

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	
Your name	Elena Castiñeira Latorre
Project title	Applying ethnobotany to the conservation in the protected area "Quebradas del Norte-Regional Park", Rivera, Uruguay.
RSG reference	12962-1
Reporting period	February 2013 – February 2014
Amount of grant	£6000
Your email address	elencasti@gmail.com
Date of this report	13/03/2014

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
Identifying the social network associated to the traditional botanical knowledge (TBK)		X		We identified key actors based on the snowball method (one actor takes us to the other actors). We conducted open and semi-structured interviews. 21 key actors were interviewed. We classified the interviewees by categories of analysis to determine the network topology. The graph theory applied to the analysis of social networks allowed us to measure the connection of the sub sets: (a) exclusive seller, (b) seller-gatherer (c) seller-gatherer-consumer, (d) exclusive gatherer, (e) gatherer-consumer, (f) exclusive consumer. Now the study of the modularity, detects the density of connections between the groups. Studying the topology of the network of TBK we can see the response of the system to a change or the disappearance of a key actor.
Systematisation of knowledge and database construction		X		The sample is not saturated. This refers to need to continue the interviews. The ethnobotanical database contains, to this day, 90 botanical species with diverse medicinal uses
Interpretative Center at "Parque Gran Bretaña", Rivera-Uruguay			X	We improved the interpretation center, where visitors can now see the exhibition with medicinal plants and botanical reference books
The herbarium at "Parque Gran Bretaña", Rivera-Uruguay		X		60% of the botanical reference material was incorporated in the herbarium

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

- l) Difficulty on building the TBK network. While informants expressed their interest in participating in the project, in some cases, especially sellers did not report their links with other vendors and gatherers. In the light of this, we proceeded to interview others who were not part of the study sample.

- II) We ignored the gathering period of medicinal plants, for species where the relationship between gathering and the religious calendar is very strong. This delayed outputs with gatherers. We now know these dates and have better planned our calendar of field trips.
- III) Delays to the building of the herbarium. The herbarium process took longer than expected. The income of botanical material was related to the availability of informants to collect the samples. We improved our communication with the informants in order to be advised of the time for harvesting.

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

- I) The topological features of the network given by size and complexity of the TBK system.
- II) The diversity of species reported for use in the health and disease processes.
- III) The substantial receptivity of informants, and the population in general, to participate in the research.

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

The informants have actively participated in the project objectives, always showing interest to conduct interviews and to provide samples for the construction of the reference herbarium. I am delighted at the support that of the local community. In fact we would like to mention three aspects. The first, relates to this project and two informal sellers that led me to write a book about recommended medicinal plants. The second is to have contributed to the construction of the interpretation center in the "Parque Gran Bretaña "where environmental educational activities are carried out, generating strong bonds with other organisations such as the Departmental Government of Rivera and the Department of Culture. And finally, the last aspect relates to promoting students of the University Center of Rivera to develop ideas and projects that will contribute to the continuation of this research.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

We have built the foundation for a new line of research in ethnobotany for Uruguay. In conclusion, the work that we have developed here will continue to deepen this type of approach in the region. Furthermore, in the future, we want to incorporate more study areas, where there is strong pressure on natural medicinal resources, especially in the hilly areas of Uruguay.

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

We disseminate our results to three levels. The first is to publish the research results in scientific journals of high impact and secondly, to distribute resources for the local community (leaflets, posters and videos), which we have already begun to do. Finally, hosting workshops with active community agents, who participated in the research; this level, we believe, will be another, special way to share the results.

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

A year ago we received financial support from the RSG, in deed this allowed us to begin exploring the world of ethnobotany problematic in "Quebradas del Norte-Regional Park" Rivera-Uruguay. We believe we have made significant progress in the development of the project, but the above contingencies have delayed. Consequently our goal is to culminate research before finishing the first half of 2014.

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
Community workshops	1600	0	1600	It has not been done.
Herbarium material	650	400	250	The 60% of the botanical reference material was incorporated in the herbarium.
Education Resource	1600	1300	300	We have acquired the majority of educational materials, but the lack audio-visual resources.
Sampling	1600	1400	200	We have not performed all field trips.
Photography camera	550	550	0	Acquired product.
TOTAL	6000	3650	2350	

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

- I. At first the analysis of the structure of social networks that comprise the TBK this would allow us to detect dynamic aspects of complex system, and the dependence and vulnerability of the loss of key actors. Similarly, the analysis of a network linking plants with their disease could help identify the most commonly used species, and how they would be affected the health and disease processes within the community by the loss of species.
- II. Strengthen environmental education activities with actors of the network to promote the social value of plant resources and the importance of their management and conservation.
- III. Dissemination of environmental education programme related to the importance of ethnobotany as a biological and cultural conservation tool.
- IV. Improve facilities for processing and preservation of the herbarium.
- V. Finally increase the study area and the number of key informants to obtain robust data and continue this line of research in the long-term

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?

We use the logo in dissemination material: posters and triptychs. This year the logo was used in the presentations of preliminary results of research in abstracts, oral and poster presentations of the: Latin American Botanical Congress (Salvador, Bahia, Brazil, October 2014) and Argentine Congress of Social Anthropology (Rosario, Argentina, July 2014).

11. Any other comments?

Through funding provided by RSGF we have begun to draw a new line of applied research in Uruguay. In this sense it would be the first approach that has the country in the use of ethnobotanical knowledge as a powerful tool for biological and cultural conservation.