

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.

Thank you for your help.

Josh Cole, Grants Director

Your name	Rosemary Groom
Project title	Establishing a mobile education unit for rural communities around Zimbabwe's Savé Valley Conservancy
RSG reference	10617-B
Reporting period	20 th March 2012 to 1 st April 2013
Amount of grant	GBP 11,937
Your email address	rosemary@africanwildlifeconservationfund.org
Date of this report	12 th April 2013

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

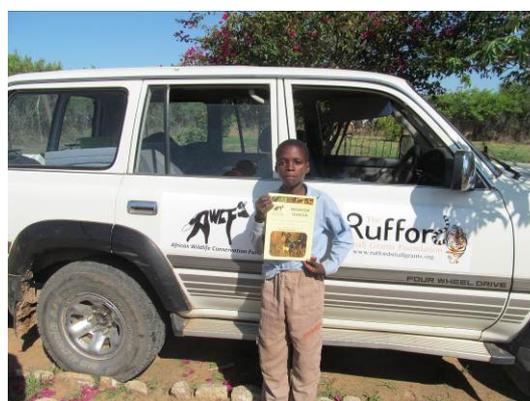
Objective	Not achieved	Partially achieved	Fully achieved	Comments
Collection and cataloguing of all resource materials			yes	We have over 200 books and 750 magazines labelled, catalogued and crated for the library. We also have 45 DVDs and a number of different conservation-themed board games and puzzles.
Vehicle purchase and modification			yes	We have purchased a Land Cruiser GX, and removed the rear seats to make it suitable for carrying all the crates, generator, fuel etc. We have put the Rufford logo on the vehicle.
Employment of educator and assistant		yes		We have only employed a full-time educator and not an assistant at this stage
Training of educator			yes	Our education officer, Victor Chibaya, has been fully trained – he has worked with the Project PI Rosemary Groom and also with the Lowveld Rhino Trust's Community Liaison Officer (CLO) and the Frankfurt Zoological Society's CLO (around Gonarezhou National Park) to learn the ropes, and get experience in implementing community conservation education programmes. He has also engaged with several local teachers and community leaders to better understand the issues and needs of the schools and communities.
Deployment of mobile education unit to first community			yes	We have deployed the mobile education unit in the communities in and around Chishakwe Ranch. We used this area as a preliminary test of how the unit would work best and got some very useful feedback. We have an ongoing library program operating out of the AWCF field base as well!
Continuation of program in all target communities		yes		We have engaged with a few different communities, but not as many as we hoped, because of the forthcoming elections. Although we have got current and up-to-date letters of support from local and regional education offices, as well as from the Minister of Education himself (which explicitly mention the mobile education

			units – see attached), we have been advised not to do any programmes that result in gatherings of people in rural areas during election year. We have instead been using the vehicle and education officer for other education programs, whilst at the same time continuing raising awareness about the mobile education unit.
Evaluation of the project		yes	We have not formally evaluated the project yet, because we haven't rolled it out as extensively as we wanted to, because of the forthcoming elections. But we have engaged with the Chishakwe community where we started the operation of the mobile library to get their feedback. We can informally evaluate the success of this through the enormous popularity of the library service which continues to operate out of our base camp.

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

The main issue which caused a slight (temporary) change in direction of the project is the forthcoming elections in Zimbabwe (scheduled for June 2013), and the associated election paranoia. We have been advised by the District Education Officers and the Rural District Councils to avoid any work in communities that involves getting people together, in case this is seen as having a political agenda. Since the repercussions for the communities of such gatherings can be quite serious, we have withheld operation of the mobile education unit since early this year.

We have however been putting the vehicle and educator to good use, with an expansion of our school-based programmes, including showing the Mobile Education Unit's DVDs in schools (often attended by teachers and parents as well!), and distributing the scholarship certificates to our nine secondary school scholars.



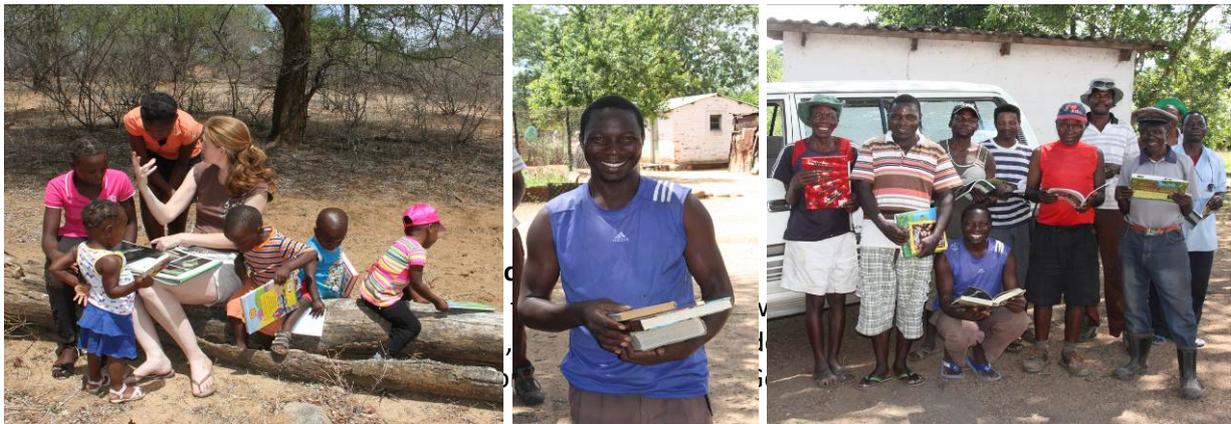
As soon as the elections are over and normality resumes, we will be continuing operation of the mobile education unit, which is fully equipped and ready to go, having been tried and tested in a couple of areas late last year and early this year.

