

## The Rufford Foundation

### Final Report

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

We ask all grant recipients to complete a Final Report Form that helps us to gauge the success of our grant giving. The Final Report must be sent in **word format** and not PDF format or any other format. 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. Please note that the information may be edited for clarity. 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**

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Grant Recipient Details	
<b>Your name</b>	Pabitra Jha
<b>Project title</b>	Mitigating on-going Human Elephant Conflict (HEC) in Sarlahi, Nepal
<b>RSG reference</b>	12222-2
<b>Reporting period</b>	September 2014-January 2015
<b>Amount of grant</b>	£5992
<b>Your email address</b>	pabitrajha@yahoo.com
<b>Date of this report</b>	18 January, 2015

**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
HEC Mitigation Groups Formation		✓		<p>Clustering of VDCs for HEC Mitigation Groups formation has been accomplished. In total, two groups will be formed at community level separating the most affected area and the less affected area. In addition to this, a district level mitigation group with the representative from different stakeholders and the mitigation group at community level will also be formed. Cluster 1 will include Janakinagar, Dhungrekhola, Ghurkauli, Hajariya, Harion, Haripur, Karmaiya, Murtiya, Pindari, Rajghat, Sasapur, and Shankarpur VDCs as they are the most affected VDCs with respect to human-elephant conflict at present. The second cluster will include Atrauli, Bhaktipur, Ishworpur, Jabdi, Kalinjor, Lalbandhi, Narayankhola, Netragunj, Parwanipur, Patharkot, and Ranigunj VDCs. Recently some of these VDCs have been merged/turned to municipalities. As per the suggestion of district stakeholders, the mitigation groups will be formed after their orientation program. Due to the other priorities of the community people and the district line agencies, the orientation programme has been planned for February 2015.</p>
Production and distribution of awareness raising materials			✓	<p>Awareness raising materials such as posters (first one related to Government of Nepal's directives on providing compensation/relief fund for the damages caused by wildlife 2009; second one related to HEC related dialogue, and third one related to do's and don'ts to mitigate HEC); hoarding boards (on the importance of mutual existence of elephant and human); and brochures (first one about Asian wild elephant and second one about the findings of the study undertaken with the first Rufford Grant) have been published and distributed among the communities and the relevant government and non-government agencies e.g. District Forest Office, Parsa Wildlife Reserve, Federation of Community Forest Users Nepal, Sarlahi, local Community Forest Users Group. The digital copies of awareness raising materials are attached with this report.</p>

Orientation to HEC Mitigation Groups		✓		Informal focus group discussions about awareness raising materials prepared, planning for the mitigation group formation, updates on HEC incidences in the recent years were done. However, formal orientations to the mitigation groups are yet to be done. Due to the other priorities of the community people and the district line agencies, the orientation programme has been planned for February 2015. However, all the preparatory works for the orientation has been done.
Orientation to Local People through HEC Mitigation Groups	✓			It will be accomplished soon after the mitigation groups are formed.

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

Despite the busy schedule of the district level stakeholders, the project has managed to secure enough cooperation from them. Evidently, the project has been able to secure government ownership on its awareness materials. The awareness raising materials were reviewed by the government authorities (District Forest Office, Sarlahi and Parsa Wildlife Reserve) and they have provided authority to use their logos in the awareness materials. This for sure has added the value to the awareness materials. However, due to the other priorities of the district level stakeholders and the strikes and protests being called by different political parties targeting the day of Constitution Promulgation i.e. 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2015 in the project area, the orientation programmes that had been planned for the beginning of the January have been postponed for February 2015.

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

i. Production and distribution of awareness raising materials

Posters, brochures and hoarding boards prepared as a part of this project are the most important outcome of this project. They cover wide range of information ranging from very basic information about Asian wild elephant to the findings of the previous HEC study to Government of Nepal's directives on providing compensation/relief fund for the damages caused by wildlife 2009 to importance of elephant conservation to precautions to be taken to mitigate HEC and associated damages. Above that they have also secured government recognition. The government authorities like District Forest Office, Sarlahi and Parsa Wildlife Reserve have provided authority to use their logos in the awareness materials. All the awareness raising materials were prepared in Nepal language and instead of lengthy texts illustrations were used to effectively communicate their messages among the target communities of the project area. These materials have been already distributed among the communities and the relevant government and non-government agencies e.g. District Forest Office, Parsa Wildlife Reserve, Federation of Community Forest Users Nepal, Sarlahi, local Community Forest Users Groups. The communities have been very much impressed with the publications. The government and non-government agencies have opined that they can also be used by other agencies in the other HEC affected areas for the awareness raising activities.

ii. Informal focus group discussion:

A series of informal focus group discussions with the communities and the district level stakeholders were organised. The focus group discussions were focused on effective use of the awareness raising materials, finalisation of location for placing hoarding boards, and planning for the HEC mitigation group formation. As per the suggestions received during those focus group discussions, it has been decided to divide the project area into two clusters for the formation of HEC mitigation groups. Therefore, two cluster level and one district level HEC mitigation groups will be formed by the end of this project.

iii. Planning and preparation for orientation to HEC mitigation Groups and HEC mitigation group formation:

Due to other priorities of the district level stakeholders and the strikes and protests called by political parties, the orientation programmes that had been planned for the beginning of the January have been postponed for February. However, all the necessary preparation for the orientations (resource person finalisation, content finalisation, participant's selection and itinerary preparation) has been completed.

