

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

Grant Recipient Details

Amount of grant	£6000
Date of this report	15 Nov 2014
Project title	Community based restoration of degraded grassland and fallow land in the buffer area of the Kuno Wildlife Sanctuary
Reporting period	September 2013 to August 2014
RSG reference	10805-2
Your email address	asmita.kabra@gmail.com
Your name	Asmita Kabra

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
Identification of beneficiary households			√	
Formation of user group and finalisation of size, scale and location of the grassland restoration site			√	Modifications were made in conceptualising formation of user groups, based on lessons from the first restoration pilot project of 2012-13. We found that individual use rights were working far more effectively than community based user groups. Thus, intra-household groups were formed based on clear legal rights of use of the restoration plots.
Demarcation of grassland restoration site on the ground			√	
Identification of control plots			√	
Creation of restoration plan in participation with user group			√	
Site manipulating activities			√	
Monitoring and evaluation of restoration site and control plots			√	Apart from the first round of data collection, we have also created protocols for concurrent monitoring and evaluation of the site. Further data will continue to be collected on the response of grassland sites to the restoration activities.

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

In the identification process of beneficiary households, there was confusion about usufruct rights of some individuals for the same land plot. Issues were resolved after several meetings with the community.

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

- **Creation of community managed pasture:** As planned, we selected a severely degraded land plot of 6 ha in village Ladar and with community participation we restored the plot into pastureland. Vegetation data collected from the site in October 2014 shows that the plot had 12 species of grass (including native species), compared to four species (exotics) on the control plot. The restored plot shows very good biomass recovery, with an average above

ground biomass of 2,088 kg/ha, compared with 128 kg/ha on the control plot. The proportion of bare ground on the restored plot is significantly lower than on the control plot.

- **Easy and Conflict free availability of grass:** Beneficiary householders will be able to access grasses for fodder throughout the year from the restored site; this will enable them to diversify into livestock rearing without increasing pressure on forests and common lands.
- **Creation of grass nursery:** A grass nursery has been established with three tall grass species and several other medium to small grass species native to this landscape. The local community can use the nursery to create their own fodder banks or for other uses of grasses, like roof thatching, rope-making and broom-making.

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

Beneficiary households participated in all stages of pastureland creation and contributed to managing and security of the site. All site manipulation activities (weed removal, building of boundary wall, introduction of seeds and grass slips, and security of the restored plot from encroachment and fire) were carried out in consultation with the beneficiary households, and using their household labour as far as possible. This enabled them to earn additional wage income and created an additional multiplier effect, apart from creating grasslands that meet their livelihood requirements.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

Yes. The landscape in the project area consists of agricultural fields interspersed with degraded fallow land on which the local people have clear ownership rights. With the active participation of the local community, we plan to replicate the demonstrated successes of the pilot projects to a much larger area.

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

- 1) Student researchers from the School of Human Ecology, AUD will be engaged to follow up on the project and generate field-based reports.
- 2) At least two research papers are under preparation based on this project.

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 for 12 months (September 2013 to August 2014), but to complete the vegetation sampling at the end of the monsoons, we requested for a 2-month extension from RSG. During this extended period, we also collected grass seeds for next year's plantation and restoration activities.

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 (INR)	Difference (INR)	Comments
Consultancy fee for Research Fellow	2169	1995	174	Exchange rate used is 1GBP=100 INR
Community mobilisation expenses (vehicle hiring, petrol for motorcycle, hiring of local assistants, village meeting expenses and miscellaneous expenses)	867	944	-77	The interest earned on the RSG grant was used for augmenting the funds in this head.
Restoration of pasture land (wage and material cost for seeds. Land levelling, boundary wall, water, miscellaneous expenses)	2290	2390	-100	The interest earned on the RSG grant was used for augmenting the funds in this head to meet additional expenses.
Field visit expenses of the Principal Investigator/ student/external experts	253	427	174	
Institutional overheads (office space, computer time, power backup, communications, stationary)	361	368	-7	
Annual audit of the project	60	60	0	
TOTAL	6000	6184	-184	

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

The beneficiary community has been resettled on degraded forest land and suffered a heavy decline in livelihoods after moving out of the Kuno sanctuary in 1999. Thus, there is continued need to create sustainable livelihood augmentation opportunities for them. Given that most households tend to leave at least a part of their land fallow due to its degraded nature, there is significant scope for using ecological restoration techniques to create pastures on private fallows as well as common lands. The next logical step therefore would be to scale this project up to include larger number of beneficiary households across at least 24 villages. This can be done partly through investments and loans, and in part by making biomass available, creating new grass nurseries, demonstrating best practices through the pilot restoration sites, and mobilising the wider community towards individual and collective action.

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 RSG logo has not been used so far for formal dissemination, since no material or documents have been published yet as part of the project. The data generated from this project is currently being analysed and will be written up as research papers. The financial support of RSG will be duly acknowledged and the logo and grant number will be displayed in any posters, reports or graphics produced by the recipient.

Ladar Village, Project plot Vegetation Cover: Before and After Restoration