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

Firstly, probably the most important outcome of this project is the opening of an avenue of communication between the Savé Valley Conservancy and the neighbouring communities. Secondly, having the educator explain to people the link between wildlife and livelihoods and demonstrate tangible benefits from the conservancy and its wildlife (particularly African wild dogs) is extremely valuable in engendering positive attitudes. Finally, the support to teachers and parents of school-aged children, and the support we've given to schools during the first part of this year are making a great deal of difference to the standard of the environmental education, and hopefully to the long term conservation of African wild dogs.

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

The whole project is directly aimed at benefitting local communities through the provision of education resources and DVDs to improve knowledge, attitudes and understanding of wildlife (carnivore in particular) conservation issues.



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

I will be doing a full-length oral presentation at the International Congress for Conservation Biology in July 2013, in Baltimore, USA, on the topic "A multi-disciplinary approach to conservation: the value of education and community engagement in landscape level conservation of endangered species". This will include mention of the mobile education units and acknowledge the Rufford Small Grants Foundation.

I also intend to publish a peer-reviewed article on the education programme after it has been running for sufficient time to have a good evaluation of the impact.

I also share news on the mobile education unit project via our social media pages (facebook and blog) as well as with other conservation and education organisations (including Happy Readers, Zambia Schoolbook Project, Cheetah Project Zimbabwe, Frankfurt Zoological Society etc).

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

The RSG was used as anticipated in terms of time scale. The resources were collated, the vehicle bought, and the educator employed and trained as per the original timeline. The unit was deployed into the first communities as planned, and thereafter the plan changed slightly due to the elections, but not so as to alter the use of the RSG funds.

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
Secondhand Toyota Hilux, raised body, diff lock, with canopy	4646	5323	677	We bought a land cruiser GX instead of a Hilux because we couldn't find a Hilux in good condition and because the GX is much stronger. We used additional funds saved from not employing an assistant educator to purchase this better vehicle.
Generator and inverter system for mobile power source	892	1050	158	Slightly more than anticipated
Camping / cooking equipment for educator and assistant	382	382	0	As budgeted
Crates for storage/protection of educational materials	48	50	2	Pretty much as budgeted
Extension cables	32	32	0	As budgeted
Education officer salary @\$400/month	3060	3060	0	As budgeted
Assistant salary @ \$150/month	1152	0	-1152	No assistant educator employed
Vehicle maintenance @\$100/month	768	850	82	Slightly more than anticipated,
Re-printing of educational materials and purchase of replacements for lost/unreturned books	637	635	-2	Pretty much as budgeted
Fuel @15 litres/day x 26 days @ 10km / litre and GBP 0.82 / litre	320	555	235	More fuel used than anticipated because the vehicle was not sitting in a village for weeks at a time, but rather going around schools and communities
TOTAL	11937	11937	0	

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

We need to focus on building local capacity to keep the mobile education unit operational with minimal external support. We also need to expand and strengthen our school-based education programme, specifically through support for teachers and provision of necessary teaching materials, for long term impact.

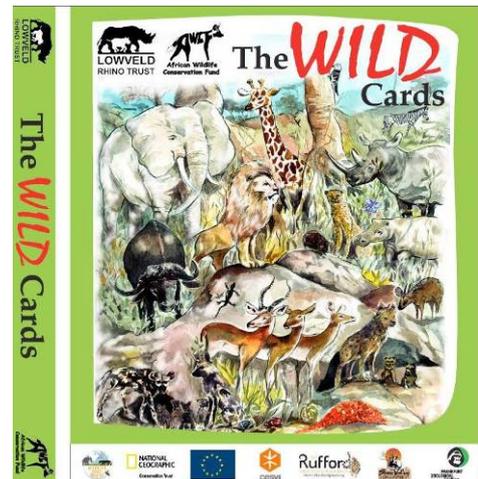
During our work with schools, we have also noticed a serious problem with low literary levels, partly due to a lack of any books with which to teach literacy. We feel it is very important to establish sound literacy programmes in these schools, complimentary to our conservation awareness programmes, at all times making the link between the support given to schools and the wildlife conservation objectives.

On the field conservation side, we are starting up a large scale wild dog genetics project to investigate the recently reported low genetic diversity in the area, and starting a monitoring program in a new, very strategically located wildlife area in the Greater Limpopo Transfrontier Conservation Area.

We will continue to work with vets and antipoaching teams to carry out rabies vaccination campaigns in domestic dogs, remove wire snares from the field and also de-snare injured wild dogs.

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?

The RSGF logo was used on the vehicle, and therefore generated a lot of publicity for the RSGF. In addition, the logo is on the cover of our WILD Cards resource which we have recently finished distributing to all 123 primary schools with which we work. There are several sets of the WILD Cards in the mobile education unit as well, and several other projects in Zimbabwe use them too.



11. Any other comments?

We look forward to continuing to work with the Rufford Small Grants Foundation to further strengthen this multi-disciplinary conservation programme for African wild dogs, their prey, habitats and ecosystems.