nearly fully achieved	A database of the mangroves around Toliara has been created. Several students have been participating together with the usage of local guides to get an overview of the status of the ecosystems. A scientific paper will be published in 2009 to share this information with others.
Set up of local Mangrove Conservation Association		Partly achieved		We have established a local Mangrove Conservation Association involving 5 different villages within the commune surrounding the mangroves. But due to political unrests, the official steps have not been finalised. This is due in 2009.
Increasing Awareness			Fully achieved	Through active replanting, celebrating an International Mangrove Action Day and holding Awareness Evenings in Toliara, Honco fully achieved their objectives in this matter. With the further development of the Mangrove Information Centre we believe in a strong continuation of the awareness programme. In total more than 5000 young mangroves have been directly planted and more than 500 seedlings are growing in different nurseries.
Demonstration projects		Partly achieved		Nurseries, protected areas, replantations, compost toilet and

				<p>vegetable gardens were initiated. The development of other alternative energy demonstration projects will continue in 2009. We will also start giving workshops to achieve a better and more durable yield through community based aquaculture of crabs.</p>
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### Summary

First of all we (HONCO) would like to show our appreciation and gratitude towards the Rufford Small Grants Foundation to make it possible for our Mangrove Conservation Project in SW Madagascar to start making a difference in the daily life of the concerned people. The last year Honco has successfully initiated a local Community Conservation Project in Ambondrolava, 12 km north of Toliara. Through a multidisciplinary approach Honco informed and trained the local population about the importance of mangrove ecosystems and the need for durable management and usage practices. The project was not only limited to Environmental Education and awareness training, it also involved numerous cleaning and active planting days. The local population understands now the importance of planting new trees after harvesting. Many people (local, international, governmental, researchers) were involved in those reforestation activities. Honco also initiated within the area the first Celebration Day (in name of the International Mangrove Action Day on 26th July) and now several other associations are copying this in other areas. Honco also constructed a training and information centre, which had some delays for completion due to political problems and lack of supply of materials. The building has been finished in the end of the year and the coming years it will fulfil his important function in helping to conserve biodiversity and natural resources in the area.

With the first phase of our project successfully initiated and completed, we will intend to apply for a second RSG grant to support our activities in securing a durable future both for the mangrove ecosystems and local population.

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

The transport is a burden and often more time-consuming than we had imagined. With the creation of the Centre we hope to minimise our transports to the city and fully focus on our work on the terrain. The prices also have been rising during the year.

Another difficulty was the problems with the unrest in Madagascar. Due to unrest and riots, shops have been closed for prolonged periods, so supply materials was not readily available.

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

Community involvement: Honco managed to involve and get the interest of local communities to change their behaviour and start protecting the mangroves. We are still far

away from 100% durable management, but the motivation of the locals is a very big step towards success.

Active reforestation: the organisation of several local reforestation days and the involvement of local NGOs, international volunteers and members of the regional Ministry of Water and Forests has started a sort of snowball effect. Different organisations now show interest and even focus on the conservation of the important mangrove ecosystems. The ministry also has shown interest to help replant large degraded areas along the city of Toliara.

Set up of local Association: the local communities understand the importance of their natural resources. Through the creation of a local association, the community is allowed to sign a contract with the government to manage their own resources and forests. They know in any case their forests much better than the officials in the capital, so it's a good case to have a locally managed and followed mangrove forest. It is now very important to push through and follow carefully the development of a durable management plan. Several workshops and training are needed to guarantee a certain degree of success.

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

The local population has benefitted already indirectly by the protection upon the mangroves around their villages. By temporarily banning charcoal making within the mangroves and actively replanting the degraded areas, they will have better change for a more durable future.

Through the training of two local ecoguides, we hope they will benefit from ecotourism. So the mangrove will offer an alternative form of financial benefit. We also started with a Payment For Ecosystems (PSE) the local communities also started to receive some financial benefit for looking after nurseries and growing seedlings at home. This certainly increased the level of community participation within our programme.

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

Yes, we intend to further develop our projects. For the next year the development of the centre and the start of durable aquaculture workshops are our main priorities, together with searching for alternative funds (carbon market) to support our programme.