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

The awareness raising materials (posters, brochures and hoarding boards) that have been produced and distributed as a part of this project are expected to benefit not only the local communities of the project VDCs but also the passers-by from the neighbouring VDCs and districts. Further the government and non-government agencies that have received the awareness materials have opined that they can also be used by other agencies in the other HEC affected areas for the awareness raising activities.

Similarly, the three HEC mitigation groups that have been planned to be formed by the end of this project are expected to disseminate the HEC mitigation related information to the local communities, establish HEC relief fund and provide some quick relief support to HEC victims and/or support the victims of HEC to access relief fund provisioned by the Government of Nepal and function as a hub to relay information about possible movement of wild elephants and avoid the possible HEC.

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

The project team wishes to and deems necessary to continue this project as there is a need of additional awareness raising activities and establishment of the HEC relief fund. As a part of this project, three HEC mitigation groups will be formed one at district level and two at community level. The local communities are planning to register these groups. Once these groups are registered, they are planning to establish HEC relief fund under these groups so that they can provide some quick relief support to HEC victims and/or support the victims of HEC to access relief fund provisioned by the Government of Nepal. And the project team believes it will be logical to contribute some matching fund through the further Rufford support for the establishment of the relief fund at the district level. In addition to this, the project team also considers it necessary to produce some additional awareness raising materials to reach target households not just the communities.

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

Final achievements of the project will be shared to the relevant district level stakeholders at the end of the project. If possible, an article about the project experience and achievement will also be prepared and published in an inter/national journal (For your kind information an article summarising the major finding of the previous HEC study has been published in Special Issue of Biodiversity Conservation Efforts in Nepal published by Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation, Babarmahal, Kathmandu, Nepal). The digital copies of the awareness raising materials produced as a part of this project will also be shared to central, regional and other district level relevant stakeholders.

## 7. Timescale: Over what period was The Rufford Foundation grant used? How does this compare to the anticipated or actual length of the project?

Activities	Proposed schedule (Time in month)	Actual time it took (in month)	Comments
HEC Mitigation Groups Formation	July to August 2013	Oct 2013 to Feb 2015	The Rufford Grant got approved only in September 2013. Nepal's two major festivals fall in the months of October and November which delayed the initiation of the project in the beginning. HEC mitigation group formation process was started only after the completion of preparation of awareness raising materials and preparation and finalisation of the awareness raising materials actually took quite some time before it got reviewed and approved by the government authorities in December 2014. The awareness raising went through series of review process and it got finally approved by the government authorities. However, by this reporting time, as per the suggestions received from the focus group discussions, it has been decided to divide the project area into two clusters and to form two cluster level and one district level HEC mitigation groups by the end of this project.
Production and distribution of awareness raising materials	Sept – Oct 2013	Dec 2013 – Dec 2014	Due the busy schedule of the government officials, it took longer than the expected time to arrange meetings for the consultations, review of awareness raising materials and getting final approval and permission for using their logos from the authorities of Parsa Wildlife Reserve and District Forest Office, Sarlahi.
Orientation to HEC	Nov – Dec	Dec 2014 –	We planned to finalise awareness raising

Mitigation Groups	2013	Feb 2015	materials before organising orientation to HEC mitigation groups so that those materials can be used during the orientations. The delay in the process of finalisation and approval of awareness raising materials delayed the orientations. Actually, the orientations were planned for the beginning of the January 2015 but due to the other priorities of the district level stakeholders and the strikes and protests called by political parties, the orientation programmes that had been planned for the beginning of the January have been postponed for February 2015
Orientation to Local People through HEC Mitigation Groups	Jan – Mar 2014	Mar 2015 onwards	Orientation to Local People through HEC Mitigation Groups will start immediately after the formation and orientation of the three HEC mitigation groups in Feb 2015.

**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
Remuneration	1764	1764	0	Contract with resource person for the delivery of orientations has been finalised and the final payment will be made after completion of orientation
DSA	1985	1985	0	Payment of expert for orientation to mitigation groups is remained which will be provided soon.
Accommodation	551	551	0	Field works for mitigation group formation and their orientation is still remained thus the full payment is not provided yet
Transportation	220	220	0	Travelling is still remained thus the full payment is not done.
Stationery (Notebook; Pen, Paper, Printing, etc.)	280	280	0	It will be required for the orientation programmes.
Communication	100	100	0	
Reporting	107	107	0	
Awareness raising, materials production	700	800	-100	Additional cost was required for hiring artist to sketch illustrations used in awareness raising materials

Overhead cost	285	285	0	It was used to prepare stand to place hoarding board in crossroads
<b>Total</b>	5992	6092	-100	1 £ sterling=136 (taken from the project application)

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

- Institutional development and strengthening of HEC mitigation groups.
- Fundraising for establishing HEC relief fund at local level to support HEC victims in future.
- Publication and distribution of additional awareness raising materials at household level.
- Field demonstration of cost effective HEC mitigation measures e.g. cultivation of elephant repellent crops.

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

The Rufford Foundation logo was used in all publications produced as the part of this project. Further, acknowledgement to the Rufford Foundation will be made in each article that will be produced based on the experience and achievement of this project in future.

**11. Any other comments?**

The RSGF has been highly appreciated by the local communities of Sarlahi district for this initiation. The local residents are hopeful that the awareness raising on HEC mitigation that is being carried out as a part of this project will certainly be useful in avoiding HEC to some extent. Besides, they are also optimistic that formation of HEC mitigation groups will keep this initiation going in the Sarlahi district and the establishment of HEC relief fund will help them to provide some quick relief support to HEC victims and/or support the victims of HEC to access relief fund provisioned by the Government of Nepal in future.