

## The Rufford Foundation

### Final Report

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**

Grant Recipient Details	
<b>Your name</b>	Kenrick Winston Williams
<b>Project title</b>	Analysis of community institutions in Belize in adapting to a shifting socio-political environment.
<b>RSG reference</b>	14198-1
<b>Reporting period</b>	January 2014- January 2015
<b>Amount of grant</b>	£5,711
<b>Your email address</b>	<a href="mailto:kenrick.williams@gmail.com">kenrick.williams@gmail.com</a>
<b>Date of this report</b>	January 30 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
Identify variables present in successful long run community institutions			✓	
Training of indigenous and local communities in participatory research techniques			✓	
Foster community interest in NR governance by involving 17 buffer communities in community mapping, ethno-history, CBA, and institutional assessment		✓		The project scope was reduced to 12 communities and two sites. The objectives of the project however were maintained to allow for comparison between a robust and a fragile case.
Develop a community institution policy framework to support Belize’s national objectives to strengthen local capacity in co-management		✓		A policy framework is being developed. The document is deemed incomplete by the researcher as it requires further scenario planning and analysis. Like many other documents, it provides a framework for state-community interactions; however it is critically lacking from the perspective of the community in terms of community development planning. A second phase encompassing scenario planning with communities are being developed to integrate into this framework.

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

Project extent: the extent in encompassing three protected areas and 17 communities proved to be wider than the capacity of the team to observe interactions in each of this community within an appropriate timeframe of the project. To address this project design issue, the project was scaled down to focus on two protected areas and 12 buffer communities (one robust and one fragile case- thus maintaining the objective of the project). The two cases allowed for appropriate comparative analysis of design principles, institutions, and their interaction in sustaining collective action.

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

Three most important outcomes of this project include:

1. Identification of key variables that contributes to success or fragility in resources governance in a Belizean social-ecological systems context. Variables identified as contributing to sustainability of collective action and strong outcomes includes leadership, strong social capital, external agencies (NGO, academic and research institutions), strong governance systems, and socio-economic attributes. The results highlight policy recommendations where key focus should be made by the state, and civil society to improve community based governance initiatives. Specifically, where the state lacks the capacity, it can provide the policy framework to allow external agencies to build capacity of local communities. Capacity building and leadership in turn would then construct formal and informal institutions to govern the social and ecological systems and respond to endogenous and exogenous pressures. The state can also build stronger collaborative framework (with a good governance approach).
2. The thrusting of community institutions and community research into the national research agenda. The current project funded by RSG only addresses the tip of the iceberg in terms of building a community institutional research framework in Belize. As it stands currently, the national research agenda is purely based on the ecological system (marine and terrestrial) and pays marginal attention to the social system and the interactions between these two systems. Discussions have been held with those in government institutions including the National Protected Areas Secretariat, the Forest Department, and NGOs, research and academic institutions. Advocacy will continue to develop an integrated social-ecological research agenda for Belize.
3. One of the direct benefits of this project was the training of key individuals in local communities to diagnose variables and their interaction contributing to robustness or fragility in their particular social ecological system. Communities have since identified critical areas of institutional and capacity building in forging adaptability to uncertainties and disturbances in resources governance.

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

The research approach was a participatory framework including communities in the design and implementation phase. Select community residents from across 12 villages in Belize were trained in assessing variables of the Social Ecological Systems framework to identify endogenous and exogenous variables that affect sustainability of community initiatives. Particularly communities participated in the community mapping, historical mapping, focus group discussions, and a community meetings to discuss findings.

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

This project has made some strides in advancing community participation in natural resources governance and institutional analysis on the national agenda. What is critically lacking, however, is firstly a “good governance” framework to ensure a deliberative, collaborative, legitimate and just participation of local and indigenous communities in resource governance at multiple hierarchical levels. Secondly, communities are often treated as a subject rather than stakeholders in research and development. The second phase of this project would like to, through a strong community driven approach, to carry out scenario analysis and planning. As for the former, current approach to natural resources governance takes on a western scientific reductionist approach to governance. In this regard, there are plans to forge a series of “pilot participatory framework” in pilot protected

areas which would combine scientific and local and indigenous knowledge in resource governance complemented by synopsis planning and analysis for indigenous and local communities. The latter will foster “development” from a bottom-up perspective. Whereas community scenario planning is concerned, the objective is to have communities buffering these protected areas consider possible disturbance and uncertainties (from the possible de-reservation of protected area for industrial development to recognized communal territory) and how to address planning for these scenarios. This will help to build adaptability and transformability—key tenets of building resilience in local communities.

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

Initial results of this work have been shared in several platforms in Belize, Taiwan, and to the at-large global community. As for the former, discussions were held with stakeholders in Belize through the Belize Chapter of the Mesoamerican Society for Biology and Conservation i.e. the primary research platform in Belize. Presentations and other discussions held also in Belize and Taiwan at various academic and research institutions as well as governmental agencies. The results of this work have been developed into a scientific paper which is currently under review in the journal “Ecology and Society”.

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

The Foundation’s grant was used for the period January 2014 to January 2015. This primarily encompasses the major activities and actual length of the project save for dissemination of information and discussions with stakeholders in Belize which continues after the close of this project

**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
Return Airfare (Taiwan-Belize)	850	850	0	
Accommodation	1300	1300	0	
Local transportation	900	1300	-400	Unexpected and significant increases in fuel prices at pump and much more traveling required than planned.
Research Assistant	1161	1161	0	
Community Meetings	500	200	+300	Stipends were not required. Funds were reallocated to transportation
Food	500	500	0	
Subsistence	500	400	+100	Funds reallocated from subsistence to local

				transportation
<b>Total</b>	5711	<b>5711</b>	0	

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

Next steps of this project include:

- i) Formal meetings with the conservation community through the National Protected Areas Committee, Ministry of Forest, Fisheries and Sustainable Development to forge agenda for increased community participation under a “good governance” framework as well as increasing focus and research in community institutions to support the protected areas systems of Belize.
- ii) To develop and implement phase II of this research to focus on scenario planning with local communities to guide local, economic, and institutional development .

**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?**

Yes. Rufford Foundation’s Logo was used in all presentations and invited talks in Belize and Taiwan and on publications. Rufford Foundation SGP was also recognized for its funding in the peer-review manuscript submitted to Ecology and Society Journal.