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

Through the further development of the MIC, we hope to reach a large part of the coastal population and visiting tourists and scientists. We also intend to publish some scientific papers regarding our research.

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

COMPONENT	Year	1				2				3			
		Quarter	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3
<b>PROJECT INITIATION ACTIVITIES</b>													
<b>COMPONENT 1:</b> Socioeconomic studies and training on mangrove related issues													
<b>Activity 1.1:</b> Create database for region. It will include information on location of mangrove, state of degradation and utilisation, current and future economic benefits.													
<b>Activity 1.2:</b> Create Mangrove Conservation Associations and a guided Action Plan.													
<b>Activity 1.3:</b> Organise local workshop and training sessions for people associated with mangrove management to enhance knowledge and necessary skills.													
<b>COMPONENT 2:</b> Increasing awareness on importance of mangroves													
<b>Activity 2.1:</b> Build a mangrove resource centre.													
<b>Activity 2.2:</b> Establish an environmental curriculum packet for the local schools and start guided projects with the different age groups.													
<b>Activity 2.3:</b> Establish library and museum related to the environment in the region.													
<b>COMPONENT 3:</b> Demonstration projects on mangrove rehabilitation and creation of alternative sources of energy and building materials													
<b>Activity 3.1:</b> Identify suitable locations for the implementation of the pilot project and where appropriate restore. Prepare land for demonstration projects and restoration.													
<b>Activity 3.2:</b> Mobilise community, educate and involve them in reforestation exercise. Develop and teach propagation techniques to establish and maintain mangrove nurseries.													
<b>Activity 3.3:</b> Encourage the use of other sources of fuel or energy (solar oven or tree plantations) through education and cooperation with other organisations (for ex. ADES).													
<b>COMPONENT 4:</b> Creation of core mangrove reserves													
<b>Activity 4.1:</b> Identify sensitive or near pristine mangrove forests and enact appropriate local, regional legislation for their protection.													
<b>COMPONENT 5:</b> Sustainable livelihood development													
<b>Activity 5.1:</b> Research income-enhancing alternative livelihoods with minimal impact on the environment such													

as embroidery, vegetable gardens, ecotourism or honey harvesting.



The coloured cells within the timescale demonstrate the slight shift in the anticipated timescale. We decided to push forward the demonstration projects plus the alternative livelihood program initiation. The final steps towards the creation of the Association and the Centre will be taken in the second year of 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. 1 pound £ Sterling = 2750 Ar**

Item	Budgeted Amount	Actual Amount	Difference	Comments
Project Initiation Activities	£ 500	£ 600	+ 100	Transport prices between the city has been increasing during the year. Also we changed our original location of the Mangrove Information Centre closer to the city.
Socio-economic studies and training	£ 1500	£ 1500	0	
Increasing Awareness	£ 2000	£ 1800	- 200	Due to political unrests and closure of shops, the development and construction of our Mangrove Information Centre was delayed. Also more working days were needed to finish construction then expected to get internal decoration.
Demonstration projects	£ 1000	£ 1200	+ 200	We focused more on this component of the project, as Centre was delayed. So the budget coming from the internal decoration for the Centre was transferred into setting up extra nurseries and local workshops in nearby villages.
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£ 5000</b>	<b>£ 5100</b>		

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

The creation of the local community mangrove association combined with the construction of the Mangrove Information Centre will help to secure a durable future for the mangroves within the area. It is of outmost importance to guide and support the association in creating a durable management plan for their mangroves and to continue training the population in durable practices and alternative ways of income (financial, energy, resources). It will also be important to see through the development of an educative and informational mangrove boardwalk plus programme. Visiting tourists will prove to the local population that intact ecosystems can generate valuable financial assets. Also in the near future an educational programme will be set up, so that children and adolescents from the nearby town will be able to better grasp the environment and its importance for mankind.

**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. During the celebration of the International Mangrove Action Day a flag was made and shown. The logo is also visible on the road signs for the Mangrove Information Centre. Brochures and identification pamphlets are being created; also here the RSGF logo will be shown.