

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. 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.

Thank you for your help.

Josh Cole, Grants Director

Grant Recipient Details

Your name	Rosa M. Garriga
Project title	Study of chimpanzee populations (<i>Pan troglodytes verus</i>) using camera traps in non-protected disturbed-fragmented habitats in Port Loko district, Sierra Leone.
RSG reference	12668-1
Reporting period	March 2013- April 2014
Amount of grant	£6000
Your email address	rosagarriga@yahoo.com
Date of this report	15 April 2014

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
To study the wild chimpanzee populations in disturbed-fragmented habitats in the Port Loko District in Sierra Leone and assess the crop raiding impact.			yes	Through 171 semi-structured interviews we have acquired a good and reliable picture of the problems that farmers face in the context of wildlife crops raiding issues. With the images captured with the camera traps we obtained images of wild chimpanzees in three different locations within the study area.
To produce an inventory of the medium and large size wildlife present in the study area.			yes	The total study area covered 316 km ² . We set cameras in 33 locations and obtained 5,813 pictures with identifiable wild animals with which we have identified 17 different species of animals. During the recce walks we gathered evidences of the presence of wildlife and their activities.
To obtain baseline data to monitor over time the progress and effectiveness of the sensitisation and community development programmes			yes	The data gathered during this project will be used to compare results between various study sites. It could also serve to compare changes over time of the wildlife diversity and abundance within the same study site in future studies.
To study, evaluate and compare the wild chimpanzee populations in various locations		yes		In this study, we have been able to identify most of the chimpanzee individuals from various locations living in farm and fallow fields. Further research is needed to establish their group dynamics and home range.
To evaluate the options for the long-term survival of these isolated populations and to explore possible solutions, like creating or promoting natural corridor links between forest fragments		yes		We have done a habitat assessment of the study areas and acquired an overall picture of the habitat types present. However, an in-depth study of key areas like riverine forests would be necessary to determine the suitability of promoting natural corridors to interconnect them and which protection measures could be implemented.

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

In general, we did not find unexpected difficulties during the project other than the usual when working in remote rural African communities.

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

1. With the camera traps and the recce walks we have been able to confirm of the presence of wild chimpanzees in the study area and have been able to individually identify some of them in three distinct locations. We have also produced an inventory of the medium and large size wildlife present in the study area.
2. Through the interviews we have found out that chimpanzees raid mainly oil palms to eat as well using the palm trees for nesting. However, the results of the data analysis show that other animals like cane rats, monkeys and squirrels are causing more damage to the crops than chimpanzees. Also, recurrent grasshopper plagues are a serious cause of concern for many farmers and their seasonal crops.
3. During the time we spent in the field, we created a good rapport with the people in the local communities and their cooperation has been of uppermost importance for the success of this project. The sensitisation work on habitat and chimpanzee protection conducted by the field team was very well received by the community members.

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

We have done 171 interviews in 38 local communities within the study area and engaged almost 900 people in discussions about wildlife and agricultural issues. No other NGO or government agency has ever come to this area to find out what are the main challenges and problems the farmers are facing for their daily subsistence. During the interviews, the farmers often mentioned their disappointment towards the central government for its lack of interest. We plan to submit the results of this project to the relevant country authorities to inform them and try to draw their attention towards these farming communities.

After we completed the interviews, we handed over environmental educational posters to the chiefs of the villages. The field team spent time explaining the importance of healthy practices to protect the environment. Also, in the evenings, they showed educational films in various villages.

During the time in the field we hired local trackers. We rented rooms in private households and hired cooks and other services. The field research assistants are Sierra Leone nationals trained in field research techniques by the main researcher.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

Yes, we would like to replicate the same type of research in other districts in Sierra Leone to acquire a broader view of the current conflicts between farmers and wildlife, as well as trying to understand how wild chimpanzees have adapted to live in such degraded habitats and in which ways can we act to protect them.

The more we investigate the better we can assess the impact of wildlife on agricultural crops as well as being able to draw conclusions and propose realistic solutions to mitigate human-wildlife conflicts and therefore try to better protect wildlife and the wild chimpanzee population.

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

The final report will be available at Tacugama's website and it will be submitted to the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food Security - Conservation and Wildlife Management Unit, Forestry Division of the Sierra Leone Government. We plan also to publish the results in pertinent international scientific journals.

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

The field work for this project was carried out between November 2013 and February 2014. The data analysis and the report writing lasted until April 2014. The length of the project has been as anticipated but the start of the project was delayed because of the rainy season. In 2013, the heavy rains continued until the end of October 2013 and therefore the field work did not start until November.

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.

RSGF granted £6,000 towards this study and Tacugama provided the remaining amount of £2,910 for the completion of this project.

Item	Budgeted Amount	Actual Amount	Difference	Comments
Research permit extension	275	275	0	
Researcher's visa	50	50	0	
Return flight BCN - Sierra Leone - BCN (flights, insurance, airport transfers)	1,185	1,185	0	
Transportation (car rent) and per diem x 6 people x 3 field trips	1,540	2,310	770	Instead of two trips to the field study site, we did three: first trip to set cameras, second to retrieve and set them again, and the third to retrieve them. In each trip we also carried out interviews and sensitisation work.
Wage researcher	1,000	1,000	0	
Wages field technicians	1,500	2,250	750	The final amount increased due to the third trip to the field study site.
Wage trackers / cook	450	675	225	The final amount increased due to the third trip to the field study site.
Accommodation and per	790	790	0	

diem for researcher in SL x 2 months				
Communications (phone credit, internet, rent of GPS x 4 units and office use)	375	375	0	
Total	7,165	8,910	1,745	

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

A more intensive research with camera traps and transects in the locations where chimpanzees have been observed. This would provide additional information of the dynamics and ranging patterns of the wild chimpanzees' groups living within these degraded habitats. We need to understand how they live and survive, so we can identify appropriate protection measures to prevent them from being hunted.

Another important step would be to involve a local and/or international agricultural entity with experience in managing insect plagues so farmers can protect their crops against grasshopper invasions.

Expand the scope of Tacugama education and sensitisation campaigns creating and distributing more educational posters about the need to protect chimpanzees, wildlife and their habitat. We have observed that posters about chimpanzee protection in Sierra Leone distributed during the chimpanzee national census carried out in 2010, were still displayed in several villages. We think that more graphic posters would be more adequate due to the low literacy level in these communities.

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, it has been published in Tacugama's blog at:

<http://tacugama.wildlifedirect.org/2014/02/06/latest-news-from-our-research-project-studying-wild-chimps/>

When the report is revised and finalised, it will have RSGF logo and the report will be available at Tacugama's website: <http://www.tacugama.com/what-we-do/field-research/--camera-trap-survey> RSGF will always be mentioned and acknowledged in further articles or reports derived from this study.